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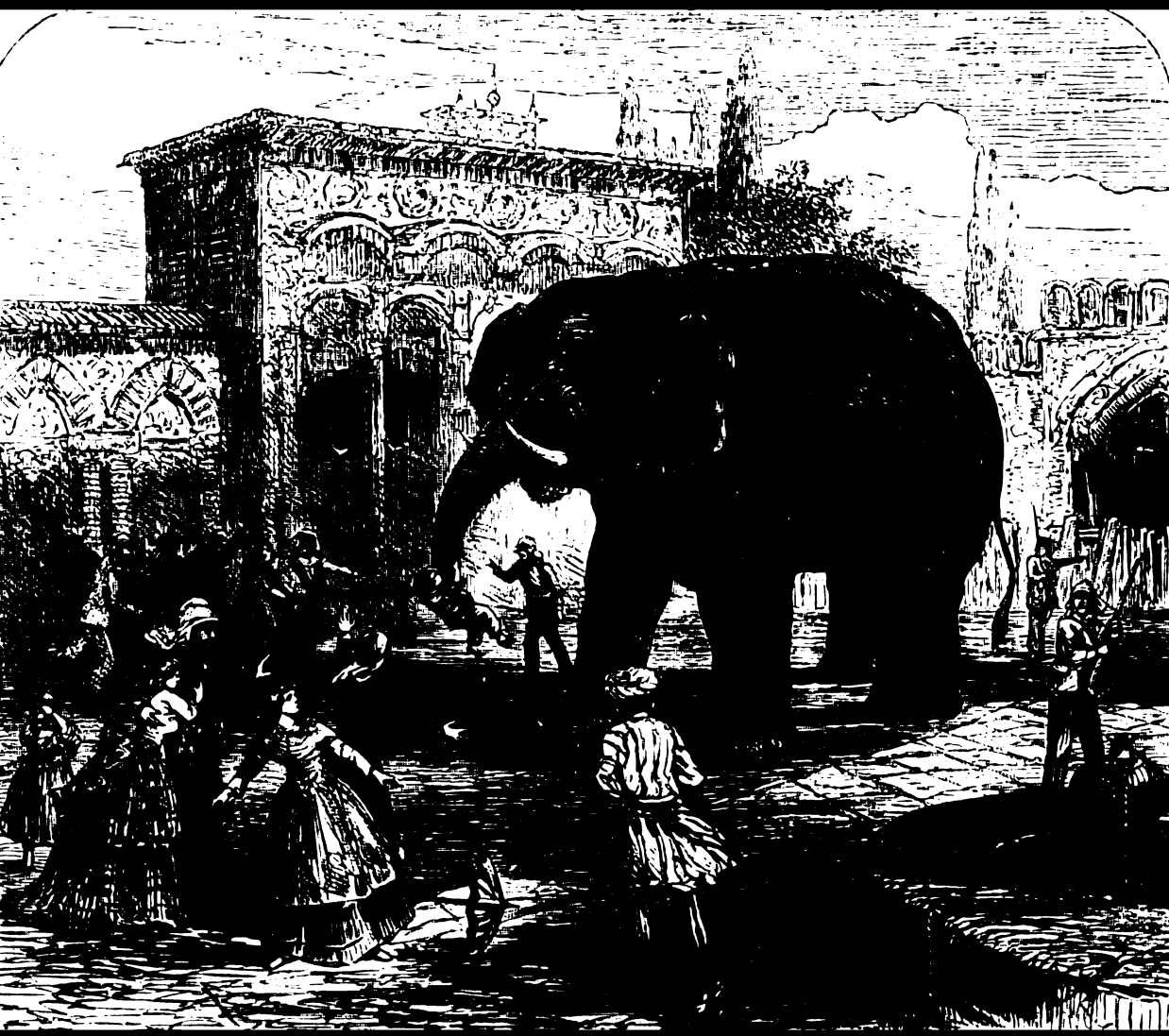

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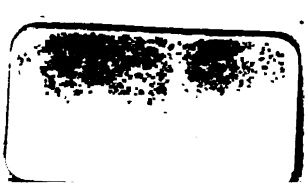

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OF

POPULAR LITERATURE

Science and Arts

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Science and Arts

1869

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A PERFECT TREASURE.

CHAPTER I.—HERSHELL POINT.

Most unfortunate persons are able to date their ruin from some trifling circumstance. The 'lifer'-convict, sentenced to years of seclusion till he gets his ticket of leave—looks back with regret on his first robbery with violence, laments the day when he stole his first watch, which perhaps was, after all, only that called a hunting one (on account of its fatal facility for 'running down'). If the poor fellow had but resisted the temptation to become its possessor, he might have sat on the bench (open to every British subject born with good lungs), instead of standing in the dock. Similarly, the wife of the French billiard-marker, once the flower of an English middle-class household, bewails that moment of indiscretion when she first returned from her finger-tips the clandestine salute of the self-styled Marquis de St Antoine, who lodged in the opposite second floor at Margate.

But why multiply examples? In every walk of life the fall can be traced to the first false step. I date my own condemnation to the literary profession from the day when I posted those *Lines to* ——, to the editor of the *Sandiford Mercury*, and he yielded to my importunity at last (for I had sent him many a poem before), and published them. All young poets write *To* ——, and all young prose-writers lay the scene of their stories 'not a hundred miles from L——;' whether from motives of delicacy, or because they have no superfluous imagination to spare for the invention of names, I am unable, at this distance of time, to recollect; but the practice, I now feel, detracts from the interest of their stories. One cannot feel very much wrapped up in either people or places who can only boast of an initial letter, such as the 'M or N' in the Baptismal Service.

Let me then here avoid that youthful error. My name and direction in full, at the period of which I write, was Marmaduke Drake, Esq., of Hershell Point, Hampshire; but I was not often addressed by that title, by reason of my tender years. I was more commonly called Master Marmaduke, and even Master Marmy, though this latter I resented as a liberty. Sangaree Tannajee, my uncle's Hindu servant (a most important person in this history), was one of those who invariably called me 'Master Marmy;' and in revenge I called him Sambo Whether I devised this term of reproach by some subtle process, such as is used by commentators, out of the word Sangaree, which was his 'front' name, or whether, dividing all mankind into two races, black and white, I dubbed him a nigger, I cannot recall to mind; but I know it made Sangaree Tannajee exceedingly angry to be called 'Sambo,' and that I often did it. I hated that Hindu with an intensity only known to boyhood, a period of life which resents difference of colour, of opinion, and even of taste, with ludicrous violence; and it is the fixed opinion of my riper years, that he, on his part, would have derived considerable pleasure from chopping off one by one all my fingers and toes, or roasting my juvenile carcass before a tardy fire. On the other hand, perhaps my imagination may have given his character a few uncharitable touches, inasmuch as he was my model ruffian, the lay-figure whom, in my youthful compositions, I invested with all the passions that defile the human breast: he was my 'Mongol of the Red Hand,' likewise my 'Gory Bandit of the Apennines,' which had appropriate scenery, borrowed from the really romantic features of the neighbourhood of Hershell Point. But for him there would have been no such creation as 'Wildred the Half-caste,' a supposed convert to the principles of the Church of England, but who only used them the better to conceal his designs against the family of R——, residing unsuspectingly in Bengal, but eventually massacred by the natives to the slow music of tom-toms. I mention these works because they are novelties: they were composed between my ninth and my sixteenth year, and have never emerged from the modest retirement of a somewhat illegible

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manuscript. If any publisher, having effected his escape from Hanwell, should have undertaken to put forth the last-named romance, it would have occupied seven volumes quarto, and close printing too. Time was no object, at that period, with so much of it before me, and I did not spare my Uncle Braydon's letter-paper.

Perhaps a few words here regarding my uncle and guardian, as well as proprietor of the house and grounds called Hershell Point, would be only respectful, and cannot be considered out of place. I was an orphan, and entirely dependent upon his generosity, which was great, nay, beyond his means. It seems to me that there are no such uncles now-a-days. In our childhood, the world appears to be composed of parents, brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts, a great many cousins, and a few other people. It takes many years, unless we happen to be very poor, to convince us that the great majority of mankind are not personally interested in our well-being; and Uncle Braydon, whom I shall never see again, unless I get to heaven, took care to keep such knowledge away from me. He was not rich, but he lived upon his own property, and always led me to believe that that would one day or other considerably improve. How this was to happen, was not specified, but it was somehow or other connected with, if not dependent on, Sangaree Tannajee. He had been my uncle's servant in the East Indies, and master and man had seen stormy times together, which in some degree no doubt accounted for their close attachment.

Theophilus Braydon had been no covenanted servant of John Company, sitting quietly under the pagoda tree, while the rupees dropped into his open hand; nor had he as an officer idled his time away in cantonments, while ennui and the climate gnawed his liver. He had attached himself, in what capacity I never knew, to the service of Her Highness the Begum of Bundelbad, a native princess notorious for her wealth, her atrocities, and her partiality to Europeans. How so kind-hearted and agreeable an old fellow as Uncle Theo could have witnessed, far less endured, the tyranny of such an old harridan, for such she certainly was, used to excite my childish wonder; but I have since heard the whole story. He was offered a command in her very irregular cavalry. The uniform, in combination with his very handsome appearance, rendered him irresistible in the eyes of the princess so 'partial to Europeans.' Under pretence of his having a genius for accounts, of which he knew absolutely nothing, she made him steward of her household, and after a prolonged resistance, wedded him *vi et armis*, although she was nearly three times his age. I have a portrait of my aunt by marriage now lying before me, painted by a native artist; and certain therefore, if he valued his head, to be at least no unflattering likeness. 'Rich and rare are the gems she wears.' She has not, indeed, 'a human thigh-bone in her hair,' because she has not enough capillary attraction to sustain such an ornament, but she has a ring of immense value through her nose. Her royal features are of a maple complexion, upon which circumstance she prided herself exceedingly (most of the ladies of her court being of a mahogany colour); and they shine exactly like a dining-room table that has just been hand-polished. Her ears are of a truly regal size, the enormous weight of their rich pendants depressing them below her shoulders. She has 'as much gay gold about her middle as would buy half Northumberlee,' and I should imagine even the whole of it. 'Her feet beneath her petticoat like little mice peep in and out,' or rather they would do so if they were about a tenth of their size; as it is, they rather protrude than peep. The Begum of Bundelbad was, in fact, severely afflicted with elephantiasis. Except for these imperfections, she might perhaps have been a charming woman, but for the expression of her eyes, which was demoniacally wicked and cruel. It was her habit, Sambo once informed me, to cause all women whom she considered more beautiful than herself to be buried alive, their cries (see *Wildred the Half-caste*) being drowned by the noise of tom-toms. Fortunately, she was very conceited, so the occurrence did not take place so often as one would imagine.

In the military service of this Princess, as the steward of her household, and finally as her lawful husband, with the title of Maharajah, my dear uncle passed many years—the last ones, I fear, not altogether of honeymoon happiness. It was an ill-assorted union at the best. In friendship, difference of age is nothing:

> We talked with open heart and tongue
> Affectionate and true;
> A pair of friends, though I was young,
> And Matthew seventy-two.

But in love—my uncle being young, and the Begum seventy-two, for instance—this disparity became of consequence: there were earth-shakings, and then a final eruption and diaruption; many brawls, and one frightful blow-up, in which but too many innocent persons were implicated. After my uncle's escape, which he accomplished in the company of his faithful servant, Sangaree Tannajee, the irritated princess planted a whole garden with her maids of honour, dibbled them in in rows like scarlet-runners, to 'make them remember' (such was her bitter phrase) the fugitive soldier's escapade. The ex-maharajah and his much-reduced staff had to cut their way through some of his late subjects. His pension as king-consort was not, as you may easily imagine, continued after this occurrence; although, I believe, he did contrive that the quarrel should take place at the beginning of the quarter. But my dear uncle brought away with him much of what may be called his 'personalty'—as many of the costly presents which the Begum had showered upon him in her misplaced passion as his horse could carry; and it was with the proceeds of the sale of these articles—sufficient to stock a fancy bazaar—that Hershell Point was bought, and the maintenance of our household secured.

I do not for a moment pretend that any sentiment of affection for that abominable old Begum prevented my uncle's marrying again after her

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death, or, for that matter, while she was alive. They had not been wedded in church, you see, or even at a register-office; that Bundelbad ceremony, consisting, as it probably did, in the burning of cedar chips and the burial of young persons alive, would not have held water in any English court of law; but his experience of the married state had been such as to determine Uncle Theo to remain a bachelor to the end of his days; and, fortunately for me, he stuck to his determination. 'I shall never marry, my dear boy,' he once observed to me. 'When I am gone, this little place will be your own, and I hope you will have a better income to keep it up with;' and then his eye would wander significantly towards Sangaree Tannajee pulling up onions in the garden, with an expression of countenance as though he was losing caste by the operation, and thereby consigning himself to perpetual perdition. It was impossible, in that moment of generous kindness, that I could ask my benefactor what that ill-looking old Hindu could possibly have to do with my future prospects; and when an opportunity did offer itself of putting this question, Uncle Theo, instead of replying with his usual frankness, returned an evasive answer. 'That Tannajee,' said he, 'is a Perfect Treasure, Marmy, and I would not lose him for ten thousand pounds.'

I have wandered from the relation of my literary pursuits, as I wander from all else, at the mention of that mystery of our household—that great, unintelligible Tannajee, whose story, to my mind, like Aaron's serpent, swallows up all other stories by virtue of its wonderful attraction.

Let me now endeavour to resume my own humble narrative.—I have said that I was a poet; nor was it to be wondered at that an impressionable youth, brought up among folks with so strange an experience of life as my uncle and his servant had had, and amid scenery so noble as that which surrounded our place of abode, should have acquired some romantic tastes, even though he should not have been born with them. I believe, however, that I was naturally endowed with something of the faculty divine of song, the germ of what might have ripened into worthy fruit, had sunshine and favouring breezes nurtured it to maturity, as they did at first. I think so now, but I felt quite convinced of it in the days of those *Lines to* ——. What golden days they were, from the breezy morn, when I arose and ran down to the shore, leaping from rock to rock, to the calm summer night, when I lay awake, watching the broad path of the moon upon the waves, and listening to their dreamy melody! Hershell Point was, as its name implies, a narrow headland, stretching far into the sea. Upon one side, the ocean lay illimitable, without hint of land, although the wizard clouds would often shape themselves on the horizon into wild mountain-ranges; but on the other it was bounded, although a great way off, by tall white cliffs. The sea-breezes never died, but whispered soft and cool upon the calmest day; and in the winter weather raged and roared, especially if they set from the south-west, like let-loose demons. The coast at that time (for a light-house has been set up since upon the very site of our cottage) was strewed with wreck on mornings after storm. The neighbouring burial-ground (there was no church), which, small as it was, would have sufficed for the needs of many generations of the scanty native population, was filled with graves of shipwrecked strangers. Many and many a time—as I have been walking on the golden sands, when the waves, after a night of furious passion, were glittering with ten thousand smiles, and breaking into laughter on the beach—have I seen, huddled up above high-water line, some shapeless form, which once was man or boy, and have straightway run up the 'cripple' path—the ladder cut in the steepest part of the cliff, but the shortest way to the village—to let the sexton know that he was wanted. The incident was too common to terrify me, but I had a morbid horror of such spectacles, and fled from them. Still oftener, in the dead of night, I have been awakened by the boom of guns, and knew that one of the vast fleet of ships which every day passed by us with their unknown companies upon their unknown way, would never complete its journey, but would give our coast its timbers, and our bay its dead. There was small hope for any vessel that once struck upon that fair but inhospitable shore, and especially at night. My uncle, kindly soul, never failed, however, to give his utmost aid. While I was still wondering whether I indeed heard guns or only the roaring wind, he would often enter my chamber dressed, and bid me hasten to the village, and bring what help I could, while the Hindu and himself went down to the shore.

It was to Hershell Point, from its position, that the news of such disasters was always carried first, for the hamlet lay inland. Although its people were mainly fisher-folk they obeyed my summons eagerly enough; I do not say from greed, nor yet entirely from philanthropy; their motives were mixed. They would save life if they could; but they would also save property, with the intention of keeping it for themselves. Their cottage-furniture, or at least what was best of it, was mainly provided in this manner; their upholsterers, so to speak, were Ship, Sea, Wind, & Co., who, moreover, dealt in miscellaneous goods of all sorts. At one time we were glutted with sponges, a cargo of which, from the West Indies, was discharged in this summary manner without invoice; at another, oranges and lemons bobbed up and down upon the surface of our little cove as plentifully as air-bubbles. Some sorts of goods suffered greatly in the process of delivery; but there was really no reason for the bitter complaints that ensued on such occasions, since we got them all for nothing.

Hershell folks had been all smugglers in the last generation, but in my time there was but little of that illicit commerce. The legends of 'the Free-traders,' as they called themselves, were probably more romantic than their deeds had ever been; and to know that a 'good run' had been effected in this or that adjacent cove, not without bloodshed, or that the great cavern in Sandcliff had been once a dépôt for brandy and lace, added to the imaginative attractions of the neighbourhood. Similarly, these wrecks were almost more terrible to think of—to be awake while those minute-guns boomed, and picture the calamity for one's self—than to witness; so little of them could generally be seen by reason of the fury of the waves and the force of the tempest. They were close at hand, for it was on the reef below the Point that they came ashore; but the blinding spray shut most of the sad sight out, and the thunder of the breakers drowned all other sounds. Feeble lights would shew themselves on board the doomed ships, only to be

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extinguished by the next wave; figures running hither and thither, or lashed to the rigging, with tossing arms; and then, when some monster wave whelmed all, a single desolate cry, which, amid that elemental strife, sounded but as the whine of a seagull.

Such incidents, such memories as these, had something of melodrama in them as well as of pathos; and they impressed my youthful mind accordingly.

I had heard stories of peril and combat from the lips of one who had himself been engaged in such scenes. I had myself witnessed spectacles, any one of which might form the *pièce de résistance* in a full-grown man's reminiscences, while children of my own age were elsewhere digging sand-heaps with wooden spades, or hunting for common objects of the sea-shore with a pail and a magnifying-glass. It is no wonder, therefore, and no feather in my cap at all, that it might have been said of me at fifteen years of age that 'young Edwin was no vulgar boy.' If I had been so, I must have been born with such a natural tendency for the commonplace as to almost amount to genius. Books and magazines, which I devoured, were the only links which connected me with what is called the world. I knew nothing of what others of my own age knew—no Greek nor Latin, no cricket nor football. I had never been on horseback in my life—had never enjoyed a tuck-out at a pastrycook's. On the other hand, I could climb—not trees—for we had no trees to be called such, but cliffs, like a chamois-hunter; I could run swifter than that 'best pony in the country,' which belongs to every schoolboy whose father can afford to keep it; I could swim like a fish, and dive like one of those long-throated cormorants which haunted Hershell Reef at low-water. I lived in the sea and the open air. The martins who had their nest under the eaves above my bedroom window were my chamberlains to call me in the summer mornings, and I was commonly up and out soon after sunrise. It was a grand thing to have the world all to myself—not a creature on the downland above the cliff-top, nor yet on the broken ground, all rock and foliage, that lay between it and the beach; not even a sheep or a cow, as would often be seen later in the day, standing statue-like on the summit of some solitary eminence, clear cut against the sky.

It is only bird and insect life that are astir in the matin prime. How solemn, although vague and inarticulate, is the lesson that Nature teaches us at such a time in that great out-door school of hers—how different from what is preached and taught in chapel and seminaries! We seem to be like him of old who walked alone with God in the garden. It might be the first morning that ever was made.

I was not without religious culture; a loving mother had lived long enough to implant those principles in my childish breast which had made her death-bed (save for her solicitude on my account) like the setting off upon a pleasure-cruise; but besides that, I had the devotional impulse which belongs to the poetic temperament, and although quite unaware how the world looked outside my Eden, I felt grateful to Providence for having placed me where I was. My uncle Theo, despite his name, was no theologian, but he encouraged me to believe all I ever heard from my mother's lips, to do all she had enjoined upon me, and to cherish her memory. A beautiful loving face, with tearful hazel eyes, and soft brown hair, is all the picture; but it hangs in that portrait-gallery of the past, for which every earthly house not built with hands has room, the tenderest and best remembered still of all. I fear her history was not a happy one, but I am not acquainted with its details; she has long been at rest from all troubles, and reaps the promised harvest of God's golden grain.

I think it was her sorrows that first moved my uncle's heart towards me; he always spoke of her with inexpressible pity and tenderness. We needed his protection sorely; indeed, I have a dim recollection (although this may not be trustworthy) that we sought it of him at Hershell Point on foot; but, at all events, he had sheltered us both for years; and when she left us for the churchyard on the cliff, he filled her place towards me as well as he could, as also that of the father whom I never knew. Thus, in a vague and desultory manner, have I pictured the home of my boyhood and its surroundings, just as they recur to my mind, disconnectedly and vaguely enough, but not without a certain harmonious completeness too, like the chords of a harp struck by the wayward wind.

CHAPTER II.—MY FIRST LOVE.

Doubtless, other boys immured in school-rooms, and kept close to their books, would have gladly left them for such delights as mine; while, on the other hand, I, to whom all days were alike holidays, was intensely fond of reading. I do not doubt but that at sixteen years old I had read more English fiction and English poetry than any lad of my own age at public school or private. From Mary Ann Radcliffe to G. P. R. James; from Shakspeare to Tennyson—I had read all that I could lay my hands on. I had quite exceptional opportunities for this sort of study. In a certain little town six miles away (and yet that which lay nearest to us), dwelt one Mrs Eleanor Blunt, whose name was once a household word among all readers, although the present generation hears of it only now and then. She had built herself a charming little cottage close by the sea, all out of the proceeds of her works, and kept herself, an attached old maid-servant or two, and a pony and chaise, by her diligent pen. The knowledge of these circumstances had always excited in me the profoundest veneration; my enthusiasm was ready laid, like a housemaid's fire, so that it is not to be wondered at that when chance gave me an opportunity, when quite a small boy, of becoming personally acquainted with her, I fell in love with her at once. Our ages were more disproportionate than those of my uncle and the Begum had been; but my devotion was of a more Platonic kind. She had seemed to me to be like some celestial body seen afar, whose orbit was altogether beyond my humble sphere, although I was not without a secret hope that my literary talents might some day attract her sublime regards. I was always picturing for myself some success in literature which should bring Mrs Eleanor Blunt over to Hershell, to make the acquaintance of her gifted young neighbour, whereas our acquaintance was destined to be brought about in an altogether different manner. I had been strolling along our cliff-road so far as where it met the main highway, one afternoon, when I suddenly heard a jingling of wheels, and there flew by me a small vehicle, with a tiny old lady in it, drawn by

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an audacious little pony at full gallop. Confident that a person of her age and sex could not be driving at this speed for a wager, and also perceiving that she was clutching the splash-board instead of the reins, I started in pursuit. I could at that time have run down an antelope (in the shafts of a four-wheeled chaise), so that it did not at all exhaust my energies to catch and stop the pony.

'Thank you, young gentleman,' said the old lady in a sharp squeaky voice: 'you have got good legs, and likewise lungs.' It was those personal qualities, then, and not my style as a British classic, which first drew forth Mrs Eleanor Blunt's approbation. I knew the famous old lady at once. The diminutive figure, the huge head, the snow-white locks, the bright, black, beady eyes had been made familiar to me by her portraits. I regarded her with undisguised admiration. Here was the individual who had won the hearts of an entire generation—nay, who had moved old and young alike to smiles and tears: she was the prose-poet of the country; the narrator of village joys and sorrows; the word-painter of woods and fields, and yet she had not appealed in vain even to the dull ears of fashion, but had filled the two greatest London theatres, and that at the same time, by her stirring dramas.

'Perhaps, young gentleman,' said she in a voice like that of Punch, but nodding very good-naturedly, 'when this gratuitous exhibition is over—when you have stared at me to your heart's content, you will just turn my pony's head round, and fasten his curb.—My dear little *Proudfoot* would never have run away, would he,' inquired she of the pony coaxingly, 'but that his curb came undone?'

The little creature (whose curb was quite as it should be) shook his head, snorted, pawed with his fore-foot, and answered, as far as pantomime could: 'Yes, I would, and I'll do it again.' It was quite impossible to misunderstand him.

'Madam,' said I, with my best air, 'it will give me the utmost pleasure to see you safe to Sandiford—to drive you thither, if you will permit me.' I had never taken a pair of reins into my hands in my life; but I could have driven a fiery griffin with packthread, for the chance of a *tête-à-tête* with Mrs Eleanor Blunt.

'You're a good boy,' said she, making room for me on the little seat, 'and a kind-hearted one too, to be so careful of an old woman. Just look to the traces, and then jump in. He's the quietest pony in the world when the trace does not get loose, and vex him—ar'n't you, *Proudfoot*?—Well, and what school are you at, my young friend?'

'I have never been to school at all, madam.'

'What a very lucky boy!' smiled the old lady. 'Never been stuffed with fusty, musty learning, eh? Never been caned? Never been kept in during the fine weather? Never learned to read, perhaps?'

'O yes, ma'am, and to write too,' remarked I with meaning, for I wished, above all things, to bring the conversation round to literature, and eventually to my manuscript works.

'Ah, that's bad,' said the old lady, shaking her head. 'Now, if you had learned to drive instead—you as nearly tipped us over that heap of stones as near could be—I should have liked you a great deal better.—What's that sticking out of your pocket? A book. Let me look at it! Shelley's Poems—and dog-leaved too! Oh, this is very bad indeed—*Alastor, or the Spirit of Solitude.* You read that, do you?—Give me the reins, young gentleman; I am not going to trust my neck to a lad of your age who reads *Alastor!*'

My boyhood had been, I verily believe, a tearless one, but I was within a very little of bursting into tears at this threatened indignity from hands I so revered.

Her bright eyes instantly perceived my emotion.

'I am a very uncivil old woman,' said she, 'and quite deserve to have my neck broken; but I mistook your character altogether, my boy, on account of your having such good legs and lungs. It is very unusual for folks to be strong and clever too, else the hippopotamus would be king of us all. A boy that could catch *Proudfoot* when at full speed—there's the reins under his tail; he's the quietest pony in the world, except when that happens—ought to be all muscles, and wind, and mischief. I thought you were all muscles, and wind, and mischief, and I apologise.—Now, tell me all about yourself. You have no father, of course; but you've a mother, who makes an idol of you, eh?'

'Alas, no, madam; I am an orphan.'

'Well, that's just my case,' said the old woman cheerfully. '*Proudfoot* is as near a relative as I have in the world. That means, you know,' added she in explanation, 'that I have got none; neither chick nor child. I had at one time a first-cousin once removed, but he has been removed altogether these thirty years.—Now, come, *you* are not so much alone in the world, my young Alastor, as all that comes to?'

'O no, madam; I live at Hershell Point with my uncle Braydon.'

'What! is the ex-maharajah your uncle?' exclaimed the old lady with twinkling eyes; and I saw that her fat little frame was convulsed with inward laughter. Doubtless, she was thinking of some gossip of the neighbourhood respecting the deceased Begum of Bundelbad; but I did not understand that at the time, and I did not like her laughing at Uncle Theo.

'My uncle is the best man in the world, madam,' said I with spirit; 'and if you have heard anything to his discredit, I will answer for it that it is a—that your informant, I mean, has been mistaken.'

'Say what you were going to say, young gentleman—say that it is a great big bouncing lie,' said the old lady approvingly. 'I like you for your sticking up for your good uncle, and telling me (by implication) that I was a scandalous old frump, a thousand times more than for your carrying Shelley in your pocket. A good honest heart, my dear, is better worth having than the most tender sensibility.' And from that moment, until her death, which did not take place for many years, Mrs Eleanor Blunt always called me 'my dear.'

She gave me a hearty welcome at her pretty cottage, which, although close to the outskirts of Sandiford, stood in a very bower of fuchsias and roses, all alone by the sea. But it was the inside of the little house that pleased me most. Upstairs and down-stairs, and (quite literally) in my lady's chamber, the walls were lined with books. Paper and paint were rendered unnecessary; the very doors were in some cases whole shelves of books that moved upon a pivot. They were almost all presentation copies. Indeed, I remember Mrs Blunt once telling me that she had gone into the town 'and bought a book,' with the air of a

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person who had been guilty of an inexcusable extravagance. 'No, my dear,' she would squeak like a little white mouse, 'I have written too many books myself to buy such things.' But she was in reality a very glutton at reading, and it was a wonder how her eyes kept so bright and keen. She did not so much 'devour' books—a phrase which gives one some idea, however rude, of digesting them—as 'consume' them in broad acres, and with incredible velocity, like a prairie fire. It is true she never read a 'hard' book. The metaphysicians, to whom she would refer as 'gentlemen who did not know what to think,' stood untouched upon her top-shelves; the divines, for whom she had a great respect—'I would do anything for them except read them, my dear'—were kept in a glass case. Her especial weakness was for French Memoirs, such as those of Madame de Crequi, and even of much queerer ladies. 'They don't hurt me, my dear, but they might hurt you; and, therefore, never ask me for one of them.' But she was familiar with the whole range of English literature, and her memory was prodigious. She had met almost everybody who, according to my then standard, was worth meeting, and had something characteristic to tell of each. I am obliged to confess that she rather destroyed my illusions respecting some of them. She had the sharpest tongue that ever I listened to either of man or woman, and the grasshopper shrillness of her tiny voice added piquancy to her satire. She would often conclude a disparaging anecdote concerning some living literary idol of mine with: 'So don't believe in him, my dear, because, you see, he 's a rogue.'

'But you destroy my faith in all my heroes, Mrs Blunt,' I once remonstrated.

'Yes, my dear; but you must remember that I have been *valet de chambre* to all of them.'

I did not half understand her at that time; her wit was altogether too subtle for me; but I comprehended enough, when she abstained from epigram, to find her even then a most charming companion. She delighted in talk, and I daresay my simple enthusiasm (and perhaps I should add, my genuine admiration for herself) made my juvenile society very palatable to her. The good people of Sandiford did not much frequent Seaview Cottage. They were no great loss, from an intellectual point of view, perhaps; but I think the genial old lady would have enjoyed their gossip, had she been favoured with it. Unhappily, however, the activity of her pen had caused her tongue to fall into disuse. The Sandifordians having come upon certain very life-like descriptions of commonplace people in their local authoress's works, were seized with the idea that she had satirised them in particular; whereas it is my opinion that she never took a single 'character' from that place, nor did I ever hear her speak an ill word against one of her neighbours. Nevertheless, I was myself so prejudiced by what I heard concerning her Sandiford sketches, that when she expressed her intention of calling at Hershell Point on the ensuing day to tell my uncle what a perfect nephew he might have, if he would only teach him to drive, I blurted out involuntarily: 'But you won't put the ex-maharajah into a book, dear Mrs Blunt, will you?'

Then I saw her angry for the first, and almost the last time.

'No, my young friend,' said she in a voice like concentrated bitter aloes, 'I never pepper small game.' A remark, however, which peppered me, I remember, most uncommonly.

COLOURS.

The infirmity known as 'colour-blindness' is much more prevalent than one might suppose; and directors of railways, when selecting candidates for the posts of engine-driver, stoker, or signal-man, are often astounded by the number of candidates they find afflicted with it.

It will seem scarcely credible to those who have themselves good eyes, that three men out of five should be quite unable, at a distance of two hundred yards, to tell a green lantern from a red one. The most astonishing mistakes have been made in this particular. Engine-drivers who in broad daylight could see two miles before them down a straight line, and detect a paving-stone on a rail at fifteen hundred yards off, have been known to rush heedlessly by a danger-signal at midnight, and bring a whole train to destruction. And yet the glasses used in the red lanterns that signify 'Beware' or 'Stop,' are always of immense power, and, on a dark night, ought to be clearly visible to the naked eye at a distance of at least five miles. Similarly, sportsmen who attend horse-races or boat-races are often in doubt as to which colour wins, until the victors are close under their eyes; and this although the jockey's jacket may be of the most flaming hue, and although in other respects than that of colour-seeing these people may have excellent, unerring sight. A sailor who on the night-watch will find it quite impossible to say which glass is 'up' at Eddystone or Bell Rock, may be the first next morning to cry out 'Land' from the top of a shaking mast-head. When a mistake is made between colours, the error is almost always attributed to this peculiar obliquity of vision, and colour-blindness itself is said to proceed from malformation of the eye. But every rule has an exception; and there are cases in which confusions are made between one hue and another, without the eye of the seer being in any great way to blame.

Some years ago, a lady had ordered of one of the best house-decorators in Paris two varieties of paper for a villa of hers at Passy. She had imagined the patterns herself: one paper was to be crimson, with black *fleurs-de-lis;* and the other green, with pale gray figurings. The order was sent to the manufacturers, and the paper fabricated; but when the first samples were forwarded to Passy, the lady returned them, saying a mistake had been made. The fleurs-de-lis on the crimson were green, she added, and the figurings on the green paper pink. The shopman who was the bearer of the samples could not help telling his master that he was quite of the same way of seeing as the lady; and the decorator himself, as he examined the specimens, was fain to own that his order had not been executed. The patterns were accordingly returned to the manufacturers; but hereupon a dispute arose, for the latter swore by all the saints that the black they had used was of the deepest jet; and as for the gray figurings, 'they had mixed colours long enough,' they cried, 'to know the difference between gray and pink.' As the altercation was serious, an 'expert' was called upon to decide; and this he did by taking a sheet of white note-paper, and cutting out in it

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some fleurs-de-lis of the exact size and form of those on the samples. He then applied the note-paper to the latter, so as completely to hide the crimson ground; and the flowers, which had seemed green, at once stood out in deep black. The experiment was repeated on the green paper with the same success: the figurings which every one had declared pink were shewn beyond doubt to be pale gray: and the lady, the decorator, and the shopman had to acknowledge themselves in the wrong.

A mistake of this kind would scarcely be possible now-a-days, for an upholsterer would take care to warn his customers in time, in the event of their giving him so eccentric an order; but it is not so very long since that the theory of the modification of tints by juxtaposition has become universally known, and even now there may yet be persons who have something to learn on the subject.

Here is an experiment familiar enough to school-boys: Take a square of scarlet paper or silk, and fix it upon a white ground; look then intently at it for a few seconds, and the scarlet will seem to have a slight bordering of green. Again, gaze fixedly at the scarlet square during half a minute, and then turn your eyes suddenly upon a sheet of white paper, an optical illusion will cause you to see upon the white ground a square of the same size as the red one, only of a pale green tint. The eye which has been looking at red invariably lends a green hue to whatever it may gaze on next; and, conversely, the eye which has stared at green, gives to surrounding objects a tinge of red. These two colours, red and green, are said from this fact to be *complemental* to each other.

In the same way, *violet* is the complement of *pale yellow*, *blue* of *orange*, *indigo* of *orange-yellow*; and the results predicted in the experiments with red and green will be obtainable in a similar trial with each of these pairs respectively.

One of the properties of complemental colours is to make up *white* by mutual blending; that is, that white light being composed of different coloured rays, when it falls upon an object, one portion of these rays is absorbed, the other rays are reflected; and the object appears to be coloured by these last. But these absorbed rays and these reflected rays would, if blended again, re-form the white light of which they are the elements; hence a second reason for the term *complemental*.

Let us say a few words now about those phenomena which have been technically called *simultaneous contrasts*.

It is admitted as an axiom that 'different colours always appear most dissimilar when placed side by side;' in other words, that the juxtaposition of various colours has the effect of making what differences exist in their respective tints stand out most strikingly. To illustrate this, let two skeins of wool be taken, of the same crimson dye and quite identical: let us term them C and C′. After this, let us take two other skeins of paler crimson dye, D and D′, and place them thus:

C C′D′ D

The two skeins C′ and D′ being juxtaposed—that is, touching each other—the skein C′, although of precisely the same hue as the skein C, will then appear darker than it; whilst, on the other hand, the skein D′, although exactly similar to the pale skein D, will seem to be lighter of hue than the latter.. Thus, when a dark tint is placed next to a light one, the dark appears to become yet darker, and the light still lighter; the dissimilarity between colours being always heightened by juxtaposition.

Here is a second experiment. Take a sheet of paper, and divide it into five compartments—1, 2, 3, 4, 5—and give to each a coating of Indian ink. When the ink is dry, give a second coating to all but the *first* compartment; after that, a third coating to all but the *first* and *second;* and so on to the end, until compartment 5 has received five coatings; compartment 4, four coatings; compartment 3, three coatings; &c.

At first thought, it would seem that the paper thus painted would have five compartments of different blackness, each separate compartment being, however, of a uniform tint throughout; and such, indeed, would be the case were the paper cut up into five strips, and each strip looked at by itself; but the effect produced by the juxtaposition of the five compartments is not by any means the same. Compartment 2, for instance, instead of appearing one-hued throughout, will appear to be of two different tints—that on the side of column 1 being considerably darker than that on the side of column 3; and similarly, compartment 4 will seem, like 2 and 3, to be painted with two shades of black—one dark, on the side next to 3, and the other light, on the side juxtaposed to 5.

Coming now to other colours, let us see what will happen if we place orange and violet, green and violet, &c. together.

Painters, it must be remembered, acknowledge but three prime colours—blue, red, and yellow. All other tints are compounds of these. Violet is made up of blue and red; green, of blue and yellow; orange, of red and yellow. In the case, then, of violet and green juxtaposed, each colour has one element, blue, in common. But this similarity on one point makes the dissimilarity on the others stand out more clearly, so that the green on the violet appears more yellow, whilst the violet, on the other hand, appears more red. In like manner, if orange and green be taken—the yellow element in the one cancelling, so to say, the yellow in the other—the orange will assume a reddish tone, and the green a bluish one.

The foregoing examples suffice to give an idea as to the law of 'simultaneous contrasts.' It remains now to be seen how this knowledge of the property of juxtapositions may be turned to good account.

One of the most laudatory things that can be said of a painter is, that he is 'a good colourist,' that is, that he knows well how to sort his colours. At first, this would seem to be no great praise, and the merit of a well-coloured picture might be thought to be principally with the tradesman who furnished the artist with his box of paints. But go some day to the Louvre, or the National Gallery, and watch a beginner copying a Raphael, a Reubens, or a Titian. What is it, you will exclaim, that prevents the man from copying the colours he sees before him? Why does he put pink where his model has put crimson; sea-green, where the latter has placed gray; orange where the 'maestro' has set ochre? If you consult the artist himself, he will tell you, of course, that it is not his fault; that Raphael and his compeers mixed their own colours, and that their secret has died with them. 'We cannot get colours like those now,' he will add dolefully; and not until some

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years after, when he has become a 'Membre de l'Institut,' or an 'R.A.,' will he own that it was not Mr A. or Mr B.'s colours that were bad, but his own craft that was feeble.

A painter who understands his art, knows well that the science of colouring must form a long study of itself. A beginner who wishes to draw a soldier in a red coat and blue trousers, will naïvely look amongst his paints, and daub the tunic of his subject with scarlet all over; after this, he will single out Prussian-blue, and proceed in the same spirit to sketch the nether garments. When this is done, he will look at his work, and find round the rim of the tunic in contact with the trousers a slight edging of orange yellow, for which he had never bargained; and provided he have only put a few ochre spots on the soldier's coat in guise of buttons, he will be not a little surprised to find each of these encircled with a rim of verdigris. 'Make thy scarlet more crimson as it nears the trousers, O man! dip the end of thy brush in green to make the pantaloons less blue where they touch the coat; remember that a tinge of violet will do no harm to the yellow that is meant for buttons; and then, but not before, will thy soldier be presentable.'

When a picture is sent to the tapestry-maker's, to be copied in wool-work, the most ridiculous blunders are made, if the workman be not thoroughly skilled in the science of colouring. He will lay white and scarlet side by side, and marvel to find a green rim betweeen them. 'I can't make it out at all,' he growls. The foreman shrugs his shoulders, and holds out to him a skein of pale gray. 'Put this instead of your flaming white on the lines where the two colours meet; and instead of that glaring scarlet, take this dark pink to lay along the gray.' The workman obeys, and the green rim disappears. But elsewhere is a poor wretch trying to insert a ray of yellow between two lines of violet and black. 'What are you doing?' shouts the foreman. —'Looking for a suitable shade of yellow,' groans the well-meaning dunce.—'Let the yellow be,' is the answer: 'take your brightest violet and your deepest black where the borders touch, and the yellow will come by itself.' And so it does.

One might write a great deal on the subject of these pictorial blunders and the way to correct them, but we shall better employ our time by concluding with some practical hints and observations that may be useful to others than painters.

An upholsterer should be very choice in the colours of stuffs he adapts to different varieties of wood. It is a mistake to cushion a mahogany chair with scarlet. That colour is too bright, and the mahogany beside it loses brilliancy, and becomes like walnut-wood. Many people, however, who love the colour crimson, insist upon putting it with mahogany. In these cases, to counteract the glaring effect of the assortment, it is well to put a black or a green braid on the border, where the cloth and the wood come in contact; or if not this, then an edging of yellow silk, or, better still, of gold-lace with gilt nails.

Those who desire to paper their rooms anew will do well to remember that on red, crimson, and amaranth coloured grounds, *black* looks *green*. In the same way, black upon green loses all its lustre, and *vice versâ*. Orange upon red hurts the eyesight; violet upon blue looks washed out; blue upon green looks spinach colour by candle-light; and gray, as we have already said, when sorted with green, very often comes out pink.

It having become a custom now-a-days to print advertisements for dead-walls in all the colours of the rainbow, we may tell those speculators who are anxious that their puffs should be seen as far off as possible, that the rule to follow is, that in all cases the colour of the letters should be *complemental* to the ground on which they are printed. Black on a white ground, violet on yellow, red on green, blue on orange, will strike the eye at once.

A word now to gardeners.

Nothing is less brilliant than flower-beds in which the only colours to be seen are blue and white; nothing is more gaudily ugly than a garden stocked with a profusion of yellow and little else. It is very unsatisfactory also to find flowers of the same colour, but of different shades, placed near each other; and all these errors of taste should be avoided. In order that a garden may be showy and attractive, blue flowers should be placed near to dark yellow or orange; violet next to yellow; and red dahlias, roses, pinks, and geraniums should be surrounded with verdure and white.

We shall perhaps astonish Rifle corps on the look-out for a uniform, by telling them that the uniforms which last longest are those that offer the greatest contrasts in point of colours. The uniforms that last shortest are those in which cap, tunic, and trousers are of the same colour. Some riflemen are in the habit of wearing their uniform trousers and cap when off drill; this is especially the case with those whose uniform trousers are gray or whity brown, and the harm is not great where the uniform tunic is of a different hue. But too often it happens that the whole suit is alike; and then the valiant rifleman, when he dons his tunic for parade, is quite astonished at the queer look his trousers have. He has been wearing them perhaps every day, because he likes them, and thinks he looks well in them; but the tunic the while has been lying in a drawer, and the consequence is, that when dressed for drill, the Volunteer's coat looks spick-span new, and his trousers, by contrast, outrageously shabby.

The most showy and most durable of uniforms is the scarlet and green, with silver, not gold lace. The smartest and at the same time most suitable and lasting uniform for a rifleman would be a light gray tunic, with bright green collar and cuffs, double row of silver buttons, and green beading round the edges of the coat; green trousers, with a stripe of paler green; and gray kepi-cap, with green band and slight edging of silver. Such a uniform would look bright and new until it were worn threadbare.

Ladies, of all persons, are most bound to use taste in their selection of colours, and we must do French women, in particular, the justice to own that they usually dress to perfection. English women, of late years, have made progress in the science or art of the 'toilette.' But still some grievous mistakes are at times committed on our side of the Channel; and it would be well if young ladies who study drawing would at times consult their masters on the delicate subject of blending colours.

Let fair-haired beauties abstain from pink, a colour which makes them pale. Let dark-haired maidens take that colour, and remember also that no hue suits *them* so well as saffron. No colour

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is so well suited to chestnut hair as lapis-lazuli blue; and the *bleu d'azur*, the *Eton* blue, as it is called in London, is the true *parure des blondes*.

SAVAGES I HAVE KNOWN.

Let me first make a careful distinction. There are savages of civilisation and savages of real savagery; it is of the latter class I would endeavour to record a few sketchy reminiscences. Many persons, of delicate perceptions and estimable character, feel no scruple—rather a great inward contentment—in applying the epithet 'savage' to each and all of their friends who fail to catch the divine excellence of Mr Rossetti's colour, or the celestial harmonies of Mr Whistler's Japanese views of Chelsea, or the majolica of the Marchese Ginori, or the views of Comte and Charles Fourier, or, in fact, the merit of any curious craze which chances to meet their own approval. Not that I myself sit in judgment upon any man's hobby, or venture to declare an admiration or an antipathy on any subject of art or philosophy whatsoever. As one who has lived much, travelled far, and seen many lands and several cities, I have learned to respect the ideas of men, and to wonder in silence where I cannot agree; I have learned also—or flatter myself in so thinking—to waive the expression of my views upon a subject which I do not understand; though views a reasonable man *must* have—whether he know much or little, or nothing at all—upon every subject. Therefore, wiser in this respect, as I love to think, than the pastors of the daily press, I will leave in peace the social and artistic barbarians who swarm, as we are told, in this our native land, and tell only my experiences of the real, unquestioned, conscientious savages who have crossed my wayward path in the odd nooks of this big world which I have girdled.

How the memories come back to me! Memories of laughter and of fear, of downright, honest, side-splitting mirth, of deadly danger, of pleasant 'camaraderie;' memories of lonely wood and sunny river; of camp, and hut, and ruin; every recollection intensified and warmed by a flash of glittering eyes, brown limbs, and honest, manly, wondering faces, pleasant to recall. For I strive to dwell upon my savage *friends* only in these retrospective visions. Too much, I think, have we heard of the horror and ferocity of simple nature—too much, perhaps, do we know; I might tell stories, like another, of the bad men one meets in this land and that, but it is not my wish. Let the recollection of a child's evil habits die with its growth; let us remember only the little one's funny ways—its drolleries and quaint innocence; lest, since the sins of men are writ in brass, while the good 'is oft interred with their bones,' we come to hate and dread the whole generation of children, because, from ignorance, they are cruel now and then; from ignorance, are treacherous; from ignorance, unteachable. I think it is the devoir of every Christian man to speak lightly and kindly of those who are to him but as the beasts that have no revelation, to guide them with his knowledge. And if, by good or bad fortune, he have wandered much among the darker places of the earth, and have gathered unusual knowledge of those who dwell therein, he should not, for a small self-glory, magnify the horrors of his sojourn, but rather point out the good that lies hid in the dim and obscure nature of the savage.

I will take in order the best types of the child-man whom, by good-fortune, as I count it, I have had the opportunity of studying. I will begin in Africa, pass on to Asia, return by Europe—where there is still, as I shall shew, a real, unintelligible, naked savage of savagery—and thence across the wide Atlantic to America.

He must have been a very Lavater, a Morton, a Gliddon, or a Thurnam, who at first sight had recognised Hassan Beni Something as a savage pure and simple, as in truth he was, and, if yet alive, is, I doubt not, still. He was the earliest type I met of this great family, and even yet the most incomprehensible to me. There are many in England who will recognise handsome Hassan; nay—for I think he reads English—it is not impossible that he will recognise himself in studying the back numbers of *Chambers's Journal* in some sweltering calm upon his native Nile. For Hassan is, or was, a dragoman, and a favourite with dukes and earls, and Englishmen generally, whom he has safely piloted along the glorious river. Should he see this notice of himself, I know it will not offend nor move him, as you shall shortly understand.

I first saw Hassan in the veranda or porch of Shepherd's Hotel, when, almost a boy, I set forth upon my travels. Seeing him there, with his beautiful face—so soft in colour and feature, so spirited in expression—with his graceful form wrapped in the joyous costume of a wealthy Arab—Nizam jacket of brown satin, sapur or waistcloth of Persian gold-work, trousers of purple silk, and tarboosh swathed in a handkerchief brighter than flowers—I stood and gazed, being yet fresh to oriental types, and thought that the more delicate style of manly beauty could never by possibility find an embodiment more exquisitely perfect. I spoke to him, and he answered in good English, but with a tone, not disobliging perhaps, but tinged with a certain assumption of superiority, which I did not then in the least comprehend. While we talked, some ladies galloped up the wide and dreary street from Boulak, and halted their donkeys beneath us at the steps of the hotel. They were fresh young girls, rather noisy, very red and hot, having perhaps something more than the average of healthy strength in their limbs and of loud mirth in their voices; but why, I wondered in innocence—why did Hassan draw together his fine eyebrows so very darkly? and why did he spit over his shoulder in that spiteful manner? Seeking the clue, I led our conversation to the topic of native customs in regard to women; but Hassan grimly remarked at once: 'Sir, we poor Arabs have a proverb: A man never talks of his treasure till he has lost it!'

I pondered this oracle for a while, and failing to see its meaning—though dimly conscious that some very fearful rebuke was contained therein—boldly inquired whether so handsome a fellow had a wife, or two, or a dozen.

Hassan gave a sudden start, spat furiously, and with trembling fingers, snatched a document from his belt. 'There, sir,' he said, thrusting the unintelligible characters under my nose—'Hassan Beni Something is a dragoman, licensed by the pacha. He's no slave of yours!'

Half-laughing, half-remorseful, I soothed the fiery fellow; and, in a stately manner, he agreed to pass over my offence.

After this, accident threw me a great deal in

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Hassan's way, and I had full opportunity of studying a character of the East which we in England know nothing and think nothing of. The handsome dragoman was a passionate fanatic for his religion; and though scarcely twenty-five years of age, I suppose, could already boast of two conversions. He knew the Koran by heart, of course; and not the Koran only, but a dozen minor prophets of his creed. Finding me very inquisitive, and a capital listener to his marvellous tales, and philosophy not less marvellous, Hassan entertained sanguine hopes of rescuing yet another soul from the devil's claws. I did not know until afterwards what overpowering ambition it was which made the fanatic so tolerant of my continual offences against his code of ethics, many of which, I fear, were committed in pure mischief; but twelve months after, I was assured, on authority not to be mistaken, that prayers had been offered, and hopefully too, on my behalf, by no less a person than the chief dervish of the college at Boulak, my very good friend. It is not every man who can boast that his welfare was so much a care to strangers; and even now, I feel no little pride in thinking that an old man, good and sincere, should have prayed for the safety of my soul, though it were to a false prophet.

But to return to Hassan. One by one, not without difficulty, I drew out those wonderful opinions and beliefs, the discovery of which leads me to class this most elegant of dandies, the favourite of peers and princesses, among the very grossest savages in my long list. His philosophy was of the simplest, and may be thus stated: This world was created perfect and holy by Allah; every change, spiritual or physical, that had since altered the face of things, was contrived by the influence of Shaitan: therefore were the nations most advanced most sinful.

'See,' Hassan remarked to me one day at the railway-station in Cairo—'see the devil's sign in this your greatest invention! Fire is his emblem and chief agent; smoke is the token of him; noise and confusion his invariable followers. Are they not all here for a witness? Your railway-trains and your manufactories are taking you all to perdition, sir!'

'Bravo, Hassan!' I replied. 'Yet you do not disdain to profit by our condemnation.'

'I am holy, and the devil serves me,' returned the dragoman with the calmness of conviction.

This was hopeless.

'How can you consent to be a servant of Infidels?' I asked one day.

'I trust that the sight and contact of a believer may turn their wretched minds,' he replied. 'And I thirst to see the holy place at Mecca.'

I was somewhat struck with a remark he made in answer to my inquiry: 'Would you die for your faith, Hassan?'

'Yes, sir. I would *fight* until I died a thousand times.'

Sometimes—when his hopes of me rose to a sanguine point, I suppose—Hassan even spoke about his family. 'How many converts have you made?' I asked.

'Two, sir. There was a girl also.'

'A girl? Who was she?'

'An Abyssinian slave, sir, whom I bought and married. The white ladies at Alexandria had taught her their false religion, or enough of it to turn her head. I converted her to the truth. She is now devout, as far as a woman can be so.'

'And how did you convince the girl? Did you beat her?'

Hassan gazed at me steadily, with that oriental calm which is the substitute for a Frenchman's shrug, an Italian's 'che!' or an Englishman's loudly phrased disgust.

'You did not beat her? Did you argue with her, then? No? Of course not! A girl! How was the result effected?'

'I told my women to convert her, and it was done.'

'How?' I insisted with boyish pertinacity.

'She is a very good and pious Mussulman.'

'But how did it come about?'

The rare and soon-veiled glance of humour came to Hassan's eyes. 'I don't know,' he said; 'I didn't ask; but—I saw a large pin lying about when I returned home!'

'And with what instrument did you secure your other proselytes? A thumbscrew? There's a good deal of business done hereabouts with a common ladder, I've heard, or even with a bucket and a wasp's nest. Which is your favourite tool for converting folks?'

'Sir,' replied Hassan with dignity, 'I have told you the other two were *men!*'

Yet this strange fellow had supported his stepmother in idleness for many years, and had pinched himself to marry his sisters respectably, and to their own wish.

I bade adieu to Hassan among the mud-built huts of El Luxor, firing a last shot at his philosophy as I turned towards the Nile. 'See these mighty ruins,' I said, 'built by pagans; see these kennels of the true believers built among them. If, without sin, you may command the devil, would it not be well to set him at work among your brethren?'

'Nay,' replied the fanatic; 'for there are weak hearts even among the faithful, and to tempt them would be unpardonable sin. I rather pray daily that the Infidel arts may perish, and the world grow pure again!' Clearly, a hopeless savage, but honest and kindly as he was handsome.

Of a very different type was the second example I shall select from a crowded *répertoire*. A worthy man he was, dwelling in the depths of a Bornean forest, in a house overshadowed with pénang palms and 'lancet trees,' thick with acid fruit; a very old man, with the face of a sheep expiring from mental affliction, the form of a gander suffering from atrophy, and the costume of primeval man after the Fall. He sat, when I first caught sight of him, upon a log, in a deep green shadow of giant trees: the expression of his innocent face shewed deep perplexity. Between his naked and distorted feet lay a basket of stained ratan, filled and overflowing with fragments of cloth, tiny bells, boars' tusks, alligators' teeth, dry seeds, deer-horns, threads of wool, and knotty twigs. Over these valuable 'properties' the old man was pondering, much harassed in mind by the incurable stomach-ache of his 'orang kaya,' or chief. For this typical savage of mine was a 'manang,' a medicine-man, a conjurer, thief-catcher, devil-fighter, of some eminence among the worthy Undups, as his tribe are called. Straightway, perceiving him thus occupied, and warned by my Malay guide—not without some awe, though the laugh of orthodox scorn rang out very clearly—what was the profession of this forest-born practitioner, I addressed him with spirit, and was

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answered in all politeness. Would I could render the terms of our conversation with the simplicity and humour which no doubt they carried; but, alas, the manang's voluble tongue spoke no intelligible dialect to me, and I myself was not yet so conversant with Malay that I could even talk with my interpreter first-hand. But somewhat in this manner our discourse proceeded, as I am told:

I. Ask the old fellow what he is doing here, Ali.

Interpreter. The lord who eats at the rajah's table asks why you are not at your unimportant work in the rice-fields, Infidel.

Manang. I am praying for the safety of my lord.

Interpreter. He say he make charms for have you brave and lots of wife.—That a lie, Tuan!

I. Ask him what are those odds and ends in the basket there.

Interpreter (directly). Oh, them be dam rubbish, Tuan—what he make medicine of, to doctor fools when they sick. All nonsense and dirty rags, Tuan!

I. Ask the old man.

Interpreter. The lord who sleeps in the rajah's bed condescends to inquire what you mean by collecting such infernal bosh as that basket contains, Infidel?

Manang. The lord is very kind to his slave.—These are the evil spirits I have extracted from my numerous and deeply grateful patients. They have great power to cure the sick, to drive out the best-born devils, and to insure good harvests. They are the chief treasures of the Undups.

Interpreter (with wrath). O infidel dog, Dyak cow! Will you repeat your mummeries before my face? Will you insult the meanest follower of the Prophet? Will you—will you'——

I. Easy, Ali! What does the old boy say?

Interpreter. I say he a pig, Tuan!—a dog, a foul Dyak sorcerer! He know our holy faith; and instead of that, he stick like gum to his bits of bone and feathers! He go to perdition—you go to perdition, old Manang!

Manang. Whatever my lord wishes. I pray for him and all his servants.

Interpreter (at white-heat). You pray for me! You pray for me! you cotton-headed, pénang-sucking, white-toothed, raki-swilling old impostor! You Dyak djour, that will never see heaven—that has no heaven, nor any Allah, nor spirit, nor future life! You pig, that will sink into the earth as a stone sinks, nor ever be heard of or seen again in the other world! You pray for me to your lumps of wax and bits of bone! Allah, that made me, knows how I would crush the life from your old carcass, were it not that my lord, who leans upon the rajah's knees, and is weak in his poor English head, condescends to take notice of you. Yah!

I. Hold your confoundedly orthodox tongue, Ali! How are these things used?

Interpreter (sulkily). The lord who is acquainted with the rajah's wife by sight, asks what are your confounded games with this rubbish, Infidel?

Manang. Tell my lord these are great secrets. Tell him that they cure the sick, and bring good luck upon a house. Tell him they are mysteries incomprehensible; and their result, when properly used, is infallible. With them I can destroy my enemies and heal my friends, rain storms, bring rain or sunshine, sink ships, win battles, cause success in head-hunting and the chase. I can do anything—anything. And if the lord be pleased with his slave, good Ali, ask him for a little English medicine to cure the fever that is burning me up—a little of that bitter stuff the 'orang putih' use. I am very ill.

Interpreter (with innocence). The old man's charms, he say, good for anything, and play the dobbil. He want a bit of quinine to cure his ague. Don't give him any, Tuan! He very wicked!

Wondering which was the bigger fool of these two, I went my way through the shadowy forest, all unconscious at the time that I had been introduced to a character of no small note among the simple and superstitious Dyaks. Months after, I was thrown for some time in the company of this medicine-man, and expended much time and ingenuity in the investigation of his real belief; but to this day I cannot tell whether he had faith or not in that strange medley of rubbish which contained his pharmacopœia, his ritual, dogmas, and vestments.*

Returning to Europe, with the half-mournful thought that I had done with savages and savage life for ever, I found myself, one bright and windy Christmas-day, beating back and forth across the mouth of Porto Torres harbour. Do you, O reader, know in what hole or corner of our continent to seek that ancient refuge? Though you be a brother member of the Geographical, I will wager all my 'traveller's tales' you never so much as heard of it. Porto Torres, gentlemen of England, is the northerly harbour of that beautiful island called Sardinia. The granite cliffs which scowl or laugh across the ever-restless sea, the massy walls which gird the island round, gape suddenly at this spot, and leave a narrow and most perilous channel into a tiny bay. No other ports exist, or ever will be formed, probably, on this end of the island. Porto Torres at the north, and the glorious Bay of Cagliari to the south, are the only breaks in the natural defences of this coast. I landed, then, with a gay company, determined to explore the innermost recesses of a land less known to Europe than many a barbarous realm of the antipodes. At my first step ashore, I admired the stately column, standing all alone these thousand years, which still bears witness for Greek art and Roman power; wandering up the street, I admired the countless fragments of temple and bath, column and statue, which now build up whole walls of field and hut. And as I passed beyond the tiny village, I vented my soul in marvelling at masses, piles and hills of ruin, which record the existence here of a city covering miles of ground—I passed beneath colossal archways yet erect, and climbed along Cyclopean walls yet standing—walls older than Rome, older than Athens, old perhaps as the hoary pyramids themselves.

Amazed and bewildered with the discovery of such marvels, feeling somewhat as Stephens may have felt among the ruins of Palenqué, I took my way back to the port, revolving a

* Whether the manang could cure others' sickness—he who could not cure his own!—may with reason be doubted, but I had abundant and unquestionable testimony that he was guaranteed by some means against reptile poison. The Malays assure me that this security is produced by inoculation of the venom in different parts of the body; which may be true. The same practice obtains in America.

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communication to the *Times* or *Athenæum* that should startle a blasé world—which communication was never written. But let me tell the antiquarian reader that such treasures of his favourite seeking are to be found in the island of Sardinia as never he dreamed of. Now and then, as the archæologist will remember, gems of art have been brought to England from this soil—Etruscan, Greek, Roman, and Saracen. The priceless scarabæi, which link Egypt with Etruria, the great Greek glasses, a thousand of the most valuable and curious antiquities in our collections, come from this wealthy but most miserable island. Yet I can assure the antiquary that scarce one discovery has been made except by accident; or if there ever were attempts at scientific search, they have long since been abandoned, and dwell not in men's memory. I myself, in such huts as I shall presently describe, have seen vases and urns, bronzes, coins, and household instruments, such as would bring beyond their weight in gold at the dealers' shops of London. None care for them there—they are too common. Nor are the remains of temple and palace less frequent or less interesting. But I dare not dwell upon this fascinating subject.

From Porto Torres—where there is no inn—I took a rattling diligence, which thrice a week traverses the sole road in the island, between Cagliari and this northern harbour. These are indeed the only towns, and they lie something like a hundred miles apart—rather more, if I remember right. Having before us a journey of many hours, we proposed to take the whole inside of the conveyance; but the clerk, with rare honesty, assured us that this expense was quite unnecessary: 'There are never any passengers, signori—never, never!' he said with emphasis. At a certain village, whereof I forget the name, we left the diligence, and demanded our guides and horses. They came after a while; and in the white and glimmering haze of dawn, we set out in search of a very Nimrod, a mighty hunter, who dwelt a day's journey off among the pine-forests. I have not delayed to speak of the scenery, nor of the strange folks who people it; suffice it that the land is lovely, and the inhabitants hideous. One league from Porto Torres, five from Cagliari, thrusts the Sardinian traveller into the middle ages. Thus were our forefathers six hundred years ago, in costume, in habits, in thought, in everything but speech. And what a marvellous speech that is of the savages! Neither Italian, Spaniard, nor Arab can comprehend it, so ingeniously have the elements of these three languages been hashed up with a seasoning of pure rigmarole. The Maltese, whose Arabic is almost as barbarous, get on best in Sardinia; but the quantity of Spanish and Italian words are just sufficient to confuse the predominant dialect. How little is known, even by their nearest neighbours, of this strange people, will be apparent when I mention that in Italy every one assured us their national tongue was generally spoken, or at least understood, throughout the island—whereas the fact is, as we found at our expense, not one person in five hundred has any knowledge whatever of Italian, or any other language except this bastard Arabic. Let me get to my savage, however—though, indeed, none can avoid digressing in Sardinian travel; for the plains are uncultivated, except around paltry, mud-built villages, which, were it not for the vegetation, one would swear were Kaffir kraals, or Fellah huts. Where this trifling agriculture is not seen, the ground is covered with a bush-like rhododendron, which, at Christmas-time, spreads a sheet of purple blossom over the plain. Rides, smooth as though trimmed by unseen gardeners, intersect each thicket of the cover, and by these natural paths one winds across the level. Partridges whirl up each instant, pigeons rise in clouds, woodcocks and snipe twist aloft from the pond-banks; now and again, with a mighty clashing of the boughs, a whirlwind of flying leaves, with grunts, and cries, and snapping of teeth, a herd of hogs dash along the path; or a huge red boar, with tusks fresh ground, with lips apart, and little eyes all fiery, trots over by himself, glancing at the intruders, as though undecided whether to pass or to attack. Sometimes, no doubt after domestic troubles such as rouse his lordly nature, he *does* charge, and then ——

Have you ever been attacked by a wild-boar? Have you stood all alone, with empty rifle and griped spear, before the forest-king? I have—by night on the golden beach of a far Eastern sea. He fronts me, black and terrible, beside the creeping water, a horrent mass against the spreading halo of the moon. By day, too, I have faced him, in a wood dazzling with the keen tropic light. The brilliant pencilled sun-rays sprinkle his dismal head; his small eyes burn with spite upon me, and seem verily to laugh with triumphant malice. See, see! The rigid bristles of the neck tremble and heave in an agony of rage; the big teeth snap, their foam falls on your face. He has gathered breath. He comes! Now grasp the spear tight, and bend to earth and pray, for rarely in this life doth one face deadlier risk than the charge of a black Eastern boar. That scream!—that ponderous rush! A sudden weight dashes me to earth, while the sun-flecked trees spin round, and the bamboos tear my flesh. I leap up; I dash the blood-drops from my face. Hurrah! The boar lies prone, with a good lance buried to the cross-bar in his heart! Rejoice, comrade, that neither you nor I as yet have felt that deadly sickness, of a pulse-beat's length, which comes o'er the doomed shikari, as his lance-point slides along the leathern shoulder of his foe. For him is no help in the cruel, sunny forest. Too many tragedies the flowers see, too many sudden fates, too many cries of agony they hear! The birds will twitter, and the gemmed flies dance, though a man's body lie in fragments underneath the trees. None will hear your groans, if life remain; none give you aid, while the last gurgling breaths escape your throat; nay, but a thousand tiny foes will set upon you, more cruel far than that brave old boar, who long since has crashed off, triumphing in his vengeance, through the brushwood.

These digressions are intolerable, but forgive them, reader, to an overflowing memory! I will sin no more.

Two days after leaving the diligence-road, we reached the pine-forests, and here I straightway lost, first my guide, and then myself. I rode for some hours in no small anxiety, being already aware how few were the paths, and how scant the population of these hills. It was almost sunset when I struck a path which led me to a little clearing, where I encountered my European savage. And do not suppose that he was an exceptional character of the region; on the contrary, I saw many worse specimens, and few better, of the

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human race, in my Sardinian wanderings; but I select him for portraiture because the *mise en scène*, the properties, all about him, were so exquisitely perfect on that first introduction. The clearing had been evidently a Roman mine two thousand years ago. Walls and pits still remained to shew its former use, and more than one of the ruins might have been made habitable by the mere addition of a roof. This style of dwelling, however, is not to the taste of the Sardinian savage. He prefers to select a piece of level ground, which he encloses in walls of timber, like a bear-trap. When the square is complete, he roofs it in with sticks, and moss, and heath; *then* thinks of providing a door and a window. These necessaries are produced by cutting two holes through the walls, and tying the intersected beams firmly together. After entrance and light are thus provided for, he grubs up the turf and bushes *inside*, flattens the ground, puts in a log for a seat, and another for a table, stores his gunpowder in a nook furthest from the usual hearth, and goes out to seek his sustenance among the boars and roebucks of the forest. Their flesh feeds him, their skins make his bed and clothes. If he have a wife, she spins a little wool for under-garments; if he have none, the sale of game from time to time—at one halfpenny a pound for boar's flesh, one penny for venison—supplies him with all things needful. The agricultural instinct is sometimes indulged in a tiny field about the size of a child's garden; more frequently it is not indulged at all; and a porridge of chestnuts and wild vegetables satisfies the moderate desire of change in diet which the savage knows. From week to week he sees no one, except perhaps the wife and possible family aforesaid; he speaks to none except his dogs, or maybe himself; he knows the iron mines, and sometimes smelts a little ore in winter evenings; he knows the silver mines, ay, and the long-lost veins of gold, but rarely turns his knowledge to account; he gathers carbuncles and turquoise, which he barters for powder and spirits; he goes to mass at Christmas, and there confesses his sins, which seem to be more heinous than appears, at first sight, possible; he knows no sin, nor any good, and is as skin-clad, senseless, brutal a savage as in all my wanderings I have seen.

And thus I found him employed, as I rode up the long shadowy aisle of firs that made an avenue to his dwelling. He sat upon a log—a tall, bearded, muscular fellow, not without some remains of that earnest beauty which Moorish ancestors have left to his race at its fairest. His body was enwrapped in a jerkin of wild-sheep skin, the dark-brown ridge of the animal's back falling along his spine, and its white belly clasped across his chest. There it was secured with vast buttons of silver, hanging each by a little chain. Through holes at each shoulder, the wiry arms emerged. His drawers, immensely wide, were of home-spun wool, not white, as is the national fashion, but of a coarse blue; these were tucked tightly into leggings of wild-boar hide, which, as I afterwards discovered, were the real skin of the animal's legs, stripped off uncut, and fitted, while still soft, to the limbs of the human brute. The occupation of my savage, when I discovered him, was beautifully harmonious; he was breaking up a 'muffloné,' that rare animal, which now only survives among these mountains. Around the carcass, with eager eyes, crowded a pack of dogs, fat and handsome enough, which fought for the morsels flung from time to time among them. Suddenly, their master thrust his reeking arm into the carcass, and produced a gory mass—Heaven knows what dainty! This he balanced for an instant in his hand, then, with some harsh call, tossed it into the air. A child, yes, a girl, suddenly bounded up from her couch upon the ground, and caught the precious prize before it fell. She laughed with glee—I saw her and heard her!—and straightway, pressing the horrid streaming object to her naked bosom, vanished into the house. And simultaneously, all the dogs caught sight of the intruder, and dashed at me.

The savage rose hastily, and snatched up his long gun. I made signs of friendship, and drew near. He called off the dogs, and welcomed me without a word, yet in a manner not quite devoid of that grave courtesy which his darker brethren practise. I asked for food in the French patois of Corsica, in Italian, in Spanish, and lastly, in Malay; he understood not a whit, but resumed his seat for greater convenience of staring. I made signs, and at a call the horrid child emerged again from her retreat, and, with a fearsome bashfulness, approached. The savage gave me to eat—I know not what horror. He sat with his long gun between his knees, and watched. It grew dark. I recalled my Arabic, and asked for a bed. The dreadful child took me within, and pointed out a pile of deerskins. The savage followed us after a while, with his gun at the 'order.' Inspirited by his example, I clasped my rifle between my knees, and lay down, as many a time had I lain in less dangerous company. Less dangerous? Not so! I will bear peril with any man and cry not, but—horrible insects—in my bed I cannot endure! For a time, I reasoned with my nose, my gorge; finally, with every inch of skin upon my body; then I arose and sallied out cautiously. At the instant they were on my track, the savage and his whelp—one armed with the inevitable gun, the other with a knife. Ah! but the moonlight was glorious without, streaming down in snowy flakes through the wide branches of the pines, lighting up those sculptured witnesses of a grander time which lay around the hovel.

I paid no attention to my host, but leisurely selected a dry spot beneath a pine, threw myself down, and slept with one eye open. And at midnight came my friend, with both the guides; and he fired his rifle over me, to rouse the savage. For behold, all unaware, I had stumbled on the abode of A'hmari, the greatest shikari of Sardinia, of whom we had been in search. He was a savage of savagery; and, such as he was, is he still, I doubt not. There is no reformation, no hope nor chance, for such as he.

This paper grows too long, or I would gladly cross the Atlantic with my reader, and portray for his instruction the various types of American barbarism. One word more only; a word I have wished long to utter, for the benefit of English sportsmen and travellers. Go to Sardinia, you who love shooting, and are not afraid of hardship. There will you find feathered game thicker than sparrows in England; there will you find roebuck and wild-boar in such numbers that your very arm will ache with slaughter; there, with luck and skill, may you once, or even twice or thrice, stand over the carcass of the glorious muffloné, and boast of the moment to your dying

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day, seeing that almost every head of the noble beast still surviving is numbered and known among the foresters.

If you be an antiquary, go to Sardinia. If you be a miner, a philologist, go to Sardinia, for there are fortunes in its rocks, and fame in its unintelligible tongue. But if you be not stout and sturdy, withstand temptation, and stay at home.

OLD LONDON LIFE.

From time to time, in some dusty old folio, one comes across a bird's-eye view of medieval London, half-picture, half-map. We are become familiar with the labyrinth of streets and lanes, with the masses and blocks of quaint old houses, tall and narrow, as if jammed between the river and the city walls, they had struggled up towards the sunshine from the smoke and gloom below. And, standing out clear from the mass, we see the tapering spire of old St Paul's as it used to be; the solid strength of the towers of Julius, much as they are now; and old London Bridge, with the swift tide tumbling in cataracts past its wooden piles. But of the people that swarmed in that warren of human life, we have the vaguest possible notions. We learn that St Jackins and Gramercy represented the 'By Jove!' and yet more emphatic invocations of our times; and that hippocras, and mead, and pigment did duty for sherry or bitter beer. But even trenchant impressions like these stand out in a dim haze of ignorance and uncertainty, and we are about as conversant with the manners of our civic forefathers as with those of republican Rome or ancient Babylon.

Indeed, it is seldom that we can have a chance of finding ourselves face to face with the everyday life of the commons of the middle ages. Clerks were scarce, and their records of common things scarcer still. Chroniclers considered the masses as beneath the dignity of history, except during one of those periodical convulsions that imperilled the upper classes; and by this time, the voice of tradition sounds faint and uncertain. Fortunately, the corporation of London, as might have been expected of a body that has made their city the metropolis of the commercial world, have been in the habit of keeping their books regularly and carefully. They seem to have thought nothing too insignificant to find a place there; and wonderful to say, their records have been preserved till now, spared even by the fire in which old London and its associations were well nigh swept utterly away. Miraculously saved as they have been, some of them threatened to expire of sheer old age, when the corporation wisely resolved to rejuvenate the old Latin and Norman-French, and to introduce them to the present generation in modern costume. The result is, a series of vivid pictures of city life, ranging from 1276 to 1419, painted by unconscious artists of the time, with a Dutch-like fidelity of detail. Fraudulent shopkeepers and obscure members of the dangerous classes little deemed that their sentence to an hour of the pillory might secure them a questionable immortality to all time.

So early as the thirteenth century, London was one of the richest towns in Europe. Foreigners were continually flocking over to the city of promise, just as the Irish and Germans of our own century go to New York; but the immigrants to London brought skill or capital as their stock-in-trade; they were substantial and industrious men, for the most part French or Flemings—artisans from the thriving Arras, Amiens, Ghent, Ypres, and Bruges, or Germans from the Hanseatic cities. Members of the great mercantile houses of Italy, already men of fortune, came to invest it at good interest or on sound security; they angled at once for whales and sprats; they combined the legitimate banking of which their own Lombard Street is still the head-quarters, with speculative financing business and that of our advertising West End money-lenders, who offer advances to gentlemen in public offices or in the army on their personal security. The well-known Florentine family of the Bardi give their name to a Society, a sort of medieval financial limited liability company. Then we have the Society of Lucca; and we find a clergyman stealing the silver-plate of Sir Baroncin, one of the members; and a gentleman who lent Edward II., when Prince of Wales, a good deal of money on his reversion to the throne. Bucklersbury takes its name from the Buckerels, naturalised Italians who rose to fill the highest posts in the city. If only they were respectable and well to do, London made slight distinction between her native-born children and her adopted ones. Penned within her walls, her thriving population soon became hard put to it for elbow-room. In those days, when a man with anything to lose settled in the suburbs, he did it at his peril. The corporation were unremitting in their precautions for the security of their wealth. The city gates were carefully closed when the first chime of the curfew rang out from St Martin-le-Grand, and at the last stroke the smaller wickets were shut, and till daybreak the city was isolated. Each ward sent its quota of warders; and some twenty men, 'strong and well armed,' mounted guard at each of the gates. During the day, sergeants 'fluent of speech' were stationed there, with strict instructions to cross-examine all doubtful characters. At night, too, all the boats on the river were made fast to the Middlesex shore. Meanwhile, there were strict police regulations for the safety of the life and property in the slumbering city. While a couple of boatfuls of river-police were afloat on the Thames, strong parties of watchmen were patrolling the town. All the taverns and hostelries closed at the curfew, under penalty, we presume, of forfeiting their licence. After that hour, any belated citizen was picked up incontinent, and summarily disposed of in 'the Tun.' The Tun was a cage of circular form, and the prototype of the Round House, the frequent night-quarters of bloods and Mohocks of a later day, and immortalised to all time by Hogarth. As with us, police charges are most frequent after Christmas-eve and other high festivals of the people, so the eve of the nativity of St John the Baptist, and those of St Peter and St Paul, seem to have been the bugbears of the quieter citizens of the period. To meet these occasions, the authorities continually took exceptional measures—each alderman was warned by circular to call on 'the good men of his ward' to act as a sort of specials. As distinctive badges, they wore party-coloured coats over their armour, and carried lances painted in different colours. It would seem that the good men cared as little as Dogberry to make or meddle with improper characters, for as they were furnished with flaming cressets fixed on long poles, they must have been visible at any distance to enemies of the peace.

The police of the day had much the same

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responsibilities on their shoulders as their successors. Then, as now, they were ever launching proclamations against those who obstructed the pavement by disposing of their wares or following their callings there. The fullers were prominent offenders, and ordinance after ordinance is levelled at the tailors and pelterers, who, 'to the prejudice of the great persons and good folk,' should be 'daring enough' to scour furs and cloths in the open air, except during night or at early morning. At the same time, if oppressed by a crush of orders from 'great lords,' they might retire in the daytime to by-lanes or blind-alleys. The awning nuisance, so prejudicial in the nineteenth century to the silk hats of those who exceed the common stature of mankind, had its counterpart in those days in the protruding wooden pent-houses, which are ordered to be removed, or raised to a certain height, as men-at-arms on tall war-chargers were always knocking their helmets against them. Some of the more remote streets must have been both indifferently kept and highly odoriferous, judging by an uncompromising order that all pig-sties whatever are to be cleared away. Independent pigs foraging on their own account, seem to have been the nuisance of that day, as ownerless curs are with us. The Sir Richard Maynes of the time gave their myrmidons instructions to deal with them summarily, always excepting the swine of the blessed St Anthony, who, in virtue of their sacred character, had the run of the town. The corporation seem to have roused themselves periodically to energetic action in the matter of the purifying their city. Probably, when things got quite intolerable, they began to cure themselves. That every citizen should be his own scavenger, was their principle, and each man was bound to keep the space clean before his door, as with us after a storm, we are compelled to remove the fallen snow. They were far from consistent in their sanitary regulations. Now the citizens are commanded to shoot all their rubbish into the river; now they are forbidden to pollute the Thames in any way whatever, under the heaviest penalties. Already it had become occasionally offensive in summer to our not over-sensitive ancestors. But the Fleet ditch was the standing nuisance, and the unlucky captives in 'the mansion of our prison of Flete' suffered from 'grievous maladies which put them in no small peril, by reason of the abominable stench.' Pure water was scarce. The course of Wal-broke, coming from the open moor of Finsbury, received constant attention, and great precautions were taken against the waste of the water in the conduit in Chepe. It seems the brewers had taken to carrying pails of it away to their brew-houses. All they took would scarcely have gone far with Barclay or Truman, but we learn that at that time the value of a brewer's stock-in-trade might be counted by shillings.

The community seem generally to have lived very comfortably. We hear very little of poverty, nothing of poor-houses, no deaths by starvation. The great city markets were very much what they are now: the fishmongers had appropriated Billingsgate; the game and poultry sellers, Leadenhall; the butchers and corn-dealers, Newgate; but the people had to live half the year on salted meat and stock-fish, and vegetables we never hear of. The foreign birds that we have acclimated were scarce and rare; pheasants fetched, comparatively speaking, enormously high prices; swans, bitterns, and herons were all expensive; you could get a dozen of capons for what you would have paid for a single pheasant. Butcher-meat was to be had for a trifle. Sturgeon seems to have been a popular fish, and very plentiful; and the salmon and trout, as they swarmed in the river, would have gladdened the heart of Mr Buckland. The fishermen of Greenwich, Woolwich, and Barking were being continually hauled over the coals for catching them with unlawful nets; one of these, that much resembled the trawl, seems to have been looked on with as much prejudice then as now.

The inspectors of weights and measures had no sinecure of it. The bakers were being continually convicted of defrauding their customers, sometimes of trying to deceive the authorities to boot. One man, with unfortunate presence of mind, thrust a piece of iron into a loaf that was about to be tested, and being unluckily found out, was made a signal example of. Very frequently, the sentence was a lenient one, and confined to a confiscation of the bread. Meat unfit for human food was constantly being exposed for sale; the invariable punishment for slow-poisoning of this sort was exposure in the pillory, among the asphyxiating fumes of the putrid carcasses as they were burned beneath it. One rather intricate case is reported, where a pieman was charged with vending a pie made of a couple of putrid capons. The defence was, that the plaintiffs had eaten one of them before objecting to the flavour; but a jury of cooks, to whom the questionable dish was submitted, found unanimously against the prisoner. He was marched off to the pillory incontinent, the remains of the loathsome paste slung to his neck. The *lex talionis* was applied in the case of a vintner selling sour wine, and they forced him to drink it. We find no reports of those magnificent banquets which in later times have gained a world-wide renown for the hospitality of the city. Instead of entertaining the court and the aristocracy in the halls of the guilds, it seems then to have been the practice to buy the materials for the feast in the east, and send them to be eaten in the west—perhaps a pleasanter arrangement for one of the parties, if not both. But that the mayor and aldermen were even then of a jovial turn, we gather not only from presumptive, but from direct evidence. When their names have been taken in vain, the fine imposed is not unfrequently remitted for a tun of wine; and an alderman who had been remiss in some of his civic duties, is fined immediately in a dinner for the mayor and his brethren; and he seems to have played the host with no *arrière-pensée*.

The worthy magistrates of the day had naturally a good deal of criminal business on their hands, but on the whole, the calendar seems to have been relatively lighter then than now. There are a good many records of coroners' inquests, but with few exceptions, the verdicts are accidental death. One gentleman, to be sure, a vintner's servant, makes away with his master after a few days' service, and calmly takes his place behind the bar of the murdered man. But the circumstances appearing suspicious, the neighbours have them inquired into, and the discovery of the body is followed by confession and punishment. Theft and burglary are not very frequent, but we hear of a good many forged deeds; and thieves, forgers, and burglars are sent alike to the gallows. Considering the inducements held out to crime in a

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city where sanctuaries were far more common than police-offices are now, it seems wonderful that property was not more tampered with than it appears to have been. Fancy the facilities it would offer to a rough of our times, if, after snatching a chain, he had only to make a rush with his booty for some church just round the corner.

There were professional bands of confederates, who made it their business to look out for young men from the country, and take them off into public-houses, where they prevailed on them to risk their money at games of chance and skill. We do not indeed hear of skittles, but one party, charged with cheating at 'quek' or chequer board, were seized with their table, when it was found that all the black squares were hollowed away, and that the dice which they had used were loaded. They had plucked their pigeon to his very cloak, but were compelled to disgorge. We have a pleasant story of Hugh de la Pole, who went a-begging with a pitiful and most circumstantial tale of his having come over with fifteen wounded comrades from the storming of Ypres; that the Bishop of Norwich, who had carried the place, had found there three barrels of gold, over which he had come to a quarrel with the other English knights. In proof of all of which, Mr de la Pole exhibited his wounded limbs, swathed in bandages; but some hard-hearted sceptics insisted on removing these, when they found everything below sound and whole; whereupon the ingenious De la Pole was relegated to the pillory. John Warde and Richard Leynham were the prototypes of those dumb gentlemen who sketch mackerel on the pavement, and write 'I am starving' below. They were brought before the mayor, charged with carrying in their hands an ell measure, an iron hook and pincers, and a piece of leather, in shape like part of a tongue, edged with silver, and with writing round it to this effect: 'This is the tongue of John Warde.' On examination, it proved that if it were so, at least John Warde had a duplicate within his lips, and he was remanded to Newgate indefinitely. Our impulsive ancestors seem to have been rather given to contempt of court, an offence on which the important city magistrates were uniformly severe. Robert de Suttone, for example, was convicted and sentenced for insulting the sheriff-clerk by saying 'Iprhurt, Iprhurt'—early English for 'prut'—and raising his thumb at him, 'to his damnifying, and in manifest contempt of our Lord the king.'

The memorials give us but little clue to the state of the public health; but in spite of all the sanitary precautions we have alluded to, we find evidences of room for improvement in it. There are no references to plague, black-death, or any of the sweeping epidemics of the middle ages. Leprosy was the great bugbear of the times. As in the earliest ages, the appearance of the plague-blotch meant for the leper a lifelong isolation from his fellows. Whatever his standing, he was taken from his family, and thrust out of the city. Men on duty at the gates had standing orders to guard against the introduction of the disease, by examining any unhealthy-looking individual who might present himself for admission. It would appear from some proclamations on the subject, that the wretched outcasts had the same mania for wantonly communicating the disease, as was observed with many of the plague-stricken in the Great Plague. Charity had founded lazar-houses at Hackney and Southwark, to which, as far as possible, lepers were confined.

There seems to have been no parks or gardens, nothing done for the recreation of the working-classes. Space was valuable; and when they wanted fresh air, trees, and flowers, they had to look for them outside the walls; nor had they to go far a-field, when Finsbury Circus was a barren moor, and the village of Charing stood among its copses and meadows. We have an incidental notice of the nucleus of a zoological garden, or at least of a menagerie, when Edward III. makes proclamation about a certain beast of his 'from the land of Egypt, an owre.' It sets forth that the people, envying the keepers of the beast, had threatened to do them grievous bodily harm, and atrociously to kill the said beast itself, and it accordingly warns all and sundry that the king has taken the one and the other under his special protection. We know that the authorities of those days, lay and spiritual, encouraged May-poles and similar gaieties of a Sunday; but we find them setting their faces against desecrating the Sabbath by week-day work. There is a letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Council, where he draws their attention to the practice of the barbers shaving their customers on that day, and he fulminates horrible anathemas at those who should continue the practice; but he goes on to shew considerable knowledge of mankind, remarking that he is aware men are become so malicious as to be more nearly touched by a comparatively small pecuniary fine than by the most terrible of threatened spiritual penalties; he therefore conjures his dear children of the Council to see to it that they enact such fines as may at once insure a discontinuance of the practice.

On the whole, these memorials leave us with the impression that, in the case of London, there is not so much to be said against the 'good old times' as uncompromising innovators would persuade us. If the liberty of the subject was occasionally infringed, he seems to have led a not unpleasant life of it under restrictions to which he was accustomed. Certainly, we question whether, allowing for difference in population, there was not more happiness and less suffering in the old city than in the modern one.

EVENING.

Low in the pale cold sky the ashen clouds
Huddle for warmth together; as the night
Grows gradual o'er the landscape, and enshrouds
Dim valley depth and craggy mountain height.
Dogs bay from far farm-folds and farm-folds nigh;
The heifer, waiting by the pasture-gate,
With head upturned, lows at the darkening sky,
And then looks homeward. It is wearing late:
All home-life sounds now die across the leas;
And save the clamorous noise of roosting rooks,
The low, soft purl of grove-hid, pebbly brooks,
And softer sigh of wind in withered trees,
Is nothing heard, and but for which would be
Inviolate stillness and tranquillity.

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A STAR'S SURROUNDINGS.

A SLATTERNLY, unwholesome-looking woman of fifty, or a little more, but whose real age it is not easy to guess; her face haggard, deeply furrowed, and of a dull yellow colour; her eyes wild, staring, and set in broad purple rings; her head and bony hands always trembling: a woman with no healthy briskness, who seems to have lost heart long ago; who drags herself hither and thither under protest, with a voice shrill, querulous, and broken, a faint, unmeaning smile for the conciliation of her lodgers, tears more than enough when any one finds fault; add further, a dress fashionably, but not engagingly short, of the commonest material, dirty and uncared for; coarse, iron-gray hair, not often combed; boots without heels, and bursting at the sides—and you have your servant's landlady, Mrs Simmonds.

She complains of a dreadful gnawing pain between her shoulders; she never has any appetite—the mere sight of food, as she says, gives her 'quite a turn.' She can't tell what is the matter with her; she thinks that she must have hurt her backbone when she was young. Sometimes, she thumps it, to stop that miserable pain just for a minute. She won't take the physic that the doctor orders, because it is 'so nasty.' She is an ignorant woman; she can hardly sign her name; I doubt whether she can read, in the strict sense of the word. Her notions are all of the crudest. She has no particular religion! In times past, she became a Catholic, but didn't like the confessional. Talked once with a minister, a Protestant, but whether of the Church of England or not, she can't say, but couldn't understand him; never goes to any place of worship—doesn't see the good of it. She has impressions which she can't explain, and can't account for. She is bemuddled, in fact, but still not an immoral woman, or a particularly dishonest one. She can't recollect that she ever went to school. When very young, she danced, and did the horsemanship and slack-rope business, but how old she was at the time she can't say. She doesn't recollect much before this—it all seems like a fog. Her father and mother died within twelve hours of each other—both of the cholera. She rather thinks she must have come of a good stock; fancies her parents must have made a runaway match. Her father was a soldier, an officer, she thinks, and his wife followed the regiment.

But Mrs Simmonds shall tell her story in her own way. 'When I was about fourteen,' she says, 'I had an engagement at Windsor. An elderly gentleman, who used to come regularly to the theatre, offered me marriage; but I was scornful, and laughed at him. I should be glad to know where he is now; if he is alive, he might help me. I wish he could ease me of this terrible pain.' (Thump, thump.) 'When a bit older, I danced in the ballet at the Opera-house. It was hard work, but my soul was in it, and I got on. Soon after this, I first met my husband; he courted me more than a year: I first saw him just outside the theatre; he used to go with me to rehearsals, and wait at the door till I came out, and now and then make me little presents. I was a fool ever to have married him; but I was only a girl, and he was a handsome young fellow, and so I got taken in. He was a bad, drunken wretch; a lazy, good-for-nothing fellow, who might, if he had chosen, have earned as much as two guineas a week as a mathematical-instrument maker; but he only cared for boosing and low company. He used to beat me sometimes. At last, he ran away, and left me without a sixpence, and with three young children to provide for. I heard nothing more of him till he was in Australia, and sent a letter to say that I had driven him from home by my unbearable temper. The wretch! Since then, I have never had another line from him.' (Tears, cut short by that awful pain, 'like knives being dug into one,' and more thumps.) 'I brought up my eldest, Tom, to my own profession. I apprenticed him to Mr Norton, who had the Queen's Dancing-rooms, Oxford Street, and he became one of his "troupe." After this, he played in pantomimes at sixpence a night; came on as a goblin or fairy attendant; got a place as call-boy at Sadler's Wells, and might have done well too, for the leading tragedian took

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quite a fancy to him; but he was a ninny, and quarrelled with the stage-manager, and had to leave. After this, he had to go into the country. He was a drone, and said he was overworked and starved; but if you take to the stage, you mustn't mind putting your shoulder to the wheel, and you don't get much money to begin with—country managers are so sharp; but Tom might have done better if he had pleased. He came back nearly a skeleton, poor fellow. At Glasgow—he was engaged at some theatre there—he lived for three weeks on nothing but oatmeal porridge, and short allowance of that. From Scotland he went to Cardiff, but never got paid. I managed to send him half-a-crown, and he said it just saved him from starving. At one time, he set up a travelling entertainment; but it failed, as everything did that he took in hand, because he had no energy. After that, he got a place as "super" at Drury Lane, but the theatre closed at the end of a month, and then I had to help him as well as I could; but I soon saw that as long as he had something to eat, and a coat to his back, he was a regular lazybones, and didn't care to try and better himself.

'As for Dick, I laid out money to give him a good start in the navy, but I was cheated by my lawyer, and my darling had to begin as a cabin-boy. I didn't know it at the time, or it would have broken my heart, but he tumbled from the mast-head in a gale, and a great piece had to be taken out of his skull, and one leg has been shorter than the other ever since.' (Tears.) 'But even as a baby he was always tumbling. When only a year and a half old, he fell from the first-floor window into the garden, and was none the worse for it. He fell from the second floor the next time, and had to be taken to the hospital. I heard of the accident when I came back from giving my dancing-lessons in the evening. I had a deal of work then. Besides my academy, which assembled twice a week on the ground floor, the parlour and bedroom being thrown into one, I taught pupils at their own homes. Round about Lambeth there are good families—carriage-folk, and I went to a school on this side of the water, and another across the park. What dreadful work it used to be coming back on stormy nights, when there was rain or snow, and having to stand in damp clothes, teaching, when one's boots were soaked through, and without refreshment, or any one caring to offer any! Perhaps it was that which gave me this horrible pain.' (Thump.) 'Just like so many knives. I believe, after all, that the bone is broken.

'Dolly was a beautiful child, and as clever as she was pretty. I put her on the table and began to teach her to dance when she was three years old. After that, I took her to the theatre, and she played child-parts, appearing in the pantomimes in the middle of a flower, or in the heart of an apple that opened at the touch of Harlequin's wand. She had lovely fair hair, and great, beautiful, wondering eyes. She was never a bit afraid. All the people in the theatre loved her. The manager, who was a regular old growler, called her his pet. By-and-by, she took to dancing, and once, when she had a *pas de seul*, she did it so cleverly that it was called for again, the very manager himself, who had gone to the "front" to see how it went, joining in the applause. When she was older, she was engaged as *première danseuse* at the same theatre, and it was then that she first came across that fellow—fine stories he told—who married her. He sat in the stalls night after night, and left flowers and jewellery at the stage-entrance. His mother was well off, but he had little besides what she allowed him, and his expectations. But Dolly, poor silly girl, didn't find this out till it was too late. He was an ensign in the army, and "I am that proud," he used to say to me, "that if my own mother spoke to me as you do, I'd never wish to see her again." Dolly was so taken with him, stupid little thing, that she got quite to forget her poor mother. She was another girl. When the marriage took place, it was like a dream. I could hardly believe it was my Dolly who was dressed in such finery and so courted. Then there were the bridemaids, and three broughams, and the coachmen with favours in their hats and on their coats, and the wedding-breakfast spread in this very house. It troubled me then, and it has troubled me since, and it does so now. When Dolly got up to say good-bye, she was as cold as a queen. I suppose she was ashamed of the old mother who had toiled for her. She just kissed me, as if she was glad to have it over, and then turned to her husband, and they were gone. Oh, she was a cold girl!

'He took a house for her in Colchester Street, Pimlico, and furnished it splendidly; but he turned Dolly's heart away from her home. He was a Catholic, and she became one too; and after that, she was always at the church, or with her prayers, or with the priest; so I scarcely ever saw her, and I left off trying to at last, for I am as 'igh and 'aughty as the best of them, and a parent has no call to stoop to her daughter. At last she went to such a pitch, giving money to churches and schools and what not—her old mother drudging, out in all weathers, with hardly enough to eat the while—that her husband wouldn't have any more of it. They had a quarrel, for she was a spirited girl, but he gave orders that no priest should be let into his house in future. In less than a year, their grand place had to be sold up. The great fortune that Dolly's husband had boasted about came to an end. It was only four thousand pounds, but girls think money in a lump more than it is. If I had known how things were, she shouldn't have married him. His mother, who despised the match—a proud, hard woman—continued his allowance, but wouldn't do anything more. Man and wife can't live on a hundred a year as gentry; and Dolly, who was a clever girl, and had got to despise her fine officer, began to look about her. She had a beautiful voice, though I had never guessed it; but I have heard her sing since, and know it to be the truth. She began to take pains with her music, and the gentleman who taught her—she had managed to save up a little money on her own account—said that if she went on with it she would be sure to be a success by-and-by. I had a prejudice against him at the time, but it turns out that he is old enough to be her father, and I am sure I am thankful if he has done any good to Dolly. A separation took place before long; my poor pet and her husband couldn't agree. Perhaps it was best for both of them. But Dolly's heart was quite turned from her mother, and I hadn't even a letter from her for more than two years. She went to Italy to study; she came out there, and made a great hit. At Florence, the gentlemen took the horses out of her carriage, and dragged it home themselves. They sang in chorus under her windows; and somewhere else she had a

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beautiful gold crown given her, besides a pearl necklace and bracelets. When she came back to England, she headed an opera company, and went for a tour through the provinces. Poor stupid Tom, whom she promised to make a gentleman, was her secretary, and a deal of good he must have been to her; however, he spoke too plainly to please her, and she threw him over, and then he had no one to go to but his old mother, whom she had taught him to scorn.

'That was the way with Dolly; she made my boys discontented, prevented their working for an honest living, and did nothing for them after all.

'When she came back to town, I thought I would go and see her. However she had treated me, she was still my child; and as winter was coming on, I should have been glad of ever so little help. I had a troublesome cough, that I must have got tramping about in the wet to my lessons, and I hadn't succeeded so well as I usually did. Dolly was living at Notting Hill then. I called there one afternoon, and they said she wasn't at home; but I knew better, for I had heard her voice when the door opened. As I said, I am a bit 'aughty, and I wouldn't be put off in that way; so I gave them to understand that I knew better. "And I won't move from here," I said, "till I see her—the bad, ungrateful child." With that the servant takes my message, and comes back to say that if I don't move, Mr Sarti—that 's Dolly's music-master—will send for a policeman. "Who 's he?" I cried, "to talk about policemen? Why doesn't he come down himself, and say what he has got to say?" At this, Miss Dolly appeared, and wouldn't even shake hands with me, but told me I ought to be ashamed of myself, coming there all in rags, no better than an old charwoman, and bringing disgrace on her, and making her ridiculous before her servants. "I have worked for you, Dolly—hard," was all I could say; but she only answered: "If you want money, write for it; don't come here again, or you 'll certainly be given in charge." So on that I drew myself up, and said: "Don't offer me none of your paltry money, for I won't take it; and as for disgrace, it 's not from me that anything of that sort will come: you 'd best look at home." And with that, off I came.

'And all the while I had that Tom with me, doing nothing but sitting over the fire, and eating and drinking, and saying he didn't like this, and didn't like the other, and that there was no comfort in his home, and that I ought to manage better, till I said: "You lout, why don't you get up and work for your living, as your poor mother does? If you can't do anything else, why not help in the academy, or take some of my pupils?" "Nonsense!" he answers. "If it hadn't been for you, I should have been a made man by this time. It 's all through your goings on that I broke with Dolly. I ought to have a place of my own. If I had a house in Belgrave Road or Bayswater, I might do something. There 's no opening here with those infernal butchers and bakers, and such like." "You ungrateful fellow!" I cried. But there, it was all along with that girl of mine; she unsettled them, and now they 've no heart or wish to work.

'She did her best to spoil Dick, and he isn't the lad he used to be. He was always so affectionate; and now he is a great noisy fellow, who comes stamping into the room, and bursts into a horse-laugh, and says I ought to give him a proper dinner every day, and not odds and ends; and that the tea isn't strong enough, and that he wishes he could go into lodgings and leave me, and see life a bit, and not always be tied to his mammy's apron-strings. But it is his poor head—a great piece taken right out, and his leg makes him bitter, and at times he doesn't quite know what he is saying. Dolly promised to set him up, and I found she had put him to a wine-merchant's, where all day long he was in a cellar corking bottles. The shame! I soon had him away from there. In a little while, that girl of mine got him what she called a capital situation on a railway. He is there now—a clerk, and gets ten pounds a year, with the hope of a five-pound rise. He is at his office from nine till seven, except for six weeks in the summer, when they are making up the books, and then his hours are from nine to nine. Sometimes they give him work to bring home. When he first began, he spent nearly all his money over his dinner. But now I give him a hunch of bread and a bit of meat, when I have any; and in the evening he has a good tea, and as much bread and butter as he cares for. There are plenty others in the office besides himself. The highest, I am told, is a nice gentleman, and might be a friend to Dick, if he would let him. He has two hundred a year, and lives a little way out of town. He asked one of the younger clerks to take tea with him one evening, and Dick says he was told he was as affable and spoke to him as if he was no more than his equal.

'But Dolly is the only one who has really done well, and she is the worst of the lot.'

POCKET-FAMILIES.

NEARLY a century ago, a young gentleman called on Dr Johnson, and told him that, having dropped suddenly into an ample fortune, he was willing to qualify himself for genteel society by adding some literature to his other endowments, and wished to be put in an easy way of obtaining it. Dr Johnson recommended the university of Oxford; but finding that he was utterly ignorant of Latin, he withdrew that recommendation, and advised him to study natural history. A conversation occurred about animals, and their divisions into oviparous and viviparous. 'And the cat here, sir,' said the youth who wished for instruction, 'pray, to which class does she belong?' This was almost more than the doctor's patience could bear; and he replied: 'You would do well, sir, to look for some person to be always about with you, who is capable of explaining such matters, and not to come to us to know whether the cat lays eggs or not.' We quote the anecdote with the view of contrasting the present state of our knowledge regarding certain points connected with the reproduction of animals, with that which existed in the year 1776. The kangaroo, which was first seen by Captain (then Lieutenant) Cook, on the 24th of June 1770, was unknown except to zoologists; and there is no evidence that Johnson ever heard of it, although he survived Captain Cook by about six years.* This animal he might have believed in; but if he had heard of some of the

* The word *kangaroo* does not appear in any of the editions of his *Dictionary* that appeared during Johnson's lifetime; and (strangely enough) in Todd's *Johnson's Dictionary*, second edition, 1827, although the word *kangaroo* is given, the most important characteristic organ, the marsupial pouch, is not referred to.

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facts we are going to relate in this article—of certain fishes, for instance, which, in place of eggs, produce litters of lively little fishes, quite fitted for all the active responsibilities of life; and of other fishes which hatch their eggs and nurse their young in their mouths—we have little doubt that he would have put them down as 'travellers' tales,' and unworthy of serious consideration.

Most of our readers, on seeing the title of this article, will say: 'Oh, it 's about kangaroos;' and a few, whose zoological knowledge is more extensive, will include the opossums with the kangaroos. Our intention, however, is to disregard those better-known examples of animals that carry their young in their pockets, and confine our remarks to the 'smaller deer' who favour this practice.

In the *Batrachians*, under which title we include frogs and toads, we have a few examples of the mothers carrying their young during the period of hatching, and for some little time afterwards, in pouches situated on the back. In the Pouched Frog (*Nototrema marsupiatum*), which is found in Mexico, the female is furnished with a pouch on her back, in which the ejected eggs, when they have been fertilised, are placed by the male, and where they undergo their further development. The pouch, when filled with eggs, becomes so dilated that it extends over the whole back. Here, as in the marsupial mammals, we have a single pouch. Similar structural arrangements occur in a less well known frog, discovered in 1854, by Lichtenstein, in Venezuela, and named *Notodelphys ovifera*. In the well-known Surinam Toad (*Pipa Americana*), a series of little pouches, one for each egg, is constructed at the required time. The eggs, when laid, are fertilised, and placed by the fore-paws of the male on the back of the female, where they adhere by a glutinous secretion. The female then takes to the water, the skin swells, and the eggs become gradually embedded in cells, which are closed by a membranous structure. In these little enclosed cavities, the eggs are hatched, and the tadpole stage is passed: it is not until the young have attained their limbs, and are fit for moving about on the ground, that they break their way through their cell-covers, and struggle, head foremost, into a state of free existence. At this period, the mother leaves the water, and returns to dry land. Excellent specimens of the pouched frog and the Surinam toad may be seen in London, at the British Museum and the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons.

Here, too, we must mention the obstetric toad or nurse-frog (*Alytes obstetricans*), common in France, Switzerland, and the Rhine district, which derives its specific name from the male assisting in the exclusion of the eggs, and causing them, after they have become fertilised, to adhere to his own hind-legs by small pedicles. He then seeks the land, where he finds a concealed hole, in which he remains till the development of his young charges is sufficiently advanced, when he betakes himself to the water with his young brood. About sixty eggs, fastened on by a glutinous secretion, are thus carried about by the careful father, the mother throwing off all responsibilities.

It has been long known to naturalists, although the fact has scarcely made its way into the general circle of popular knowledge, that certain fishes present marsupial* peculiarities. Aristotle (d. 322 B.C.), the father of Natural History, observed and described a fish which he called Béloné, in the female of which was a cavity in the hinder and lower part of the belly. This cavity contained its young, and at a certain period of the year it tore away the outer wall, to allow its progeny to escape. Aristotle's errors will become apparent when we have entered a little farther into the subject. There are certain genera of fishes popularly known from their peculiar form as the Pipe-fishes and the Sea-horses, in which the males take upon themselves the office of carrying about their young in a special bag, or series of cells, as the case may be. Several species of the pipe-fishes inhabit our own shores, and have been taken on the Cornish coasts, Dublin Bay, &c.; and the sea-horses, which abound in the Mediterranean (whence Aristotle may readily have obtained them) and elsewhere, are occasionally drifted to our own shores.

The peculiarities of the pipe-fishes and sea-horses in relation to the carrying of their young gave rise to various wild speculations. Pallas, one of the most distinguished naturalists of the last half of the eighteenth century, was of opinion that each individual was possessed of a community of sexes; while Schneider, a very eminent ichthyologist, who lived a little later (d. 1822), arrived at the conclusion that all the pipe-fishes which had been examined were females, and that no males had hitherto been discovered. Recent observations, especially those of Mr Andrews of Dublin, Mr Couch, our greatest living English ichthyologist, and the Rev. Samuel Lockwood, an American naturalist, have led us to the knowledge of the following singular facts. Mr Andrews tells us that, in shoal water in Dublin Bay, he has frequently seen the Greater Pipe-fishes (*Syngnathus acus*), which attain a length of from one to two feet, lying in pairs, side by side, on a rock or stone, and that he has watched the eggs in an immature state being discharged by the female, and being received into the abdominal pouch of the male, which lies somewhat in front of the base or root of the tail. The pouch at this period secretes a glutinous matter, by which the eggs are made to adhere to its inner walls. Amongst the most remarkable points connected with this process, it may be mentioned that before the female is ready to get rid of her eggs, the slit which forms the entrance of the pouch is closed by adhesion; that at the period when the eggs are to be received, the male has the power of expanding the lappings of the pouch, so as to facilitate the entrance of the eggs; and that when the latter are fixed in their places, the opening is again closed by adhesion of the edges of the lappings, till the period arrives for the escape of the little fishes from what may literally be called their *paternal home*. Mr Couch supplies us with further and more minute details. He has found eggs in the male pouch as early in the year as April, and as late as September. Each egg in its earliest observed stage was a transparent vesicle, with a red spot directed towards the opening. When further grown, the body of the fish is seen curved into a circle, with the head projecting into a snout. At a still later period, it remains attached to the wall of the pouch; and even when the little fishes are fully developed, and able to live in the surrounding water, they will in cases of alarm fly for shelter to their former refuge, into which they

* From the Latin word *marsupium*, a pouch.

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are readily received. When they no longer require this shelter, the edges of the pouch become again united. In the Broad-nosed Pipe-fishes (*Syngnathus Typhlë*), and in the Sea-horses (*Hippocampus*), there is as complete a pouch as that which occurs in the greater pipe-fish. Mr Lockwood, after many failures, once succeeded in observing a male sea-horse in the act of turning out his young, to the number of several hundreds, into the world. Immediately on coming into the water, the young fish began to swing their prehensile tails, the result being that two or three of them often got their little, hair-like, caudal appendages so entangled or intertwined with one another, that as the little creatures struggled in different directions, the loss of a tail seemed an imminent catastrophe. It is much to be regretted that he did not succeed in rearing any of the brood.

Mr King, of 190 Great Portland Street, London, has been more successful than any one else in breeding sea-horses. In five journeys to the south of France in search of them, he brought back no less than one hundred and eighty-two living specimens. On one of the journeys home, one of the males gave from his pouch about six hundred young, which at the time of their extrusion were about the size of the *s*'s used in printing this article. These curious little animals live readily in a salt-water aquarium, and will soon probably be widely distributed in a semi-domesticated state.

In other species of pipe-fishes, as the Ocean Pipe-fish (*Syngnathus æquoreus*) and the Snake Pipe-fish (*Syngnathus ophidion*), there is a singular tendency to the marsupial state, which seems checked at an early stage. In these fishes, there is no true pouch, but the eggs are transferred, as Mr Andrews has observed, by the combined action of both parents, from the female to the external abdominal surface of the male; that part of the body being, for the time, flattened, so as to retain and support the eggs during the period of their development. The eggs are here arranged in regular order, and something more than mere adhesion retains them in their places, the skin being raised up around each egg, and thus holding it in a cup from which it cannot be easily removed. There is a certain amount of resemblance between the procedure which takes place here and in the Surinam toad, in so far as the marsupial cells in each are temporary. It must, however, be recollected, that in the latter case it is the female which has charge of the family on her back.

The great moralist whose name we introduced at the beginning of this article would have been as much astounded at the idea that fishes may be viviparous as at the supposition that a mammal could lay eggs; yet, at the present day, we are acquainted with several genera of fishes which produce their young alive, amongst which may be mentioned the Blenny (of which several species are viviparous), the *Anableps tetrophthalmus* (a Surinam fish, which derives its specific name from a peculiar division of each eye by a ligamentous band, not occurring in any other vertebrate), the *Poecilia*, and the *Embiotoca* (so called from the Greek words signifying *producing living young*). The fact that these fishes bring forth their young in the form of little fishes, instead of that of eggs, is not in itself sufficient to bring them within the category of 'animals carrying their young in their pockets.' But on anatomically examining the structure of the *embiotoca*, we find they have regular pouches for their young, and that they only differ from the animals that have been previously described in the fact, that there is here no transference of the eggs, and that the pouches are formed in the interior of the mother's body, and in connection with the structures in which the eggs are primarily found. These fishes are so remarkable that we shall enter somewhat in detail into their history.

The discoverer of these remarkable fishes (or, at all events, of the peculiarity which we are now considering) is a Mr Jackson, who, soon after his return to Boston from San Francisco in 1853, informed Professor Agassiz that while fishing in San Salita Bay, he had caught with the hook and line a fish of the perch family, containing living young. The following is Mr Jackson's account of the way in which he was led to make his discovery. After having caught two of these fishes, he determined to change his bait, and to try a piece of the thin part of the belly of the largest of the fishes already captured, when 'what was my surprise,' he observes, 'to see coming from the opening thus made a small live fish. . . . . On increasing the opening, I was vastly astonished to find next to the back of the fish, and slightly attached to it, a long, very light violet bag, so clear and transparent that I could distinguish through it the shape, colour, and formation of a multitude of small fish (all facsimiles of each other), with which it was well filled.' He adds, that the number of young in the bag was nineteen, and that when they were liberated into a bucket of salt water, they were as lively and as much at home as if they had been for months accustomed to their new position.

Professor Agassiz did not see any of Mr Jackson's specimens, but subsequently obtained a number caught at the same spot, and sent to him preserved in spirits, by a Mr Cary. To the account of the bag given by Mr Jackson, he adds the following interesting particulars.* Its surface is covered with large ramifications of blood-vessels, and it is divided internally into a number of distinct pouches, opening by side-slits into the lower part of the sac, which seems, in an anatomical point of view, to be nothing but the widened lower end of the ovary, while the pouches within it are formed by folds of the ovary itself. 'In each of these pouches a young individual is wrapped up as in a sheet, and all are packed in the most economical manner, as far as saving of space is concerned, some having their heads turned forward, and others backward.' In the specimens examined by Professor Agassiz, the number of the young varied. Their size, as compared with their mother, was very remarkable; a specimen ten and a half inches long, and four and a half inches high, containing young ones nearly three inches long, and one inch high. Judging from their size, he at first suspected that the young could move at will in and out of the sac, like young opossums; but, on further investigation, he ascertained that this was impossible; but as these young have fully developed gills, it can hardly be doubted that the water penetrates into the marsupial sack.

Mr Lord, the naturalist to the British North American Boundary Commission, has added considerably to our knowledge of these viviparous fishes in his interesting work entitled *The Naturalist*

* The following details are taken from the professor's Memoir in *Silliman's Journal* for 1854.

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in British Columbia, the covers of which are adorned with a gilt figure of the female fish with most of her young shewn *in situ*; while a few that have escaped when the abdomen was opened, are seen lying around her. Mr Lord's discovery of these fishes in Vancouver's Island was made almost simultaneously with Mr Jackson's similar discovery, a long distance off, in California. According to Mr Lord, the geographical range of this fish is from Sitka to the Bay of San Francisco, or possibly much further south. They are abundant on the coast of Vancouver's Island, where they swim close to the surface in immense shoals. When alarmed, they leap high out of the water; and the Indians, by lashing the sea with their paddles, actually frighten the fish to leap into their canoes. He stumbled, like Mr Jackson, upon the discovery of the viviparous nature of these fishes without the slightest previous suspicion of the fact. On dissecting back the walls of the abdomen of the fish in which he made the original discovery, he found a bluish-white bag with folds, in each of which was packed away a little fish, of which there were fourteen. Moreover, he quite confirms Professor Agassiz's statement as to the relatively large size of the young fish as compared with the size of the mother. Dr Gunther, in the British Museum Catalogue of Fishes, vol. iv. page 245 (quoted by Lord in page 353 of his second volume), uses the generic title of *Ditrema* for these fishes, and recognises no less than seventeen species; the illustration to which we have referred being that of the *Ditrema argenteum*. For the benefit of those of our readers who have forgotten their Greek, we may add that the term *Ditrema* indicates that the fish possesses two distinct abdominal apertures.

We shall conclude this article with a notice of the latest, and at the same time the most remarkable of the discoveries of this kind. Professor Agassiz, in his recently published *Travels in Brasil*, gives an account of certain fishes occurring in the Amazon, which carry their young, from the egg-state to that of perfect development, in their mouths. This peculiarity exists in the type of fishes called by the natives *Acarà*—a term which they apply to various oval-shaped fishes belonging to several genera. How the eggs are brought into the mouth, has not been ascertained, nor does the professor state whether it is exclusively one of the sexes that possesses this peculiarity; but that the eggs are thus transferred soon after they are laid, is obvious, because eggs in every phase of development are found associated together in that position. Occasionally, instead of eggs, a brood of young, already hatched, was found occupying the cavity of the gills as well as the space enclosed by the gill-membrane. The eggs, before hatching, are always found in the same part of the mouth—namely, in the upper part of the branchial arches, protected by a special lobe or valve, formed by certain bones known to anatomists as the *upper pharyngeals*. The cavity thus occupied by the eggs corresponds exactly to the complex gill-cover of that curious family of fishes inhabiting the East India Ocean, called, from this peculiarity, *Labyrinthici*, of which the Climbing Perch (*Anabas scandens*) is the best known example; and the professor throws out a prophetic hint that the branchial labyrinth of these fishes may possibly be a breeding-pouch as well as a mere respiratory apparatus. This suggestion, coming from such an authority, will doubtless lead some of our medical officers in the East (many of whom are skilled naturalists) to investigate the life-history of the climbing perch.

In a later part of his voyage, the professor obtained numerous specimens of a new species of these fishes, which furnished a complete embryological series; some of them having their eggs at the back part of the gills; and others, their young in the mouth, in different stages of development, up to those which were a quarter of an inch in length, and able to swim about freely when removed into a vessel of water. The most advanced were always found outside the gills, within the cavity formed by the gill-covers and the branchiostegal membrane whose office it is to close the gill-opening.

A careful anatomical and experimental investigation shewed that the marsupial pouch thus formed in the gill-region is provided with a very sensitive network of nerves, the principal stem of which arises from a special nervous mass (or ganglion) lying behind the cerebellum, in the medulla oblongata (which is the name given to that anterior part of the spinal cord which lies within the cavity of the cranium). Hence, we have a peculiar modification of nervous structure, by which an obvious connection is established between the care of the offspring and the parental organ of intelligence.

In the case of the Australian mammals, the special nature of the climate sufficiently explains why the marsupial arrangement should prevail over that sterile continent. Whether any equally plausible reason can be found to explain why two or three kinds of batrachians, and a few fishes, should deviate in so extraordinary a manner from the ordinary course of nature, we know not: these isolated cases are, as it were, problems to which, at present, we see no solutions, and which must be left to future inquirers in this field of science.

A PERFECT TREASURE.

CHAPTER III.—MRS BLUNT'S VISIT.

On the ensuing day, Mrs Eleanor Blunt drove *Proudfoot*—in whose steadiness and decorum she had, ever, the same misplaced confidence—over to Hershell Point, which was called by those in the immediate neighbourhood 'the Point,' and joked upon by my new acquaintance accordingly. She always complained with respect to us that it was impossible to come 'straight to the Point;' and called the series of inclines that led to the house from the upper cliff *Voyages en Zigzag*, after the French book of that name, which she lent me, and with the illustrations of which I was hugely delighted. My uncle and she became great friends, to my extreme satisfaction, and not a little to my surprise. I had felt an apprehension that this *littérateur* and bookworm would not have properly appreciated my kind protector, who rarely read anything but the *Gardeners' Chronicle*, and had pronounced one of Mrs Blunt's own *chefs-d'œuvre*, which I had once persuaded him to attempt, as 'fudge.' I did not then understand that 'character' is more attractive to a person of genius—and such Mrs Eleanor Blunt decidedly was—than any mere sympathies of taste.

She was charmed with Uncle Theo's modest yet perfectly independent air, his natural talk, his manly carriage; and he, on his part, received with something more than courtesy a lady who did not spare her praises of his nephew. I will never own, even to

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myself, that Mrs Blunt was insincere; but although no flatterer, she was an adept in the art of pleasing. 'I had expected,' she confessed to me as I accompanied her part of the way home that evening, 'to have found in the ex-maharajah a sort of Dugald Dalgetty; instead of that, he is a Bayard: he could surely have never picked up that stately courtesy at the court of Bundelbad with that wonderful woman.' Here she became a little hysterical, and had to wipe her eyes. The fact is, I had shewn her the portrait of my eccentric aunt-in-law, not without some pardonable pride; for surely if to be illegitimately descended from royalty is a matter for self-complacency, how much more to be lawfully, although indirectly, connected with it. 'You need never fear,' she went on, perceiving in me some discomfort, 'my putting that guardian angel of yours into a book. Such a life-history as his could be only fitly written in lively French. And yet,' mused she, 'no Frenchman would understand him. If there is something of Murat and Warren Hastings about that capital relative of yours, there is more of Uncle Toby.'

'That is quite true, madam,' said I gravely.

She looked at me with a comical air, as though she would have said: 'You are young for Sterne, Master Marmaduke,' but uttered no remark. She was desirous at that time, if not of discouraging my literary proclivities, at least of not forcing them into premature activity. She had had too much experience of juvenile geniuses to take them at their self-estimated value; and she had too kindly a regard for me to assist, without some proof of my fitness for that calling, in my 'devoting myself to literature'—a phrase that has more of its primary Juggernautish signification about it than neophytes are apt to imagine. I am bound to say that while discussing my favourite branches of reading in a manner that could not but enhance them in my eyes, she parried every leading question that I put to her with respect to the profession of letters, and when she spoke of it in the abstract, always called it 'that heart-breaking business.'

Still, when I at last did put the question: 'Then why have embraced it yourself, good Mrs Blunt?' it was difficult even for her to reply to *me*, boy as I was: 'Because I felt I was fit for it; whereas you, Master Marmaduke, are not fit, being a goose.' She only gave a great sigh, and said: 'You may bring your manuscripts to-morrow, my dear—all the best of them, that is—but I shall never like your works one-half so much as I like *you*'—which was, I thought, but a left-hand sort of compliment.

The selection thus imposed upon me proved a very invidious one, although my own genius was alone concerned. If one of my precious manuscripts excelled in imagination or fancy, another had the pre-eminence in pathos. Fortunately for Mrs Blunt, *Wildred the Half-caste* was too bulky to be put in my pocket, or perhaps even in her pony-carriage, had I borrowed that equipage for the purpose. I only took a specimen chapter or two, to give her an idea of my more elevated style, half-a-dozen shorter narratives, and about ten pounds weight of poems, all in a knapsack.

The expression of my talented friend's face as I exhibited these works *en masse* upon her drawing-room carpet—for the table could not hold them—would have been a study for Gustave Doré. 'Don't you think you could winnow them just a little more?' inquired she pathetically; whereupon I did take out three or four exquisite poems, although it was like parting with my heart's blood.

'You shall read these afterwards,' said I, 'if you like the rest.'

'Thanks, my dear,' said she with gravity; but I saw from the motion of her shoulders that she was laughing; the dear little lady was so plump, that mirth very literally 'moved' her—it set her wabbling like *blanc-mange*.

In the course of that week, Mrs Eleanor Blunt passed judgment upon my literary efforts. It was her custom to write to me almost every day. I never knew any one at once so skilful with her pen and so willing to use it. Famous authors are generally chary of their epistolary favours; they do not like to write for nothing when they can earn a shilling a line; or perhaps it would be more charitable to say that they have enough of professional writing to tire them, and are obliged to cut short their communications to their friends. But Mrs Blunt, though one of the most prolific of English writers, wrote more private letters than any of those poor idle women who suffer from *cacoëthes scribendi*, and they were long letters too; although, being written in a microscopic hand ('Which I practised for cheapness' sake, my dear, in times when the cost of postage was very heavy'), they occupied but little space.

In yonder desk lie at least three hundred of them, marvels of wit and sense; and one lock of snow-white hair from her wrinkled forehead, which I value more than all. Yes; here it is:

> And my own breath
> Stirs its thin outer threads, as though beside
> The living head I stood in honoured pride,
> Talking of lovely things that conquer death.
> She pressed it oftentimes, and underneath
> Ran her fine fingers.

But to my story.

Her verdict was passed by letter.

'I HAVE read your manuscripts, dear Marmaduke,' wrote she, 'and some of them with an interest quite independent of the writer. They are very unequal, though the worst of them have some redeeming points. There is nothing so good as to enable me to say: "This boy will make his mark." The very best of the poems is but an echo. Still, they are better than Lord Byron's were at the same age; and, in my humble opinion, we have had no such poet in this country in my time as Byron. I knock you down with one hand, you see, and pick you up with the other, just as the National schoolmaster here boxes his boys' ears (for I have seen him do it). The fact is, you have placed a responsibility on me which I must shift in part from my own shoulders to those of your good uncle; it is too grave for me to bear alone. If the promise exhibited in what you have written were less than it is—that is, considerably less—I should say: "Give up this cherished idea of a literary life, and be content with an ordinary calling;" if the promise were only a little more, I should not hesitate to say: "You are born for letters, and will be a successful writer." But as it is, the matter, being in doubt, becomes a mere question of finance. I know nothing of your pecuniary prospects, my dear; indeed, you seem to know nothing about them yourself. (Do not suppose that is in your favour; it is a popular error that assigns as an attribute of genius an inaptitude for business

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affairs. It is quite possible—though, of course, this is not your case—to be stupid at everything.) Well, you must go to your uncle, and find out what is likely to be your future position. If you are always to possess a moderate independence, or even a small one, then you may become a literary man, as the loose phrase goes, and not trouble yourself about another pursuit. But if you are to be a poor man, or to be left poor when that good friend of yours shall have departed (a sort of friend that is very rare, Marmaduke), take the advice of one who has been exceptionally fortunate in a very risky trade, and eschew literature as a calling altogether. You have more than once heard me call it a "heart-breaking business," and I was born tough. I never much cared for what people said of me, and still less of what they wrote. But you, my poor Marmaduke.

> Who killed John Keats?
> I, said the *Quarterly*—
> With my Review so slaughterly,
> I killed John Keats.

And John Keats, whom I knew well, had the hide of a rhinoceros compared with yours, which is but goldbeaters' skin. Yes, you'll be fool enough to read all that the reviewers say about you, and to be tortured by them. I warn you, without forbidding you, as St Paul warns young ladies upon the subject of matrimony; you will have trouble in the flesh. Yes, my dear, this in any case; and though your union with literature should be the happiest on record. But this inconvenience is nothing compared with the combination of poverty and failure. My good boy, let me entreat of you to have another string to your bow, to have another weapon to fight the battle of life with beside the pen, if you are destined to be poor. The most successful writer of any age has left it on record that "literature is a good staff, but a very bad crutch;" and he never wrote a more pregnant sentence. I paraphrase it, for fear of misinterpretation. It is a perilous thing to trust to this profession of letters for sole support, although it may supplement an income very agreeably. Perilous? Nay, the stage itself is not a more wretched calling (and I well know the wretchedness of *that*), nor one in which it is more difficult for the aspirant to undeceive himself. The author and the actor who have mistaken their professions are scarce to be convinced by starvation itself. I do not wish, however, to overstate the case: you may not starve, but you will certainly not carry the heights of Literature by assault. You will wait outside in the cold, it may be, for years; your manuscripts unaccepted, or, if accepted, ill paid—perhaps unpaid. When Shakspeare talks of the "insolence of office, and the spurns that patient merit of the unworthy takes," he must have had a prescient eye to editors. My *Hearths and Homesteads*—the best work of its day, I may say *now*, I suppose—was refused by six of these critical gentlemen, and eventually made the fortune of a publisher. Now, constant rejection, which is only galling to the man of means, is to the poor man Death. I hope, my dear lad, I have thus written enough to warn you against going into such a profession as that of letters without well counting the cost. As to other callings, your uncle is, of course, the proper counsellor, and you will be guided by him.—Always your affectionate well-wisher,

ELEANOR BLUNT.'

This courteous communication was a sad blow to me; for, conscious of my own merits, I had expected a decision of a very different sort. I say 'decision,' because it was at Uncle Theo's desire, as much as my own, that I had placed those ill-appreciated manuscripts in the hands of Mrs Blunt, and her verdict, it was agreed, was to be final. 'You can scarcely be an unprejudiced judge of your own productions, Marmy,' he had replied to me when I spoke of becoming an author; 'and as for Sangaree and myself, we are no critics. But this good lady at Sandiford is in a position to say "Yes" or "No" to the question: let her see all that you have written, all those effusions which seem so excellent to yourself, and so unintelligible, because I am so stupid, to me, and let us hear her advice, and follow it.'

My heart had yearned towards my generous, simple-hearted guardian as he thus spoke. Notwithstanding certain hints of an Indian Civil Service appointment, which had from time to time dropped from his lips, he would, it was thus made evident, permit me to follow the bent of my own inclination, if I were only pronounced by competent authority adapted for the calling of letters, and I had had no doubt of a favourable verdict. It was true that my manuscript works, both 'prose and worse,' as the wit has termed such, had seen the inside of several publishers' establishments, and of half the magazine offices in England, without the least sign of acceptance: some had been sent back to me with courteous frigidity, with meaningless 'Compliments' or 'Thanks,' and the rest I had a shrewd suspicion were feeding editorial fires. But I comforted myself with what I had read somewhere concerning the exclusiveness of literary cliques, the preference shewn to the staff of a periodical over volunteers, and also with the charitable reflection, that it was only natural that so novel and striking a writer as 'Leo' (for I was fool enough to use a *nom de plume*) should meet at first with envious obstruction.

But I had entertained no apprehension that so excellent a judge of literature as Mrs Eleanor Blunt would fail to see my peculiar merits, and her shortcoming in this respect disappointed me bitterly. It was impossible in her case to attribute it to jealousy, though I did try to reflect that successful persons are generally inclined to discourage others from attempting obstacles which they have themselves surmounted. I was driven to extract what comfort I could from the letter itself. If it was not decisively in favour of my own plans, it was by no means against them. Perhaps Uncle Theo could allow me, without inconvenience, a sufficient income to maintain me until my literary merits were acknowledged, without the necessity of my becoming an Indian judge—a position, by the by, much easier attained at that time than it is at present. Perhaps—but perhaps not. I was as ignorant of my pecuniary position as Mrs Blunt had hinted; I had always felt a delicacy in inquiring about it. I only knew that to Uncle Theo I must be indebted for my future maintenance, as I had so long been for my past. We had never spoken upon the subject at all, except on that one occasion when he had said: 'When I am gone, Marmy, this little place will be your own,' and had alluded in that mysterious manner to Tannajee. When I carried Mrs Blunt's letter into my guardian's room, I knew that some

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explanation must needs be made, some understanding come to, and I felt myself grow now hot, now cold, not—to do me justice—from anxiety as to my own prospects, but from the unpleasantness of having to enter upon so delicate a subject at all. It was hard to feel myself possessed of so sensitive an organisation, and yet to be denied the more advantageous qualities of genius. I had half a mind to give up my favourite project altogether, and to throw myself at the ex-maharajah's feet with: 'Uncle, I am a born fool; and ready to be a judge in India.'

CHAPTER IV.—THE FIRST HINT OF THE SECRET.

My uncle was in his study, a chamber, however, which scarcely possessed a single book, though it had a desk and an inkstand. Its chief article of furniture was his turning-lathe, at which he would work for hours in constructing a number of ingenious articles in sandal-wood and ivory, vast quantities of which he had brought home with him from the East. Our little drawing-room was so lavishly furnished with these ornaments that it looked like a bazaar. Sangaree Tannajee passed almost as much of his time in this department as his master, under pretence of assisting him; but the obese Hindu had in reality no more experience of mechanics than I had of making chupatties. He would sit smoking my uncle's cheroots upon the carpetless floor, with his legs folded under him, and gaze with lack-lustre eyes at the flying chips and spinning wheel until he fell asleep. It will doubtless seem very indecorous that Sambo should sit smoking, with his hands before him, while his master toiled, but the fact is there were no bounds to that fat scoundrel's idleness and impertinence. He did just what he liked of the work of the house, and that was almost nothing; he treated me with studious insolence (Master Marmy was the best name he had for me), and my uncle with at least a great want of respect. In public, indeed—if I may so term the few occasions when we had company at 'the Point'—he used to affect an Eastern servility towards his master (although even this thin polish was gradually wearing off), and salaamed and sahibed in a most ludicrous manner; but when we were alone, his tone was disagreeably familiar, and was growing more so daily.

On the present occasion, when I entered the study with Mrs Blunt's open letter in my hand, Sangaree was seated on the floor as usual, putting his lazy lips to his cheroot just sufficiently often to keep it alight, and lolling his head slowly from side to side like a sick elephant. Uncle Theo, with his coat off, and his pleasant face shining with toil, was listening to him attentively, while the other spoke a few languid words in Hindustanee; and though I knew nothing of their import, it was impossible to misunderstand the self-complacent and offensive air with which they were delivered. It was not the first time nor the second that I had known him thus repay his master's good-nature and forbearance with insolence. I had hitherto, however, abstained from interference (although it must be owned that Master Marmy took up the cudgels very readily when his own dignity was similarly outraged); but now, being vexed, to begin with, thanks to Mrs Blunt's verdict, I fairly lost my temper with the rascal. 'Sambo,' said I roughly, 'get out; I wish to speak to my uncle in private. Do you hear, you fat lout? Get out!'

I daresay my manner was rather offensive, as indeed I had meant it to be; but I don't think it was that which annoyed him, so much as my touching the fattest part of his fat person with the tip of my toe. He leaped up with an agility for which I should not have given him credit, and uttered some forcible ejaculations in his native dialect. I believe he also attempted to strike me; but I am not quite sure of that. My uncle was between us in an instant. I had never seen him in a passion before. I could henceforward picture to myself (which I had been hitherto unable to do) how Uncle Theo, sword in hand, at the head of the Begum's irregular cavalry, had looked; or cutting his way through the said troopers when he flew from the embraces of my aunt-in-law. It was not with me that he was thus enraged, but with the Hindu. At first, Tannajee cowered before the storm, and looked, as I have no doubt he was, exceedingly frightened. Then, as the rain of epithets slackened, he began to pluck up a little, to grumble, to gesticulate in his turn; and then to pat his stomach. With Sambo, as with the gorilla, this curious pantomimic action was always indicative of menace; it was somehow a sign, too, that he was growing absolutely dangerous, for it always had its effect upon his master. Upon this occasion, I noticed, with no small sense of humiliation, that my uncle's manner at once became grave and conciliatory. If I had had my way, I would have treated the rascal's ill-temper in a very different fashion. I felt like a planter in the Southern States with respect to this refractory Sambo, or rather as an Englishman in India regarded Hindus during the Mutiny. It is recorded that a cruel sepoy once underwent at the hands of our soldiers the following medical treatment: they gave him all the blue packets in a Seidlitz-powder box, and then all the white ones; and I should like to have tried that cooling prescription upon Mr Sangaree Tannajee whenever he patted his stomach.

I am afraid I may be thought arbitrary and tyrannical, but the fact is it was this scoundrel who was the tyrant of the whole house. He used to swear at Martha the cook, until he made her cry—though she was a tough one too—and absolutely, on one occasion, broke her own broom over the shoulders of our poor little maid-of-all-work, Nancy. His excuse, in the latter case, was (appropriately enough) that he was under the influence of bhang—which was his general name for any sort of spirituous liquor. He got drunk every week of his life upon something or other; gin, Dublin stout, spirits of wine—nothing came amiss to his palate so long as it was strong. He ate little else than rice, but that little was sometimes of an abominable description. He cooked everything for himself with his own hands, and perhaps that made Martha inclined to be scandalous; but she once confided to me that he had curried a cat. I could believe anything of him; and should not have been surprised (since there were opportunities, after storms at Hershell Point, for his indulging in that practice) to find that he was a ghoul, and ate human flesh. Whatever he ate, it must be owned it nourished him, for he was growing obese and unwieldy, and his little eyes sank deeper every day in his fat cheeks. In his person, I am bound to say that Tannajee was scrupulously clean; when not drinking or smoking, he was

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always washing, and spent hours at a time in the sea. Unfortunately, as I then thought, there were no sharks in Hershell Bay; for the time was yet far off when, to use my uncle's words, I was to find 'that Tannajee a perfect treasure.'

I never thought him more utterly worthless than at the present moment, when, as he withdrew from the study, still muttering and grumbling, my uncle turned on me, and gave me the first scolding I ever heard from his lips.

'You are hasty and foolish, young sir,' said he. 'Why do you thus anger that poor fellow?' (I thought of Tartuffe.) 'Because his skin is brown, is that a reason for your hatred?'

'I hate him, uncle, because he is so disrespectful to you.'

'Never you mind that, lad; I can take care of myself, thank you; and besides, he 's not wanting in regard for me, although his manner of shewing it may be peculiar.'

'He is a drunkard,' said I, rather sullenly, I am afraid, for his master's forbearance towards this scoundrel seemed to me nothing less than infatuation.

'Perhaps, Marmy,' rejoined Uncle Theo gravely, 'if you were an exile in a foreign country among persons of another race, and even colour, you too would take to drink: many Englishmen do so in India.'

'But he beats the servants.'

'Many Englishmen do so in India,' reiterated my uncle tranquilly: 'we must know how to make allowances for others. At all events, Sangaree Tannajee was once my faithful and attached follower in very troublous times.'

'O uncle,' cried I, 'pray, pray forgive me; I have behaved unkindly and ungratefully. Henceforward, Sam—I mean Sangaree—shall never be treated otherwise than well by me. I will ask his pardon, if you wish it, immediately.'

'No, no! don't do that, Marmy,' said my uncle rather hastily; 'he would misunderstand you: we must not seem, you see, as if we were afraid of him.' My dear guardian spoke in a hesitating and even painful manner, which I could not understand. But presently he added briskly: 'Come; I forgive you, Marmy; and do you, on your part, forget that I was angry with you. It has never happened before, my lad, has it?'

'O sir,' said I, looking up into that bronzed and comely face, 'I am an ungrateful boy. I have done nothing to deserve your regard, as this faithful fellow doubtless has, and yet I treat him'——

'Hush, hush, lad.'

Uncle Theo stooped down, for though I was a tall youth of my age, he was almost a foot taller, and kissed my forehead; his blue eyes—so tender that they softened the bushy, hard, and grim moustache and weather-beaten features wholly—were moist with tears.—'What is it brings you here, Marmy?'

A few minutes ago, and I had resolved not to shew him Mrs Blunt's communication, but now I felt that I could withhold nothing from him, any more than from the mother whose place he filled for me; so I placed the letter in his hand. He read it very slowly, spelling it out half aloud to himself, for he was not familiar with manuscript. 'She seems a wise and prudent lady, this friend of yours, Marmy,' said he gravely. 'Let us take counsel together over what she says. We agreed, I think, to abide by her decision as respects your literary talents?'

'Yes, uncle,' said I as blithely as I could, but not without a wince.

'Well,' continued he good-naturedly, 'she evidently thinks more highly of them than she trusts herself to speak. If her decision had been dead against you, there would have been nothing for it but for you and me to part: that would have vexed us both, I think. I at least, who am growing old, would have felt very lonely here, with the seas rolling between me and you, lad. Perhaps I should never have seen you again. That Indian life is not what it used to be; the pagoda-tree has been too well shaken. It would have taken you half a lifetime to make your fortune; and even if you had made it more quickly, how much might you have lost in exchange? Look at me, Marmy—an old, ill-thought-of man, without a friend, because my days for friendship-making were passed out yonder.' He pointed across the eastern sea, that stretched below us, a plain of molten gold. 'I am glad my boy is not to be sent to that school.' He stopped, and gazed upon me with a wistful sorrow. 'I wish, Heaven knows,' he went on, 'that I could say: "Follow your own way, Marmy; and whether you succeed or not—whether you gain a shilling by your pen or not, there is enough and to spare for us both." But I cannot do this. It is necessary that you should do something for yourself, not for my sake, but for your own. I have sufficient to last us both so long as I am likely to live, but I have nothing to leave behind me except'—here Uncle Theo hesitated, evidently at a loss to express himself—'except a contingency. I myself may be very rich some day, Marmy. It is almost certain that you will be so. But in the meantime we are poor; every year, every day, we are growing poorer, for the fact is we are living on our principal. Of course this seems to you the height of imprudence; but it is too late to talk of that now. I calculated upon a certain expectation, which did not turn up so soon as I anticipated. Perhaps you are saying to yourself: "Why does my uncle thus speak in riddles?" I cannot help that; I would tell you all if I could: there is no confidence, no secret, which is my own to tell, that I would not repose in you.'

'I am sure of that, Uncle Theo.'

'I hope so, lad. But, to convince you of it, see here.' He opened a little writing-desk, touched a secret spring, which set free a small drawer, and took from it an envelope, bearing this address upon it: *To my Nephew, Marmaduke Drake. To be opened immediately after his uncle's death.* 'I put this back again, Marmy, in the fullest conviction that you will never break that seal until the proper time arrives.'

Nothing could be more matter of fact and simple than my Uncle Theo's manner. Although his own career, to that large class of persons who 'believe nothing they do not read in a newspaper, or which does not come within their own trumpery experience,' might have seemed a melodrama, he himself (like him who had talked prose all his life without knowing it) was quite unconscious of the fact. Nothing imposed upon him in what he saw of life. The fame of Mrs Eleanor Blunt was no more to him than that of any tradesman whose goods were extensively advertised; the Begum of Bundelbad was in his eyes merely a coarse, passionate woman, like Martha the cook. I am sure it did not seem strange to himself that he should be an ex-maharajah. In short, he was the most

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inartificial as well as straightforward of mankind. Thus, though in so singular a statement from any other man I should have suspected at least exaggeration and stage-effect, I well knew that Uncle Theo had told me the truth, and nothing but the truth (although, for reasons which were beyond his control, it was not the whole truth), concerning our affairs.

'To be still more explicit, Marmy,' continued my uncle, shutting up the desk again: 'we two can live on here as we have hitherto done for the next five years, during which, let us hope, you will be able to establish your footing in literature. If so, you shall help to keep your old uncle; and if not, well, we must sell Hershell Point, and live on the proceeds until better times!'

'You shall never sell "the Point" on my account, dear Uncle Theo,' cried I warmly. 'And oh, if I could but make you rich (not repay you what I owe you, for that is impossible) by my own exertions, how happy should I be! It would be worth all the fame in the world! Five years in which to push my way! I must be a very slow mole indeed, not to get through all difficulties in that time!'

Uncle Theo nodded and smiled, or he was very willing to share the confidence which I felt in my own powers. 'I hope so, lad, indeed; and I am sure it will be your misfortune, and not your fault, if you fail in the matter. We can but do our best, you know, whether we use pen or sabre. But, in the meantime, be civil to Tannajee, though I am afraid (and here he smiled) 'the true worth of that poor fellow will never be discovered by you until he is gone.'

FROM THE ICE-FIELDS.

The British tourist is little known in Iceland. It is not a polyglot country; he cannot speak the language, and he cannot get on without speaking it; there are no roads in those portions of the island which are especially worth visiting; and the prevailing customs with regard to food are unsatisfactory. These are all sound reasons why the Briton should draw the line of northward travel at Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, and also why we should feel grateful to the enterprising Swedish professor* who has explored the islands thoroughly, as well as to that accomplished scholar, Mr Barnard, who has made so admirable a translation of his work. The country, abounding in natural features of great interest, and in myths and traditions of immense antiquity and significance; and the people, few, but of strongly marked character, of a stern intelligence, and ardent lovers of liberty, form delightful subjects of study for the stay-at-home travellers for whose delectation the dauntless author of the present work underwent so much. Iceland, with her ice-mountains, her warm springs, her volcanoes and streams of lava, her sandy plains and rapid rivers, is 'a land of reminiscences, where well-nigh every spot has its history written by the hand of man. But besides this, it is an open book of nature, a country where the formation and transformation of the earth's crust take place on so grand a scale that the lapse of even a few years is often sufficient to make the effects of this transforming power evident to the attentive observer.' The exploration is by no means easy, nor is it quite free from danger; it is one of the very few things in the category of travel which still includes self-denial, energy, and courage. The desert tracts are monotonous, the treeless wastes are sad, the fjelds are naked, the mountain torrents are many and boisterous, and their courses are capricious. There is not a little resemblance between the life of the Icelander and that of the Arab, especially in the dependence of both upon their horses. 'The Icelander,' says the professor, 'can scarcely go a single step without his horse; and should this fail him, his life is placed in peril. It must carry him over long and barren wastes, where hardly a handful of grass is to be seen wherewith to appease its hunger, and yet the Icelandic horse has one great advantage over its Arabian congener—it never lacks water!'

On the eighteenth day of a voyage from Copenhagen, the professor saw the lofty islands in Fuglasker, the most south-westerly point of Iceland—the mainland being enveloped in fog, which abounds in the country. A grimly grand spot is this extremity of the volcanic peninsula, with its outlying island of suggestive name—Eldey, or fire-island—haunted by the phantoms of the great auk. What a strange place it must have been, when the ugly monster penguin, with its flabby, swimming flaps instead of wings, was common there! Then came the entrance into the broad Bay of Farajoror, crowned by the Snäfell Jökul, a volcano four thousand five hundred and seventy-seven feet high, whose snow-clad cleft summit rises up from the sea like a pyramid. The only habitable parts of the island are the narrow strips of land running parallel with the coast, or at the bottom of deep valleys. Solemn and forbidding, but in its grim way beautiful, must be that treeless country, with its sharp ridged mountains studding the coast—gigantic partition-walls between the numberless fjords that everywhere intersect it and its wide interior table-lands; a kingdom of fire and of snow, with perpetual tokens of the presence of the fire, fantastic, capricious—the volcanoes now forming solitary and barren crests, rising up from the plains, without any connection with a mountain-ridge or plateau; again, the eruptions taking place on the lower table-lands, without any apparent connection with the mountains themselves. A grave, peaceful, industrious, thoughtful people live in this wonderful country, in the perpetual sight of those natural phenomena which appear to us most awful and imposing, under conditions of existence which are rather quaint and grim than rigorous.

The seaport town of Reykjavik is a miniature of Copenhagen, with two thousand inhabitants, partly Danish, partly Icelandic. Trade is very remunerative, but few of the merchants are residents; their business being done by paid managers, who have also a percentage on profits. The form of the government—separate, except in a financial point of view, from that of Denmark—is simple and satisfactory, and great unanimity and sound public spirit prevail. Of course, there is a 'National' party, but it is moderate in its views as yet, and not obnoxious in its proceedings. The ecclesiastical interest is powerful in the little place.

* *A Summer in Iceland.* By C. W. Paijkull, Professor of Geology at the University of Upsala. Translated by the Rev. M. R. Barnard, B.A. London: Chapman and Hall.

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There is a bishop, with a staff of twenty archdeacons, and there are one hundred and ninety-six livings, a pastoral seminary, and an elementary public school. On the whole, an idea of tame, well-to-do respectability is gained from the professor's description of the social aspect of Iceland. Uniformity in dress, buildings, and modes of life, gives a general dulness to the scene, no doubt, which is not contradicted by the wide-spreading ice-fields, and the perpetual menace of Hecla. In the vicinity of Reykjavik are seen the 'rucks' peculiar to Iceland. They are plains of stone and sand, whose surface presents the appearance—owing to the way in which the small stones and pebbles crossbar it—of land-drains in a field. The explanation of the phenomenon is that the earth, rendered soft by the melting of the snow in spring, has become dried by the heat of summer; rifts or cracks are formed in it; and when a storm occurs, the small stones that lie on the surface of the ruck are swept down into them.

Roads do not exist in the interior of Iceland—carts are unknown—all journeys are made, all merchandise is carried on horseback—and the bridle-paths, though good, are singularly embarrassing and disheartening to a stranger, especially when they are crossed by the tumultuous streams which rush down from the enormous snow mountains. There are few bridges, and the strength and rapidity of the currents generally render a ferry impossible. There are no stations for the entertainment of travellers, and the way has few distinguishing marks, consequently, a guide is indispensable. It is not easy to realise that the mere thread of pathway, totally unimportant, like a footway through a field, and actually crossing the bottom of brooks in the road, is the only highway to the far-famed geyser—that world's wonder, named with Niagara and the Victoria Falls. The absence of roads must aid the monotonous appearance of the country, which is doubtless also assisted by the construction of the Icelandic *baers*, or houses, which are built sometimes of earth only, sometimes of earth and stone, and have a turf roof, so that in the summer, when they are covered with green, they can scarcely be distinguished from the adjoining fields. Timber is so expensive to import and carry up the country, that it is seldom seen; and even the clergy and well-to-do farmers have not wooden houses, though they generally contrive to have one room floored. The poorest of the population dwell literally in earthen burrows, though, instead of being underground, they are above it. This is not an inviting description of a peasant's baer: 'The interior, which was very low and dark, formed only one room, one end of which was occupied by two bedsteads, the two side walls, with a small oblong table; and at the other end of the apartment was a store-room, where provisions, wool, moss, &c., were stored away. The fireplace, marked only by a few stones, was in the middle, opposite the entrance. This house possessed no floor, and no other ceiling than the rafters, which sustained the roof of turf. Light was admitted through a couple of small apertures in the roof; and the house was so low that the crossbeams which supported the rafters reached to the middle of the visitor's chest as he stood upright.' It seems wonderful to us that the poor should voluntarily dispense with the comforts of air and light, from which poverty does not debar them. We have heard the horrors of Irish and Scotch hovels, in this respect, accounted for by the fact, that the need for warmth is predominant; perhaps this also explains the Icelandic baer. The dirt in such places is frightful; and though the poor people are hospitable, and anything to eat and drink is not to be despised in a country where there are no inns, it requires real hunger and thirst to induce one to eat under such circumstances. Coffee in Iceland is as universal as tea in Russia or in the bush; the coffee-kettle stands on the fire all day long, and the coffee is excellent. It is the national beverage, with the addition of brandy. The latter is in very reasonable requisition, as damp is a normal constituent of life in Iceland; there is every facility for it afforded by the climate, and neither the roofs nor the walls can keep it out. In one part of the island, fireplaces in living-rooms are absolutely unknown, and the people live in darkness, the houses having no windows, in a loft over the cow-house. Turf and manure, animal and fish bones, and dried sea-weed, form the fuel in use. In houses of the superior class, the guest-room is furnished with a bed, a table, and a few chairs; but the family-room furniture consists only of beds fixed to the wall, and capable of holding two or three persons each. Every one eats his meals sitting upon his bedstead, with his plate and porringer before him. Looking-glasses and chests of drawers are a great rarity.

The national manners are simple and polite; the national tastes are grave; the national female dress is uniform and unostentatious, serviceable and modest. It consists of a tight-fitting, knitted woollen bodice, of dark colour, with tight sleeves buttoned at the wrist, without any decoration; and a wadmel skirt. A striped apron, generally green and red, enlivens this costume, which is completed by the *höfa*, a characteristic head-dress. It is a small black cap, fastened coquettishly across the temples, and adorned with a long silken tassel. This style of dress is worn by all classes alike, and by married and unmarried women, so that, on meeting an Icelandic woman, it is difficult to define her rank in society. Of course this rule only applies to the country. In the towns, the higher classes dress like other Europeans, perhaps more decently and rationally, but they will not be very long behind the age. The state costume is more barbarously splendid than that of the Hungarians, and must be imposing, stately, and beautiful. The Swedish professor maintains that the Icelandic women are not ugly, and says they have beautiful hair. Both men and women have remarkably prominent eyeballs. The men are not so good-looking as the Swedes and Danes; they are strongly built, with long waists and short legs.

The magnificence of nature contrasts strongly in the remote portions of the island with the dulness and squalor of the lives of the natives. Everything is grand, gigantic, superb, though the whole space for the display of these immensities is comparatively small. Mountains that hide their snowy heads far up in the sky; boundless sandy plains; swift foaming rivers; steep, rocky, perpendicular slopes; tremendous roaring waterfalls; deserts of lava, of ice, of snow, of sand, of stone; the boiling springs which tell of the wondrous chemistry within the bosom of the earth; and beyond all, seldom out of the traveller's sight, on every side the wide surrounding sea. The effect of this piled-up titanic grandeur, whose scale is so exaggerated

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that distances are both diminished and increased, must be very remarkable. The lava-fields which stretch away from Reykjavik form a suggestive track for the traveller towards Hecla, and the way is rich, not only in historical records of the terrible fiery floods, and the appalling convulsions of nature which have had their way there, but in wild and wonderful legends. The legendary lore of pagan Iceland must have been amazingly fruitful and picturesque, for so much of it to have survived among so matter-of-fact and coldly practical a people. The professor intended to have visited the crater of the Skaptar volcano, which was the vehicle of the awful eruption of 1783, when it discharged the largest lava-stream ever known, and which has never yet been reached. The account of this fearful occurrence is painfully interesting, including, as it does, details of suffering which do not occur to our minds as naturally ensuing on a volcanic eruption in a place which seems to us so desolate and remote as Iceland. That the fiery mountain should destroy and overthrow, and its cruel might be devastating in the regions under Vesuvius and Etna, is intelligible, but we fail to realise what the Icelandic volcanoes do, in the way of inflicting terror and misery and death. The eruption of 1783, when the lava from Skaptar piled itself to a height of six hundred feet in the ravine, and spread itself over the plains a hundred feet deep, put a stop to the fisheries, because the boats could not go out in the thick smoke which enveloped the entire district for three months. There is a terrible picture in the mere words. The *débris* that fell into the lakes destroyed the trout; the egg-harvest was lost, because the birds were driven away by the eruption; and swans, which used to be caught in great numbers, in the moulting season forsook the place. The grass was destroyed; and the wild plants, such as angelica and Iceland moss, used for food, were buried under the ashes. Early in the winter, the cattle began to shew signs of disease, of a nature never observed before, and peculiarly dreadful and painful. The sheep suffered beyond all the other animals, and died in great numbers. Then came the turn of the human race. The fetid state of the atmosphere, and the impurity of the water, produced a terrible dearth, soon felt with appalling severity. With famine came pestilence, in the shape of a frightful disease, resembling the worst form of scurvy. In the little district of Skaptarfell alone, one hundred and fifty persons died early in 1784. In one farm, all the inmates were attacked, so that there was not literally a single person left to nurse and succour the infected; and the dead had to lie as they were struck down, till news of the disaster was conveyed by travellers to other places. Many of these had had for their only subsistence the flesh and milk of the diseased animals, or old hides that had been boiled down. This was one of the most terrible epochs in the history of Iceland.

Dried fish, smoked mutton, and bread (made not in ovens, but in iron pots), of which very little is eaten in Iceland in comparison with other countries, is the staple food. The poorer classes use a mixture of oil and tallow instead of butter, and all Icelanders are addicted to the eating of fat. A fable, with an implied moral, is founded upon this national predilection: 'A man, named Fusi, seated himself one Christmas-eve at a cross-road, to wait for the elves, who come at this time with their riches. It is only necessary not to speak to them, or take anything from them during the whole of the night, otherwise they will vanish, and all their riches are turned into stones. But when the sun rises, one must say: "God be praised, now it is morning in the heavens!" and the elves vanish, leaving their stores behind them. Fusi, then, was sitting by the cross-road, and an elf came to him, and asked him if he would not partake of a piece of fat. The temptation was too great to be resisted, and he replied: "Fat have I never refused!" But alas! fat, elves, and all vanished from his sight.'

The professor believes that the extent of forest in Iceland, in the pre-historic period, has been exaggerated. The forest limit in the interior of Scandinavia is two thousand five hundred feet under the limit of snow, and he believes this to be the limit in Iceland also, and that forests could not have existed on the table-lands. He considers that Iceland lies above the region of fir, neither fir nor pine growing there, but only the dwarf and common birch; also because its flora is exclusively alpine; and finally, from the low altitude of the limit of snow above the sea. The physical geography, the geology, and the mineralogy of this wonderful country, are full of interest: the little space devoted to them makes one wish for at least another volume. Whale-fishing, which must be unspeakably disgusting in reality, is always interesting in books, and in a description of Iceland has naturally a prominent place. Naturalists hold that the whale is not plentiful on the coast, and it must be remembered that a very little whale goes a very long way. The islanders are fond of a dish made from an intermediate layer of its flesh, which lies nearest the bones, but is not quite blubber, called *rengi*. This delicious *plat*, which is first boiled, for the extraction from it of lamp-oil, then soused in sour whey, is said to resemble 'something between pork and the muscles of a bullock, is of a whitish-yellowish colour, and tastes like pickled pork.' The professor asks: 'Can I give a more appetising description of it?' Hardly.

The Icelanders supply the Spanish market with dried fish, which is called *klip*. This is cod-fish, not salted in barrels, but in open heaps, so that the brine runs off; it is afterwards laid on the rocks to be dried. Stores of this preparation are kept in every house for winter consumption. The fish is first beaten on a stone, in order to separate the meaty fibres a little, for it can then be more easily divided into small pieces, which each person accommodates to the size of his mouth and the state of his teeth; for after the fish has been beaten, it is ready for the table. It is then torn in pieces with the fingers, which here usurp the place of knives and forks. The fisheries are much neglected, the French reaping almost the whole of the rich harvest of the seas. Farming is very imperfect, and the products of the country in minerals are only beginning to attract attention. The people are unprogressive and reserved. They regard emigration with horror, and emigrants as traitors. There are few mechanics in the country. The fine arts are not cultivated; a taste for the beautiful is not developed. There are no national songs, and dancing is very rare. There is one clever young painter, but he is not encouraged. The only art which finds patrons in Iceland is that of working gold. Even in this, all the patterns are memorials from olden days; and the wrought gold is used only on the national state costume. Few

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Icelanders are students of nature, though they live amid her wonder and sublimity. When students at all, they are theologians. On the whole, they are an unsatisfactory people, respectable and staid, but wanting in grandeur, and the ideal qualities which make a race interesting. The political position of the country is vague: no one seems to know what its precise relation to Denmark is. When the mines are about to be worked by great companies, the position will be defined, no doubt to the satisfaction of the bigger parties concerned. At present, Iceland is sometimes called a colony, sometimes a province, and finally, a new word has been coined, and it is called a dependency. The Icelanders acknowledge no such title, but simply call it 'The Land.' Not a wholly unprosperous or contemptible little country, it has fallen into obscurity, and it is hard to believe in what it was from the beginning of the twelfth to the middle of the fourteenth century, when it produced that remarkable, that splendid literature, which is justly Iceland's pride, 'and which,' says the professor, 'has been instrumental in preserving, up to the present day, the knowledge of that language which our forefathers spoke—a language which is of the last importance to the proper understanding of our own tongue; while at the same time the historical portions of this literature, the Sagas, are the sources of the ancient history of the countries of the north, whether as regards actual occurrences, customs, or morals.'

To the pages of that ancient literature we must turn, if we would find congruity between the dwellers in Iceland, and that marvellous land of the burning mountains, of the boundless ice-fields, of the grand treeless wastes, Saharas of the north, of the boiling lake and the Great Geyser.

A PACK OF DEMONS.

I KNEW the Chieveley Pack—as fine a pack of hounds as ever ran a fox to earth. Everybody said so, and therefore the assertion will not bear contradiction. I never saw, for my part, that they were more in number, or finer-looking, or had better runs than the Pytchley, or the Puckeridge, or Essex, or Southwold hounds—packs that I have often gazed upon, when a southerly wind and a cloudy sky proclaimed a hunting morning. I knew Jerry Ball, too, the old huntsman—as dry an old stick as ever blew horn, or curled the long thong of his whip round some truant young hound's flank. Proud of his pink was Jerry; and when, with a fresh season, he came out with what Captain Castigan used to call a 'new shoot,' I don't think that he would have doffed that black-velvet-covered head-case of his to a prince. He was like his horse, and a better-matched pair never went to meet. They were both of the style that sporting-men would term 'weedy;' for Jerry was dry and withered, and had a blue nose, while his back rose up like that of a wet mouse. As for Jerry's legs, they seemed regularly to have grown to fit round the ribs of his old hunter, so that they seemed almost to belong to one another—Jerry and his horse; and if anything was to be cleared, or gone through, those were the two who would do it. Jerry certainly had two eyes, but one was half-closed, from the lid being drawn over it in a perennial wink: and here again there was a likeness; for Old Bones, his horse, had also lost one eye, while, as if in imitation of his master, he would hang his head down, set up his back, and crook his old legs in the most extraordinary manner. See him then, and you would value him at knacker's market-price; but that would be through ignorance, for you did not know him. Languid swells on satin-coated steeds said he was a disgrace to the Hunt; but the old master would chuckle to himself, and his huntsman retained his steed. Wait until he was called upon, and then see what Old Bones could do; he would throw up that old coffin-shaped head of his, wag his ragged old tail, curve his spine for a few moments, and perform the feat known amongst 'horsey' men as 'bucking;' and then he went off; and if you kept steadily at the tail of the pack like he did, right through the run, why, all I can say is, that you were well mounted.

One wit of the followers of the Hunt compared him to an unfinished horse, saying that the framework was there, but it had not been clothed. However, Jerry and Old Bones went well together; and everybody agreed that there was no such pack of hounds anywhere as those yclept the Chieveley.

I had the misfortune at that time to dwell near the kennel; a handsome, brick-and-stone faced building, that would have been no disgrace to a gentleman if he had pointed it out as his shooting-box: pleasantly situated on the slope of a hill, with a splendid sweep of woodland scenery around: to the right, the broad lake, glistening through park-like patches of beech and oak; to the left, the tall sand-hills, crowned with many a darkling whispering grove of pines; while in front, far away till the distant dim blue hills cloud the view, one long stretch of valley. A rare hunting country; no ring-fences of wire here; no stone walls; but plenty of tolerable hedges and ditches, with now and then a stiff timber-fence, a bullfinch, or a brook to lend a charm to the tract.

One nuisance to me in this propinquity was the frequent arrival, and consequent passage past my gate—not of the butcher's cart with joints, but of what took its place—namely, that of the feltmonger of the neighbouring town, driven by one Dicky Bird, a strange-looking, dwarfish creature, whose duty it was to unclothe dead horse, cow, sheep, or lamb for the tannery; to cut up the animal for the sake of its tallow and glue-making material, and then cart off the flesh in large lumps to the kennel; and I can say, that in summer the odour given out by this Bird of prey, the cart and contents, was anything but desirable.

However, the hounds had to be fed; and the lumps of meat were forked out, and at due time, and in prescribed quantity, distributed amongst the members of the pack.

Hounds will be hounds; and at times, there would arise such a demoniacal din, such a howling and yelling, as would make the listener toss in his bed. Why, I have slept with those demons howling in

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my ears, and dreamed of such horrors that it would freeze your blood; while the worst of it was that you could not get used to the noise. You might accustom yourself to one particular howl, and bear with it pretty tolerably; but before a week had passed, you would find that some genius, proud of his noise, had invented a new solo in some horrible minor key, to which he would give vent the first fine night, with *da capo* unlimited; when, as if either in ecstasy or horror, the whole pack would join in chorus, as Captain Cuttle says, 'with a will;' and then it was sleep no more, for sleep was banished. Well, in time you would get over that; but there would come another, and another, and another—all perfectly new chants, with a heavy chorus attached; and it was quite wonderful to what a pitch they carried variety. I grew in time to know every hound by its noise—Gaylad, Juno, Merrilegs—all of them; or, at least, I believed that I did, and often wished that I did hunt, if only for the sake of having a long-lashed whip, on purpose to lay about me well, when occasion served, though at last they completely vanquished me, those tormentors did.

There came a night when the howling was something unbearable; and even now, when I recall it, a cold shudder creeps through my frame. The pack had been very quiet all the evening, and I was congratulating myself; for the wind set dead down upon my place, and if there had been a noise, I should have had the full benefit. But my reprieve was not for long. I had just looked up at the timepiece on the mantel-shelf, and seen that it wanted yet a quarter of twelve, so, giving the fire a friendly poke, and putting on just one more knob, I settled back in my chair for just one quarter of an hour before bed.

I had hardly read a line through before there came a whimper, and I shuddered in dread of what was coming, since experience had taught me the meaning of those little alarm-notes. Then came a howl in C major, followed in about twenty seconds by another in E minor; then there was a chromatic scale sung half-way through, but evidently broken in half for want of breath; then, without cessation, came bark, bay, and howl of the most outrageous description. Please to bear in mind that it was of fifty-dog power, while every brute was exerting himself to the uttermost, and I was only about an eighth of a mile distant.

Evidently, it was too much this, even for poor old Jerry; for, after closing my book in despair, and making a couple of cotton-wool plugs ready for insertion where sound enters, I suddenly heard a fierce yelping take the place of the barks and howls; and, in imagination, I could see old Jerry, whip in hand, laying about him most vigorously, making the long twining thong wreathe and twist about the flanks of the howling fiends who disturbed my rest; and I mentally determined to ask the old man to take a flagon of home-brewed the next time he passed my way.

Then came peace; and once more calling upon imagination, I saw Jerry leave the kennel, and enter his cottage, preparatory to going to bed. Thinking the old man's plan sensible, I rose, and followed his example; but my head had hardly touched the pillow, before the din recommenced, apparently with tenfold fury. I drew the curtains—I stopped my ears—I put the clothes over my head—I resolutely set myself to go to sleep; but all was in vain; and, at last, sitting up in bed, I was trying to recollect a few good round canine Eastern oaths wherewith to curse the whole pack, when my features relaxed into a grin; and I chuckled and rubbed my hands; for, plainly enough, in the silence of the night, I could hear that Jerry had come down again, and was plying that whip of his right and left, and most effectually too, from the howling it produced.

Silence once more; but sleep seemed chased from my eyes; and but for the badness of the habit, I should gladly have had a smoke, to calm my ruffled feelings. However, I lay, I should think, for about a quarter of an hour awake, when there was a little outbreak of yelling, just enough to rouse me up a little, and keep me awake for another quarter of an hour; when, after perfect silence, the noise began again worse than ever—howl, yell, bark, bay—they seemed to be excelling themselves; and gnashing my teeth with rage, I lay still, and composed an artfully worded advertisement to send to the morning papers, offering this desirable bachelor-residence *upon lease*, with immediate occupation, setting forth the fishing, shooting, and hunting; but not mentioning the kennel, as a matter of course; and then I grinned as I anticipated trapping some unfortunate wretch, with hunting proclivities, into dwelling there, and suffering my tortured nights.

But the storm still kept on for a few moments, after I had determined where applicants were to address, and I was just saying to myself: 'Why the dickens doesn't he get up and thrash them?' when once more I heard the yelps and cries as the whip fell amongst these disturbers of my rest.

'Give it them well this time, Jerry,' I muttered; and I was thinking that if I had been there, I should have applied the but-end as well as the lash of the flagellator, when all at once the yelling changed to another familiar sound—that of the growling, worrying, and snarling over food. 'Ah!' I thought, 'bribing them into silence, eh? Best plan, perhaps;' and as I mentally saw the old fellow pitchforking leg and thigh bones into the kennel, I could picture him giving two ravenous brutes toppers upon the skull with the fork-handle.

'That was a sharp one, at all events,' I muttered, as apparently following a blow from the heavy staff, there floated out upon the night-air a horrible cry, and then another and another, different to any that I had heard before, but plainly enough produced by suffering, as they rang out above the fierce worrying sounds.

'They 'll be quiet now, at all events,' I thought, while I pictured the grim old man belabouring the dogs in his anger at being fetched out of bed; and then I fell asleep, to dream that I had let my house, and was dwelling in a sunny part of the country, where there was neither cat, dog, nor east wind, when I was awaked by a knocking at the door, and a noise I knew well enough as that of a neighbour, asking me to get up and come down.

'Here; come in,' I exclaimed, pulling the string

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of the night-latch; and, coming in, he hurriedly informed me of the object of his visit.

'It's not seven yet,' he said. 'My man told me; came and knocked me up; and I thought I'd do the same by you before I went. Horrible, isn't it?'

'Frightful!' I ejaculated, dressing as hurriedly as I could; and a quarter of an hour after we were up at the kennel, where we met the old master of the hounds, looking pale as death, and holding a freshly discharged double-gun in his hand, which trembled with agitation.

'I've killed two of the devils,' he said, turning back with us.

'There's no doubt about it, then?' I said anxiously.

'Doubt, sir?' he exclaimed. 'Look here!' And turning into an outhouse where they were laid, I looked for a moment at something, and then turned shuddering away.

No; there was no doubt about it. You remember what followed, when Jehu said: 'Go, see now this cursed woman, and bury her; for she is a king's daughter.' It was almost the same here, for there was little more left of poor old Jerry than of royal Jezebel.

I told what I had heard, shuddering, for I recalled the strange cries, and knew now well enough what they meant.

'He ought to have known better,' said the old master, pointing to a torn and stained rag which a groom had brought out of the kennel. 'His clothes are all by his bedside, and he must have come down in his shirt, and entered the kennel. Animals know you as much by your clothes as by anything else, and they could not have known him when they saw the white figure come amongst them.'

IN THE PORTRAIT-GALLERY AT SOUTH KENSINGTON.

What a strange mystic influence falls
Upon me from these gazing walls.

Silent I feel strange mysteries
Look down from these beholding eyes.

I seem to breathe a doubting breath
Of death in life—of life in death.

What are you, painted shades that seem
Day wanderers from the land of dream!

Life-seemings that have found your way,
From worlds we know not, back to day.

Whence is the awe with which I tread
Through your long ranks, ye living dead!

The felt half-fear that haunts these aisles
With once-known wisdom, once-loved smiles!

With semblance grave or gay as when
Not painted lines you lived, but men.

Come you, we ask, from awful glooms,
Acquaint with secrets of the tombs?

Bring those lips power, to us, to tell
Of those new homes in which you dwell,
Of that great secret, in our turn,
We from the unseen too shall learn?

Even as I gaze, ye seem to me
The glasses of eternity;

In your unchanging steadfast gaze
Lives not the life of mortal days.

We come as ye came; we shall go
As ye went; change ye will not know.

Immortals, in our mortal air,
Our doom of time ye do not share.

Down to its depths the dim past drew
Your fellows, but it gulfed not you.

Barks from far seas of ages gone,
Ages to come will float you on.

Deaths, that are lives to us through art,
Would ye your knowledge could impart.

Watchers of life, would you could say
Your thoughts of us you see to-day.

What think you of our times' vain strife!
Of all we fleeting shades call Life!

From you, impassive, should we wile
Or wrath or pity, frown or smile?

Or both? Methinks that passing well
Fancy your utterance can tell.

See not, those unpronouncing eyes,
Wise men half-fools, and fools half-wise?

In men, find they not older boys,
Busied with games, and pleased with toys?

Puppets, through time, our parts we play
As you did in your little day.

Ah! too, like yours, our sports will cease;
We too, like you, shall pass to peace.

To peace? O say, to peace or strife?
Or, change to change, from life to life?

Who knows? Death, that our sight shall clear,
When we shall pass, and leave you here,

With watching eyes, and lips still dumb,
To times to be, and men to come.

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DAISY'S CHOICE.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

It was a beautiful road, leading through a green, undulating country, rich in corn-fields and woodlands. It was bordered by tall hedges, of which the hawthorn blossom was over, and had been succeeded by the delicate pink of the wild roses. The sloping banks were rich with fern fronds of the commoner sorts, but full of grace; they were sprinkled, too, with the tiny heart's-ease and the blue veronica. The road was deeply cut in some places, and then those banks were exquisite walls of greenness, and the wild hedge above made quite a shadow for travellers. It was as sweet a place as you could find in England; and at six o'clock on a May morning, with a blue, unclouded sky, and the birds making jubilee in the woods, and faint, delicious odours coming on every breath of wind, it was an exceedingly pleasant place to linger in.

So seemed to think a gentleman who was riding very slowly between the deep banks and shady hedgerows. He was a tall, powerfully built man, and he rode a strong, useful horse; but both horse and rider seemed pretty well tired out; and no wonder, seeing they had travelled a good many miles together, and the latter, at least, had not been in bed all night. The man rode with his head drooping a little, seldom looking up at the beauty by which he was surrounded. He had seen it all very often before, at all seasons of the year, and all hours of the day and night; for he was that hardest worked of all people—a village doctor. A turn in the road brought him suddenly face to face with another person, and he checked his horse. 'Daisy!' he said, and the tired look disappeared from his face in an instant. She was a very young girl, hardly more than seventeen, a good twenty years younger than the doctor, who was nearer forty than thirty. At the first glance, you could not help seeing that she was beautiful, and more than that. She had that picturesque grace which one often sees in pictures, and so seldom in real life. Her slender, undulating figure; her free, natural gestures; every turn of her head and pose of her body, were thoroughly graceful. This was what first struck every one in Daisy Barton. People always said of her: 'She is like a picture.' She was simply dressed in a light-blue cotton gown and a broad hat; yet everything about her was so fresh and delicate, that she might have gone anywhere dressed just as she was then, and no one would have thought of finding fault. She had crisp, wavy hair, that curled in her neck, and would not be brushed out straight. The only approximation she could make to the prevailing fashion was to tie it in a bunch of curls behind, with a blue ribbon. She had sweet, lustrous blue eyes, clear as those of a child; and she had a sensitive, flexible mouth. It was a face you could not soon weary of, for its expression was so constantly varying, and you were always learning something new in it. It would be beautiful, even after its owner should be old, and when the sunny brown hair should have become white; for those clear eyes could never lose their purity, and the sweet smile would linger till the coffin-lid was shut on it.

The doctor got off his horse, which stood patiently beside him while he put his arm round Daisy, and kissed her very gently. She turned and walked with him, he keeping one arm round her, and throwing the bridle over the other.

'I did not expect to meet you out so early,' he said.

'Nor I you,' she answered. 'The morning looked so lovely when I opened my eyes, that I jumped up. It would be a sin to sleep away those bright hours; they are the sweetest of the whole day. There is a sort of flavour about the morning air that is at no other time. Don't you think so?'

'Yes,' he said, smiling down at her. 'But I did not feel it till you came.'

'I wonder if you see things with the same eyes as I do, doctor?'

'Why—no. I see them with my own.'

She laughed softly. 'That is not what I mean. Is not all this lovely?'

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They had climbed slowly out of one of the deep cuttings, and had reached one of the high points of the road, where they could command a view of green corn-fields and wooded slopes. Below them lay the village of Thornregis, its white houses gleaming in the sun; and past it the Drew glided slowly between its luxuriant banks, crossed by its gray old bridge. Far off, a dim blue line marked the sea, and they could trace the windings of the Drew nearly till it was lost there.

The doctor stood still, and looked round him gravely. 'It is very beautiful: a man must be blind not to see that. Yet, I don't know that I feel about it just as you do. You see, I 'm a stupid old fellow, Daisy, and I think so much about other things. I believe the most beautiful thing in the world to me is your face, my darling.'

Daisy was silent. She did not pay any attention whatever to the compliment, albeit he was not given to making many. They walked on again, down hill now, passing from the opener country into a wooded dell, where the village was again lost sight of, though they were approaching it more nearly. When she spoke, it was of something else that he had said. 'You are not stupid; I know better than that. You are very clever about your own profession, and I know you have written books that are thought much of, though I can't understand them. And you are very kind and good; every one knows that.'

She said this as much to herself as to him, and as if speaking for her own comfort. He said nothing, but looked down at her very tenderly. No one could doubt that what she said of Dr Carleton's goodness was true, who looked at his face. It was a strong face. Strength lay in the broad brow; in the massive jaw; in the keen, steady gray eyes. It was a face which all sick people and all poor people instinctively trusted, it was so gentle and wise. He was, as she said, clever in his own profession; more than merely clever; he was greater in it than she could know.

'Have you been up all night?' she asked.

'Yes; I needed to be.'

'You must be very tired?'

'Not now. I was, a little ago.'

'Ah, how hard you work!'

'Not harder than many others; and I am strong. I 'm good for nothing except hard work, you know, Daisy.' He spoke lightly; yet there was a shadow, hardly perceptible, both on his face and in his voice. They were silent for a little, till his eye was caught by a pretty blue-and-gold volume which she carried in her hand. 'What have you been reading?' he asked, taking it from her, and turning over the leaves. 'Poetry—Byron. Child, I am not sure that this is good for you.'

She looked up at him with her blue, innocent eyes. 'Why not?' she said wonderingly. 'It is very beautiful.'

'Is it? I have heard people say so, who understood those things better than I do; but there may be poison in it nevertheless.' He glanced at her face. 'But I daresay it won't do you much harm—not the sort of harm it might do some.'

He was right; it would not do her much harm in the way he meant; her nature drank in the beauty, and let the evil roll off, as dew from a leaf. Yet, as she read it, she began dimly to comprehend that there were depths of love and passion which she had never dreamed of, and which half-frightened, half-fascinated her. Had some drops of the poison entered her mind when she began to think the doctor and his work rather commonplace, and vaguely to wish that there had been some different, some more exciting element in her life? She was so very young, and she hardly knew the worth of an honest man's love, or guessed that even in its quietness lay its depth and strength.

'By the way,' he said, as he gave her back the book, 'there is some one coming down here whom you will like to see. I used to know him long ago, but we have taken such different lines since that, I hardly thought we would cross each other again. But he is quite in your way. Have you ever heard of Gerald Vivian?'

'The poet?'

'I believe he has written something or other.'

Daisy's face flushed, and her eyes brightened. 'You don't mean to say that he is coming here?'

The doctor checked his patient horse once more, while he fumbled, first in one pocket and then in another. 'I should have it somewhere.'

'What is it?' said Daisy impatiently.

'A note I had from him. Perhaps I left it on my desk. He says—— Ah, here it is.'

She took it eagerly, and read:

DEAR CARLETON—I have lost sight of you for so long, that I did not even know you had settled at Thornregis, till I heard so casually the other day. I hear that the Drew is a good trout-river; and as I have been feeling knocked up lately, I think I will run down, and stay a week with you, if you will have me. We 'll have a talk over old college days and chums.—Yours truly,

GERALD VIVIAN.

'Oh!' said Daisy, drawing a long breath.

'Why, child, you look quite excited,' said the doctor laughing.

'No wonder. I have been so fond of his poetry, it is so lovely; and now, to think of seeing him! But I shall be too much afraid of him to speak to him, I 'm sure.'

'You need not: he is not at all formidable; at least, he was not, as I remember him.'

'Of course, you have written?'

'Yes. He may be here to-day or to-morrow.'

'And you have really never read his poems?'

'No, indeed.—You see,' he said humbly, 'I've so little time. And besides, even if I did read them, I don't think I could understand them.'

Daisy sighed; the doctor glanced at her sidewise, and sighed too. 'You are my poem,' he said.

She gave him a beautiful look, and laid her hand on his arm, and he looked satisfied.

They were entering the village; but they walked on slowly, still together. Every one knew the doctor, and every one had known Daisy all her life; it was known also that they belonged to each other, and people looked on them with approval. It seemed the most natural thing in the world that she should marry him who had watched over her motherless childhood; it was only making a little closer bonds that had been very close before. The villagers were coming to their doors to look out at the bright May sky, and they got many a kindly glance and nod as they passed. They went up the long street, and stopped before two houses that stood close together. Daisy would not have far to go when she married the doctor. Her father's house was an old-fashioned one, standing with its gable to the road, and with a wide court in front

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of the door, laid out prettily in turf and flower-beds. On the other side of this flower-garden was the doctor's house, which stood in the usual fashion, with its front-door to the street, so that its gable formed the boundary of Mr Barton's garden. In this gable, on the ground-floor, was the room which the doctor called his surgery, and where he constantly sat when at home. It was a pleasant room in itself, with a heterogeneous sort of odds and ends of furniture that had accumulated there during the years of the doctor's life at Thornregis. The medicine-bottles were all stowed away in a great carved oak press, which filled one end of the room altogether. Another side was covered by book-shelves, containing a very professional library. There were comfortable arm-chairs and sofas, and curious old escritoires scattered about; the doctor had a fancy for picking up bits of old-fashioned furniture. The room was sunny, and altogether had a homely pleasant air about it; and more than all, there was that wide deep window looking into Daisy's garden. The doctor's writing-table was drawn close to it, so that by merely lifting his head, he could see her go backward and forward among her flowers. Often it stood wide open, so that they could carry on a disjointed sort of conversation while she raked and watered. People at Thornregis were too unsophisticated to think evil of any such proceedings.

It was all very charming and very natural, and the doctor was thoroughly content. Perhaps it was just too natural for Daisy to be quite satisfied with it, and had come about too easily in the ordinary course of things. There seemed never to have been any change in her life; and when she married, there would be very little. There would still be the old village, the people whose faces were all familiar to her; she would have her old garden, where every plant was a friend; and she would live with the doctor, whom she had known all her life. It was to be very peaceful, very happy; but the young are restless, and crave change. They would fain leave the old everyday things, and go out into the world, where all is new, and vague, and unknown.

CHAPTER II.

The doctor was in his surgery, but not alone. He was busy doing something with bottles—going for them to the oak press, and bringing them to the table near the window, where the processes of examining, shaking, and putting mysterious substances, which had been weighed critically in a pair of small scales, into them. He was watched by a young man who lounged in the window, and who looked on with a look half-curiosity, half-amusement.

'Frankly, now, Carleton,' he said, 'do you not find it rather slow work living down here? It is a pretty enough place for a week or two; but for the whole year—to live one's whole life in, I don't think I could stand it.'

'The difference is,' said the doctor coolly, 'that you are an idle man and I am a busy one.'

'But with your abilities, it seems to me that your being buried here is simple waste.'

'My work is here.'

'Yes; but an inferior man would do the work as well.'

'Hardly. Do you think that the health of poor people matters less than the health of rich ones?'

'Well, no; not if you put it in that way. But I was thinking of you.'

'Thank you; but I am content. Are you?'

Mr Vivian did not answer; he turned to the window, and looked out. The doctor went to his oak press to search for something, softly whistling a few bars of a tune the while.

'Whose house is that opposite?'

'Mr Barton's.'

'Isn't it rather disagreeable to be overlooked so? They must see right in at this window.'

A curious little smile played about the doctor's mouth. 'I've never found it so.'

'It is a pretty little garden, though,' said Vivian, leaning his arms on the window-sill.—'Why, Carleton,' he went on with a sudden change of tone, 'who is that?'

The doctor glanced out. 'That is Miss Barton.'

'What a lovely girl!'

He drew back behind the window-curtain, and watched her. Daisy was in a simple white muslin, and her curly hair was tied with blue ribbons. She had come out, as she did every evening, to water her flowers, and she moved slowly among them with her little watering-pot in her hand. She glanced up at the surgery-window, and seeing only the doctor, gave him one of her brightest smiles.

'Are you busy?' she said, as she came near the window.

The doctor held up a bottle by way of answer.

'Oh, you can leave that just now; this is such a lovely evening, and I want you to help me.'

He smiled. 'May I bring some one with me, then?'

She drew back, flushing. 'I did not know he had come.'

'Will you come out?' said the doctor to Vivian; and they went round by the front-door, and in at Mr Barton's garden-gate. Now, although Daisy's garden was overlooked by the doctor, he had that privilege all to himself, for it was completely hidden from the street by a thick and tall laurel hedge. The gate was made through this hedge, so that one entered the garden under a green arch.

'This is Mr Vivian, Daisy,' said the doctor, going up to her; and they bowed to one another, Daisy not venturing to lift her eyes. Her cheeks were still flushed, and as she gained courage, she gave a swift glance at his face with her bright blue eyes. As she did so, she thought it was one of the most beautiful faces she had ever seen in her life; pale and sallow, but with finely cut features, and lighted up by a pair of wonderfully dark and lustrous eyes—eyes that seemed unfathomable in their depth, and that could be fiery, dreamy, sad, all by turns. When he spoke to her, it was in a voice soft and musical, very different from the hard dry tone he had used in the surgery. There was no undertone of discontent now. 'This is a sweet place, Miss Barton. What a lovely little nook you have; it is like some convent gardens I have seen.'

Daisy ventured another glance at him. The poet was not so very formidable after all.

'It is very quiet,' she answered; 'and there is a beautiful view from one part. Would you like to see it?' she asked timidly.

'If you please;' and she led him away from her flowers, along a shady walk, that took them quite to the other side of the garden, where a low wall separated it from the river-banks. Sitting on this wall, they could look across the Drew, and away

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over sloping meadow-land, to the distant blue line of sea, into which the sun was just then sinking in clear golden radiance. Vivian looked at it in silence; he had too much real poetry in him to say much. Daisy looked at him, as he stood with his face turned towards the sunset, the rich glow resting on it. He turned suddenly, and caught her admiring, reverent look, and it pleased him. Mr Vivian was accustomed to a great deal of admiration, and his fine dark eyes had done a considerable amount of execution; but his appetite for worship was by no means satiated. Besides, there was something piquant about Daisy: she was very beautiful, and his critical eye noticed the rare grace of her motions. As he watched her, leaning against the old wall, her head slightly bent and her eyes drooping, with the sunset lighting up her wavy hair, he thought he had never seen any one at all like her before. She was not the sort of person one might expect to meet in an out-of-the-world place like Thornregis.

The doctor, who had often seen Daisy's favourite view before, had been looking round her garden to see what he could do for her. He found rose-trees that needed nailing up, and called her to ask where the hammer was. She went into the house for it, and then stood by the doctor, giving directions while he nailed. Vivian felt annoyed that their *tête-à-tête* had been interrupted, and her attention directed to other things; he was one of those people who are accustomed to be first in almost any company, and felt ill used when he was not being taken special notice of. He looked at the early rosebuds, and smelled them discontentedly: Daisy unconsciously mollified him by pulling one of her cream-coloured tea-roses, and giving it to him. He gave her one of his most beautiful smiles, and put it in his button-hole. She did not think of giving one to the doctor, though he was working for her. She had grown so used to have him as a slave, that it seemed only natural that he should do the work, while Vivian stood and looked on with his beautiful dark eyes.

Presently, Mr Barton came out to them. He nodded to the doctor, who was now perched up on a ladder, nailing some high branches, and crossed to where Vivian stood. He was a tall, slender old man, with a fine face, and long white hair falling on his shoulders. He said: 'Mr Vivian, your coming is quite an event in the life of this little girl of mine. I scarcely think you can have a more fervent admirer than she is.'

This was pleasant to hear, and Vivian bowed and smiled. Daisy blushed, and whispered: 'O hush, papa;' and then murmured something about going to get tea ready, and disappeared through the ivy-covered porch.

Vivian thought it was all like a scene in an old romance: the quaint garden, with its high laurel hedge, and clipped yews and box-trees; its gay flower-beds set in the turf, and one or two vases filled with creeping-plants; the gray, ivy-covered house; the courteous, white-haired gentleman who was talking to him; and then Daisy came to the door, and standing there with her white dress and bright hair, surrounded by the frame of glossy ivy-leaves, put the finishing touch to the picture.

'Will you come in to tea?' she said; and the doctor came down from his ladder, and they all went in together. Inside the house, there was the same air of quaint picturesqueness: the drawing-room smelled of the dried rose-leaves which filled the old china jars that stood on old-fashioned cabinets; the furniture was all old, and its colours were toned down into soft harmonious tints. Daisy sat at the tea-table, and poured the tea into little old china cups. She looked very young and bright herself, and seemed to make a sunshine in the room. Altogether, it felt to Vivian like the rest he had wanted; he was tired of the noise and whirl of London, and of its conventional beauties who lionised him: this was something quite fresh and charming.

After tea, he asked Daisy to sing, and she went to the piano, and sang some simple airs very prettily. Then Vivian sat down, and from the first note he struck, he wrapped Daisy's soul in a dream of delight. He had one of those pathetic tenor voices that float in mournful, sweet cadences, that seem to be the very utterance of the soul of the singer. It could be sad, pleading, passionate; it could rise in the upper notes into triumph, and sink down again low, quivering, as if in pain. Daisy had never heard anything like it before; it fairly bewitched her, and she would have sat still for hours listening. When he stopped, she felt as if she could hardly bear the silence; and she begged him so sweetly for another song, and then another, that he sat singing to her till long after the darkness fell. Like most fine singers, it was happiness for him to sing, when he had a listener who could understand him.

The doctor had slipped away, and was out in the dark village street, where firelight gleamed through the unshuttered windows of the cottages. He walked with his head down, and for once his thoughts were those of repining. 'How fascinated she looked, my poor little Daisy. I wish I could sing like that. A man ought to be happy who can pour out the thoughts of his heart so. It is a gift of God.'

He stood still, and looked up to the sky, where the stars were shining out; and as he looked, he felt himself poor and mean compared with the gifted Vivian. Only for a moment; he was too truly noble to indulge long in sickly fancies. He knew he was what God had meant him to be, and that was enough for him. He turned into a low doorway, and went into a little room, where a poor creature lay in pain; and then he forgot all about Vivian, and thought only of his own work.

OATHS OF OFFICE.

Those who have never studied the subject, says Lord Chelmsford, would be astonished to learn the enormous number of oaths exacted, by law and custom, from British officials. These oaths are of two kinds—oaths of allegiance to the sovereign and her successors, and oaths of fidelity in the discharge of official duties.

Although five out of thirteen Royal Commissioners concur in declaring the first-named to be needless in peaceful and prosperous times, and unobserved in days of difficulty and danger, we are not likely to see the oath of allegiance abolished altogether; but there can be little doubt that it will be confined to the great officers of state and the higher judicial functionaries, instead of being required from all ranks and degrees of office-holders. The term office-holder must be taken in its widest possible sense, seeing that it includes ministers of state, the very highest and very lowest legal functionaries, officers of the royal household,

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members of the Royal Company of Archers doing duty as the Queen's body-guard in Scotland, officials of diocesan ecclesiastical courts, lord-lieutenants of counties, barristers of the Temple, Lincoln's Inn, and Gray's Inn; mayors, aldermen, town-councillors, and other officers of municipal corporations; university authorities, students and servants of Maynooth, Trinity House Brethren; heralds, pursuivants, and messengers of Lyon Office; lay-officers of the cathedrals of Hereford and Wells; members of the Society of High Constables of Edinburgh; poor brethren of the Charter House; directors of the Bank of England, Bank of Ireland, Bank of Scotland, and Royal Bank of Scotland; Commissioners of Income, Land, and Assessed Taxes; officers of the Royal Hospital of Kilmainham, 'for ancients and maimed officers and soldiers of the army of Ireland;' and parish clerks in the dioceses of Rochester, Hereford, Worcester, Peterborough, and Gloucester; to say nothing of takers of the Queen's shilling. To these may be added, if the statutes be strictly interpreted, all Scotch ministers of the Presbyterian and Episcopal churches, dissenting ministers generally, and private chaplains and schoolmasters practising their callings in Scotland.

Of the second class of oaths, many have been abolished, or converted into declarations; but nearly a thousand different formulas remain in use. Many of these are at the best unnecessary; and where the plea of necessity can be plausibly raised in their favour, not a few of them contain promises long since inapplicable to the duties of the offices to which they appertain; while almost all are overburdened with repetition and surplusage. If our judges solemnly promise to exercise their office with impartiality, it is only a mockery to make a lord chief-justice furthermore declare he will not be swayed by filthy lucre, by assenting to such an insulting clause as this: 'Ye shall not take, by you or by any other person, privily nor operte, any gift or reward of gold or of silver, or anything which might turn to your profit, but if it be meat or drink, and that of little value, of any man that shall have any plea or process hanging before you, as long as before yourself the pleas and processes shall be hanging, nor after for that cause ye shall take no fees of any person as long as ye shall be justice but of the Queen. Ye shall not give any advice or counsel to any person great or small in a cause where the Queen is party.' Nor can there be any need for a baron of the Court of Exchequer to swear he will speed the business of the crown before all other; and considering that Q.C.s do now and again appear against the crown, it is ridiculous that gentlemen in silk should bind themselves, without any proviso, to take no fees of any one for any matter against the Queen, although it is not unreasonable that they hold themselves ready to attend to the Queen's matters whenever called upon, and truly counsel her after their cunning. But for an oath-oppressed functionary, commend us to the bailiff of the Central Criminal Court. Upon receiving the bills of indictment, he has to swear that he will faithfully deliver them to the grand-jury in the condition in which he receives them; when the court adjourns in the middle of a case, he has to swear that he will keep the jury in some private place, neither speaking to them himself, nor allowing any one else to do so, upon matters touching the pending trial; and upon a jury's retiring to consider their verdict, he must take an oath to keep them without meat, drink, or firing, and confine his conversation with them to asking whether they have come to an agreement.

The golden-robed minister, dear to the purses if not to the hearts of his fellow-subjects, has to take no less than three oaths upon assuming office; and we cannot better give an idea of the style of oath administered to the great officers of the realm than by quoting two of them. That taken by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as a member of the court from which he derives his title, runs thus: 'Ye shall swere that ye shall serue well and trewly the kyng our souereign lord in the office of Chaunceler of the Escheker; and well and trewly ye shall do all thyngs that perteigneth unto that office. And ye shall spede the kyng's beseignez byfore all other. And ye shall not enseale any writte of juggment of any other place than of this Escheker with the seall of this place whiles the Chauncerie shall be xx. myle about the place where this Escheker is abydyng. And also ye shall swere that if it fortune you hereafter, by reason of your office, to make any clerkes or mynistres to occupie any office or place within this courte, ye shall make such clerkes and mynistres as ye will answere for at your perill, and such as shall be sufficiant true and entendaunt unto that to them shall appertaigne in spede as well of the kyng's bessignes as of his people, after the forme of the statute in that behalve made in the parliament holden at Westminster the secunde yere of the reigne of Kyng Henry the VJth.

'Ye shall well and trewly serue the kyng our soveraign lord in the rome of Under Treasourer of this his Eschequer, and in the recept of the same. And well and truely survey and order as well the receipts of all sumes of money payed and to be payed to the kyng's use in the seid recept as the issue of the same; and well and truely behave yourself in the same roome.—So help you GOD and all saynts and the Holy Evangelyst!' The second oath, clothed in more modern phraseology, is in the following form: 'You shall swear that well and truly you shall serve the Queen our sovereign lady, and her people, in the office of Chancellor or Under Treasurer. And you shall do right to all manner of people, poor and rich, of such things as toucheth your office. And the Queen's treasure truly you shall keep and dispend. And truly you shall counsel the Queen, and her counsel you shall lain and keep. And that you shall neither know nor suffer the Queen's hurt, nor her disheriting. Nor that the rights of the crown be distressed by any means as far forth as you may let; and if you may not let it, you make knowledge thereof clearly and expressly to the Queen with your true advice and counsel. And you shall do and purchase the Queen's profit in all that you may reasonably do.—As GOD shall help you.' The third oath, taken as Chancellor of the Exchequer for Ireland, is worded rather differently, but has the same significance. For some occult reason, the Chancellor is obliged to take the oaths of allegiance twice; once at the Privy Council table, and once in the Court of Chancery. The oaths required from other officials are to the same tenor, being declarations of loyalty, honesty, secrecy, and impartiality, binding them to behave themselves as true and faithful servants ought to do. Sometimes they contain a special condition relating to their special duties. The Lord-lieutenant of

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Ireland swears to keep her Majesty's peace amongst her people, maintain her officers and ministers in the execution and administration of justice, to defend her Majesty's castles, garrisons, dominions, and subjects, and to repress her rebels and enemies. The Lord Privy Seal undertakes to take especial care that the Privy Seal may be in such substantial wise used and safely kept, that no other person without the Queen's special commandment, or her assent and knowledge, shall move, seal, or imprint anything with the same. The Clerk of the House of Commons vows (spite of reporters) to keep secret all matters treated of in parliament, and 'not to disclose the same before they shall be published but to such as it ought to be disclosed to.'

Officers and servants of the royal household swear, among other things, not to depart out of her Majesty's service without reasonable warning, nor out of the court for any long term without licence. The members of the Honourable Corps of Gentlemen-at-arms are under more onerous obligations, if they are ever expected to keep their oath to the letter: 'You shall keep continually three double horses and two men, and provide that yourself and two servants may be also well furnished with harness to serve her Majesty in time of need, or otherwise for her Majesty's pleasure, at the command or appointment of your captain, his lieutenant, standard-bearer, &c., when commanded so to do by her Majesty. . . . When commanded by her Majesty, you shall also make your musters in such harness and other habiliments of war, and upon such horses as shall be your own proper goods, and no other man's. Also you shall not muster at any time hereafter before her Majesty, the captain, or other officers, with any man's servants in lieu of such servants as you be charged to keep, but only with such as shall be retained by yourself to serve the Queen's Majesty for the same intent and purpose.' A Yeoman of the Guard is sworn never to go above twenty miles from the court without a licence from the captain, adjutant, or clerk of the Cheque, and to keep the peace within the precincts of the court and in all other places as much as in him lieth, and cause everybody else to do the same.

As befits the representative of a long line of civic magistrates, the Lord Mayor of London takes the ancient oath of his office, although he thereby promises more than he intends to perform, and this is the oath to which he subscribes: 'Ye shall sweare that ye shall well and lawfully serue the Queen's Maiesty in the citty of London. And the same citty ye shall surely and safely keepe to the behoofe of her Highnes, her heires, and lawfull successors. And the profit of the Queen ye shall doe in all things that to you belongeth. And the right of the Queen that to the crown appertayneth in the same citty of London, lawfully ye shall keepe. Ye shall not consent to the decrease ne concealement of the rights, ne of the fraunchises of the Queen. And wheresoever ye shall knowe the rights of the Queen or of the crowne (be it in lands or in rents, fraunchises or sertes) concealed or withdrawen, to your power ye shall doe to repeale it. And if ye may not, ye shall say it to the Queen, or to them of counsell that ye wete will say it to the Queen. Also lawfully and rightfully ye shall entreate the people of your balliewick, and right shall ye doe to every one, as well to strangers as others, to poore as to riche, in that belongeth you to doe. And that for highnes ne for ryches, for gyfte, ne for beheste, for favour, ne for hate, wrong shall ye doe to no man. Ne nothing shall ye take by the which the Queen should leese, or right be disturbed or letted. And good assize shall ye sett upon breade, wyne, ale, flysh, fflesh, corne, and all other victuals. Weights and measures in the same citty ye shall doe to be kept, and due execution doe upon the defaults that thereof shall be founde according to all the statuts thereof made not repealed. And in all other things that to a mayor of the citty of London belongeth to doe and behaue you.—As God you helpe.' Aldermen cannot by virtue of their oath sell any kind of victual by retail, either in their own persons, or by means of their apprentices and servants; while they are bound to maintain the rights of orphans after the laws and usages of the city. A common-councillor swears not to maintain any singular profit against the common profit of the city of London, and not to leave the council until it be ended, without obtaining leave from the lord mayor.

The oaths taken by the heads of the many municipal corporations are but variations of one tune; enjoining loyalty to the throne, due administration of the laws, and resistance to all encroachments upon the rights, customs, and privileges of the places and people over which they hold their limited rule. But in one or two cases, we find something additional required, as at Montgomery, where the bailiffs promise to keep and defend the town and borough by day as well as by night; at King's Lynn, where the mayor undertakes to exercise the office of Clerk of the Markets, in setting the prices of victuals, reforming unlawful measures, and punishing victuallers; and at Wilton, where the same functionary promises to see that the borough be plenteously victualled; that the assize of bread, ale, wine, fish, flesh, coal, and candle be strictly observed; that all sellers of unwholesome food, regraters, forestallers, and misdoers against the common profit be openly punished; and finally, that the rents and goods of the burgesses and commonalty be employed to the benefit of the borough. In some towns, rather curious engagements are entered into by the burgesses. Those of Bristol solemnly promise not to 'colour the goods of any foreigner or stranger, or know any foreigner or stranger to buy and sell with another foreigner' within the precincts of the city, without informing the town-clerk thereof without delay; not to take any apprentice that is bond of blood, and no other except he be born under the Queen's 'obeysance;' and not to wear the livery of any lord, gentleman, or other person, but only the livery of his craft, or of the sheriff, lord high-steward, or mayor. A similar jealousy of strangers is found at East Looe and Liverpool—a burgess of the first swearing not to bear out any foreigner or stranger against the interests, rights, dues, and privileges of the corporation; while the Liverpudlian vows he will 'by no covin, colour, or deceit, free any foreigner, or the goods, chattels, or merchandise of any foreigner or non-freeman, in the name of his own proper goods, to the impairing of the customs of the town. Your Christchurch burgess takes oath not to carry away any muniment, escript, or scroll out of the common hall, or common coffer, without the consent of the mayor and a majority of the burgesses. A freeman of Coventry must promise not to allow any horse, mare, gelding, colt, filly, cow, heifer, or other cattle, belonging to another man, upon any

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of the city's commons; and every burgess of Great Grimsby swears he will not, 'by reason of any lordship or mastership, nor other means, draw any manner of man to make any party against the mayor, or other burgesses or commoners of the borough, to reprove or hurt them, or bring any heaviness upon them,' upon pain of forfeiting his freedom.

A market-juryman of Boston binds himself to break, burn, or otherwise destroy all false weights and measures found within the borough, and bring up the users thereof for punishment, in company with regraters, forestallers, engrossers of provision, and sellers of unwholesome articles of food. Discreets of the market of Southampton swear to be indifferent betwixt buyer and seller, and to see that only good victuals, wholesome for man's body, be offered for sale; while the ale-taster of Wilton promises to look after the brewers and ale-house keepers, and see they brew good and wholesome beer, and sell the same according to the statutes of the realm. The good folks of Lincoln are particular in statistical matters, their foreman of the corn-jury having to swear that he will diligently inquire into, and give a true verdict as to the average prices of the wheat and grain sold in the Lincoln market. They rejoice, too, in the possession of officials seemingly peculiar to themselves, called 'searchers and sealers of and for tanners and butchers;' but what these officers search for, and what they seal, is a mystery we care not to try to fathom. So fond are municipalities of binding all their servitors by oaths, that even Bumble himself does not escape the infliction. The beadle of Wilton has to swear that he will duly and faithfully take up all swine pigs he may see going up and down in the borough, either at fair-time, market-time, or any other time, and detain the offending porkers until their owners have paid certain fines for their pigs' wrong-doings.

Police oaths are much the same everywhere; but the constables of Bishop's Castle vow not only to apprehend all rogues, vagabonds, wandering and idle persons, sturdy beggars, and suspected persons, and see they are corporally punished, but also to take care that the stocks and whipping-stock be kept in good order, and always ready for use. The constable of Wells curtly swears true constable to be, and true presentment make of bloodshedding, outcries, assaults, affraies, rescous made, and arrests broken within his jurisdiction. Members of the Metropolitan Police force swear, well and truly, and to the best of their knowledge and ability, to act as constables for the Metropolitan Police District, and within the palaces of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, and ten miles thereof, for preserving the peace and preventing robberies and other felonies, and apprehending offenders against the peace. The Royal Irish Constabulary and the Dublin police have furthermore to swear they will not belong to any political or secret society except the society of Freemasons.

The oaths of ecclesiastical officials are not without their curiosities. The deputy-registrar of York swears he will not render himself difficult, nor be a burdensome exacter of unjust fees; while the proctor of that Diocesan Court promises that, if in any part of a suit he becomes aware that his clients prosecute or defend an evil, unjust cause, which to him shall appear desperate, he will no longer delay such cause by any allegations or other frivolous and unjust means. The lay-officers of Hereford Cathedral swear not to tell anything abroad likely to turn to the hurt or damage of the church, college, or hospitals, and not to consent to the making of any leases, but according to the sense and meaning of the statutes and laudable customs of the cathedral church, to which they owe obedience.

Masters, wardens, assistants, freemen, clerks, beadles, in short all connected with the trade-guilds of London, have to subscribe to wordy oaths, requiring them to promote the interests and keep the counsel of the fellowships to which they belong, to behave modestly, soberly, gravely, and orderly in their assemblies, but speak their minds, sparing no man for favour, and grieving none for hatred. The different oaths have a strong family resemblance to each other, the only ones at all remarkable being the three we append. The oath taken by a freeman of the Goldsmiths' Company runs thus: 'You shall swear that you shall be faithful and true to our sovereign lady the Queen Victoria, and true gold and silver without deceit you shall work, and do to be wrought, so that the gold and silver that you work, or cause to be wrought, be as good as one of the standards appointed for wrought-plate; and you shall set no glasses nor counterfeit stones in gold, nor work latten nor copper, whereby the Queen's people might be deceived; nor no deceit known to be done in anything that belongeth to the craft of goldsmiths, but that you anon warn the wardens, for the amendments of the same, and all the good ordinances of the same craft you shall keep;' &c. The searcher of the Founders' Company subscribes to the following: 'You shall swear that from time to time, at the appointment and commandment of the master and wardens, or otherwise when you shall see just occasion, you shall make diligent view and search within the city of London and suburbs, and three miles' compass thereof, as well for all manner of deceitful works wrought into brass or copper wares, as for deceitful brass weights of all kinds, and do your best endeavour that the makers, sellers, and workers of the same deceitful works and weights be justly and condignly punished and corrected. And all such as you shall find to be true, sufficient, and lawful brass weights, agreeable to the Queen's Majesty's standards, you shall do your best to cause them to be seized and marked with the common, usual, and accustomed mark of the said mystery or company, being the stamp and form of an ewer.' A Hostler of the Innholders' Company has to bind himself to the performance of still more troublesome duties: 'You shall bee true and faithfull to our Soveraigne Lord the Kinge that now is, and to his heires and successors, kinges and queenes of England. You shall bee obedient lawfully to the wardens and masters of this societie for the time beinge in all such thinges as concern the good government of the said societie. And if your master, with whom you serve, use any subtiltie or crafty demeanure in his weights, hostries, measures, or lodgeings, or double hostries, contrary to the orders of this societie, you shall, at the request of the master and wardens of this societie, utter and shew the same to them. And, moreover, if you have knowledge and intelligence of any felons, murtherers, or other suspicious persons resortinge to your master's house, or the houses of any other of the said societie, you shall, with all diligence, disclose and shew the same unto your owne master, or else unto the master and wardens of the societie

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of Innholders for the time beinge. You shall not wittingly or willingly receive, harbour, or cherish any thiefe, robber, or other suspicious persons. You shall not bee of councell with any thiefe, robber, or other persons for the settinge of any robbery, or doeinge of any violence, thefte, or fraud to any person, nor shall know the like intended by any without discloseinge the same, either to your owne master with whom you serve, or to the master and wardens for the time beinge of Innholders, to the intent it may bee discovered to some magistrate.'

How parliament will deal with the oath-question remains to be seen. The Royal Commissioners are agreed upon the desirability of sweeping away the great mass of oaths taken upon admission to offices; but while some of them would abolish them altogether, others would substitute declarations in their place. We certainly think there is much force in the remark of Mr Tyler, that no man should be called upon to promise to do what he is bound by the duties of his office to perform, the very act of accepting office being a promise to perform its duties; and most people will agree with Lord Lyveden, the late Dean Milman, and Messrs Maxwell, Bouverie, and Lowe, that no declaration or promissory obligation should be imposed by the legislature without penalties attaching to its non-observance which public opinion will approve, and the executive enforce. 'If the penalty be incurred and not exacted in any single case, the force, not only of the violated obligation, but of all similar obligations, is sensibly diminished; and even if the public conscience be at first shocked by the unpunished crime, it will soon become reconciled to the impunity, and ere long may even be disposed to condemn the infliction of the punishment.' This is true enough; and equally true are the concluding sentences of the paper bearing the signatures of the above-named gentlemen: 'When a declaration has lapsed into a mere form, and, as a general rule, is made falsely with impunity, it has obviously not only ceased to be useful, but has become mischievous, and it is for the public advantage that the scandal should be removed as speedily as possible.'

A PERFECT TREASURE.

CHAPTER V.—I AM EDITED.

DIRECTLY after my interview with my uncle, I was off for Sandiford, borne, as it were, on the wings of my glad news. How easily elated I was in those days! How ridiculously prompt to believe that others were as interested in my affairs as I was myself! How inordinately egotistic, how credulous, how vain! But then, as dear Mrs Blunt had observed, what lungs I had, what limbs!

The snow was falling thickly that December day, but I flew through it like a bird.

> Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore
> On winding lake or river wide,
> That need no aid of sail or oar,
> That heed no spite of wind and tide,
> Nought cared this body for wind nor weather,
> When Youth and I lived in 't together;

and yet I would have given up all that vigour for ever so small a modicum of Fame, all that brave sack (of which I know the true value now) for a poor halfpennyworth of mouldy bread. I remember how disgusted I was that what I had to tell did not seem to fill good Mrs Blunt with sympathetic transport. It did not even surprise her in the least.

'I knew you would persuade that dear Maharajah to let you do as you liked, Marmy. If I had said that your manuscripts were only good for lighting the fires, you would have still got your way. However, I have done my duty. I am like the master of the ship who has been consulted by the captain as to its course, and has replied, that it is, in his opinion, a dangerous one—full of rocks and shoals; notwithstanding which the captain decides to hold on. I have made my remonstrance; if any mischance happens, I at least am not to blame.'

'Certainly not, madam,' answered I; 'but, like a good sailor who loves his ship' ('You rogue!' interrupted Mrs Eleanor Blunt), 'you will do your best to save her, nevertheless.'

The good-natured old lady was charmed with this reply. 'Well, my dear,' said she, 'I will do my best; but indeed literature is a trade in which a man must make his own way: an introduction from another is but of little service. You may get your head in that way, but your shoulders must follow by your own exertions. It is no use my pushing you from behind.—Now, you want me to get some of these deathless works of yours into print, I suppose?'—and here she touched the parcel of manuscripts a little contemptuously.

'Yes, madam.'

'That would be to do you a very ill service, Marmy,' said she gravely. 'At sixteen, everybody writes rubbish; Shakspeare himself doubtless did so at that epoch, and occasionally even a little later. I do not deny that this stuff is creditable to a lad like you, whose writing anything is like a dog walking on his hind-legs, as Johnson says; you do not do it well, but the wonder is that you do it at all. But then the wonder is only excited in those who are acquainted with your circumstances—your tender years. If the public should read these things in print as productions of a grown-up writer, they would only say: "This is a wretched plagiarist;" and they would be right.—Now, don't be cast down, my dear; you will have much worse things said of you in after-years, if you take up with this calling, by persons who have not (as I have) your good in view, but only the indulgence of their own spite. Gad, sir, with a skin like yours, you will be stung to death by midges.'

I certainly felt very sore already, but not at all in the sense of irritation; I was utterly depressed and humiliated. I felt that Mrs Blunt was speaking the truth—that all those precious papers, the results of months of delightful toil, were indeed nothing but 'wretched plagiarisms;' the poems were echoes; the prose, a patchwork, made up of scraps from my favourite authors.

'I will throw all these things behind the fire, said I suddenly; and I rose to do so.

'You will do nothing of the sort, my dear,' said the old lady quietly: 'first, because so much fuel

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would certainly set fire to my little chimney; and secondly, because what is valuable about your works will not remain after such a crucial test, as gold does in the furnace. I told you in my letter that it was not all rubbish. When I was your age, I had written twice as much, and what was equally worthless as a whole; but, as in your case, there was the seed of good in them, the raw material that only required the requisite machinery—experience of life, power of expression, and other matters which cannot be supplied by intuition—to turn it (to use a woman's image) into a fabric of pretty pattern, warranted to wash and wear. I laid by all these productions, not in obedience to the Horatian maxim, but simply because I could get nobody to publish them; and in after-years, while fully agreeing with the adverse editorial verdicts that had kept them in manuscript, I found in almost all of them the germ of something that blossomed agreeably enough in print. Indeed, I think the best things I have done are those which occurred to me in embryo, when I was very young. Some excellent compositions have doubtless been written off-hand by great authors in heat and at a sitting; but, generally speaking—and especially with respect to prose writings—what is best is that which has long ripened in the brain, and been afterwards carefully pruned and trimmed. Thanks to the cant of our calling, this is not the popular view of good authorship; but believe me, Marmy, it is the true one; and whenever a professional writer tells you that he "trusts to inspiration," you may depend upon it that he takes a good deal of brandy and water.'

'But these manuscripts,' said I, impatient of Mrs Blunt's abstract remarks, and ignorant of their practical importance: 'how am I to know what is wheat-ear and what is chaff?'

'In a year or two, you will be able to judge for yourself, Marmy; but at present this is perhaps the one thing in which I can be of service to you. I will be your editor this afternoon; only, instead of the usual "Declined with thanks," I will give you my reasons for rejection.'

'How kind you are!' cried I, with genuine gratitude, for, though careless of advice in the general as any other young gentleman, I knew how to estimate it in this case. 'How can I ever repay you, dear Mrs Blunt?'

'What! for being your editor? Well, perhaps you may be my biographer some day, Marmy, when you will deal tenderly with my memory, for this day's sake.'

I don't know what I answered; but the old lady nodded pleasantly in reply, and said: 'God bless you, my dear.'

Then we set to work at those manuscripts. I am afraid to say how many there were; but Mrs Blunt read more than a dozen of them aloud. Her elocution was much better than mine, and yet they did not sound to me nearly so well as when I had read them to myself. It was often necessary for her to stop at this or that flowery passage (which had formerly seemed such a gem), with some remark, such as: 'Too many creepers for your trellis-work, Marmy;' or, 'Too fine, my dear, by half—all sunflowers and crown imperials.' I could see for myself now how garish and tawdry the language was. The misplaced or extravagant epithets, the lavish synonyms, the borrowed images, were all pointed out with an unerring finger; and the bathos of many a splendid peroration was so laid bare, that I almost laughed at it myself. Nor did she confine herself to verbal criticism, but, with a nicety which shewed what pains she had taken with my poor productions, explained how the interest of one narrative was weakened by division, or exhibited the inconsistences of character in the *dramatis personæ* of another. She used the scalpel like a skilful surgeon, fearlessly, but not mercilessly; she cut deep, but without inflicting unnecessary pain. And, on the other hand, with what pleasure she halted whenever in that Great Sahara she found palms and water, to say: 'Well done;' or, 'That's really good, Marmy.'

Of course, in my case there was a little favouritism; but in the matter of generous yet critical appreciation, I have never known any one (save dear Leigh Hunt, perhaps) to equal Mrs Eleanor Blunt! She was a very Jack Horner for picking out literary plums. It is true these were very scarce in my pudding; but the praise, when it did come, was all the more precious; the balm in those few words healed all the gaping wounds which had been before inflicted on my self-love, and left me all the better for the blood-letting; or I should rather say I felt in my new literary position like one who has been just shampooed in a Turkish bath—much less corporeally, but with what was left of me in the highest possible condition. Before the operation, I had no idea that there had been so much superfluity to come away; but now I trod upon air. In only one respect was I cast down; my poetry had met with considerably less favour in my mentor's eyes than my prose. It was not without some grace and elegance of expression, she allowed, but 'Gad, sir, it's very thin.' She was strongly against my cultivating this talent. 'If you were a rich man, Marmy, it would be different; you might give half your days to polish—*ad unguem*, &c., you know' (but I didn't know); 'as it is, you cannot afford the time. The chances are ten thousand to one, and more, against your getting your living by such work. The British public can only afford to keep one or two poets at most; the rest find the greatest difficulty in keeping themselves. It is the prose that pays, and, above all, that branch of it to which you seem to have some calling. Some day, when you and I are dead, Marmy, and all the world runs and reads, and Yankee publishers give up thieving, the most popular British novelist will be the richest man in England. In the meantime, half a loaf, or less, is better than no bread, and we pick up our crumbs. But the writer of fiction needs, above all others, to have experience of life. You cannot spin stories out of your inside, as a spider spins his web; you must have material. You must study men and women, Marmy, as the scholar his books. The volume of Nature is open to you at Hershell Point; but there are not enough of those flesh-and-blood illustrations which you require to have before your eyes. When you have painted your uncle (whose outlines are recognisable enough in your productions already), and that black gentleman who waits upon him, and little Mr Glendell, your doctor (a very excellent fellow, by the by), and me, you will almost have come to the end of your present tether. You must not stop at "the Point," Marmy, if you mean to take up the trade of letters.'

'I could never leave my uncle,' said I firmly.

'Then you must take him away with you,'

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replied Mrs Blunt. 'But you need not think of that for some time to come. For the present, read whatever you can lay hands on, but especially good sterling English writers like this man' (she put into my hands the *Rural Rides* of William Cobbett): 'the descriptions in that book excel all your modern word-paintings for life-likeness, as much as objects in a stereoscope excel those in a picture. Read, and, above all things, observe; and never trust to your memory when there is an opportunity to use a note-book.—There, Marmy; my preaching is over. The words of the wisdom of Mrs Eleanor Blunt are ended.'

'They will not soon be forgotten, dear madam,' said I dutifully.

'I hope not, my dear; and I will now add, for your encouragement—since it is finally settled that you are to try to open that oyster "the world" with a steel pen—that it is my belief that you will succeed in doing so. If the ex-maharajah can, as he says, support you for five years, you ought certainly by that time to be able to run alone. For even if one fails as an author,' squeaked the dear old lady, her black eyes dancing with roguish glee, 'and the worst comes to the very worst, one can always be a critic, you know, Marmy.'

I do not think there was any happier creature on the earth than I as I ran home that evening, after a *tête-à-tête* dinner with my hostess. The snow had ceased, leaving the whole earth covered with a mantle, on which the moonbeams sparkled as on frosted silver. The sky shewed a thousand stars. The winter sea sent its deep monotone for miles inland through the clear still air. I seemed to drink in the beauty of earth and air, and sky and sea, as I had never done before. It was a keen and bitter frost, but my veins were aglow with a joy that no cold could chill. I have said that there was no light-house at that time at Hershell; but to one coming from Sandiford, the lamp in our sitting-room could always be seen at night from a great distance. I wondered that I did not see it there now; but concluding that my uncle had retired earlier than usual, its absence gave me no anxiety. When I reached home, however, and Martha answered the bell, I saw by her face at once that something was amiss.

'What is the matter?' asked I with anxiety. 'My uncle is not in the sitting-room.'

'No, sir, nor in the house neither,' answered the cook. 'He 's gone away, and Heaven knows where, all along of that Sugary Tannajee; drat him!'

CHAPTER VI.—THE HINDU BECOMES MY PATIENT.

My uncle's absence was unprecedented. Ever since I had known him, he had never left 'the Point,' [even for a single day; but the sudden departure (for such I learned it had been) of Sangaree Tannajee was even more extraordinary still. He had no friend in the world except his master; his colour, his strange English, and—if I might so speak of the absent—his extravagantly hideous appearance, made him an object of ridicule to all except our little household. Our roof was the only secure haven for him, and yet he had left it of his own free-will, and apparently for good and all. At least—as Martha informed me—he had quitted the house while my uncle and I were engaged in that conversation concerning my future which has been already described, with a large white bundle, that was his substitute for portmanteau, hat-box, &c., and which doubtless contained all his worldly goods, since they were missing. His absence was not remarked until I had myself left for Sandiford, when my uncle had rung his bell for him in vain. 'Then such a fuss as there was, Mr Marmaduke. I never saw master so put about before,' said Martha, describing these occurrences with great unction. 'It was: "Cook, run here," and "Nancy, run there"—all after that liver-coloured Tannajee. Your uncle ran down to the beach as lissome as yourself, as though he expected to find his man had toppled hisself over the cliff. But, as I said to Nancy, he was a deal more likely, was Sugary, to kill somebody else than his precious self; and master heard me, and oh, Mr Marmaduke, if he didn't swear worse than the parrot! I never heard the likes; for Tannajee, with all the will in the world to be wicked, could never swear like a Christian man. "Well," says I, "these are pretty words; and if I leave your service to-morrow, sir, I hope that 'ere fellow has gone for good, as the saying is (though for good he never can be); for a sweet riddance it will be for them as he 's left behind."—"I beg your pardon, Martha, for swearing," says your uncle, as gentle as could be; "but you don't know what you are talking about." And he really did look so grieved, that I half-wished the poor coloured creature back again, if that could be any comfort to him, as a black dose is said to be to them as is bilious, which I never was myself, and consequently don't hold by it. Well, we searched and searched, but he was nowhere to be found; and presently the baker came, and said he had met my gentleman with a bundle on his shoulder, making straight for Daisyport. At which news your uncle snatched up his hat, and without even putting his greatcoat on, started off like a March hare. And that 's just all I knows about it, Mr Marmaduke.'

This news distressed me exceedingly; not, of course, that I regretted the Hindu's defection one whit more than did his fellow-servants, upon its own account, but for the vexation it had evidently caused his master; while I could not divest myself of the idea that it was my own behaviour towards the missing man that had somehow brought about the catastrophe. When I called to mind the expression of truculent animosity which Tannajee's face had worn that morning, when I stirred his fat carcass with my foot, and his vehemence of speech and gesture when my uncle strode in between us, I could not but acknowledge that it must be me who was to blame; and for how much? What was the extent of the mischief to my kind protector? What stake could my uncle have in this man? What interest in keeping him in his service, that he should thus start off in cold and darkness to pursue him? I did not for a moment believe that mere attachment to Tannajee had caused this solicitude for his safety. It is true that master and man were on those terms of familiarity that are sometimes seen between an employer and his faithful dependant; but this did not seem to me to be founded on the usual base of tried and ancient service. I had penetration enough to see through the Hindu's show of respect to my uncle in public, and to contrast it with his languid insolence when I had occasionally, and on that very morning, come upon them when alone. My presence had hitherto, as it seemed to me, been the signal for both to return to something like their respective positions, to act the parts of master

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and servant, which were laid aside when there was no spectator; and yet, I repeat, it did not strike me that Uncle Theo had much genuine regard for Tannajee, and far less that the latter had a due respect for his employer. The bond of union, evidently so strong between them, was not that of mutual esteem or affection. What, then, in the name of wonder, could it be? What material interest could they possibly have in common? My uncle had spoken of our not discovering the true value of the Asiatic until his death—a common expression enough, it is true, to apply to a well-tried and valuable domestic, but which was, in this man's case, a most inappropriate phrase. Sangaree Tannajee was an ill-tempered idle fellow, quarrelsome in his cups, and very often in them, one who gave more trouble to our little household than any other member of it, and whose situation in it grew more and more of a sinecure daily. Was it possible, then, that my uncle literally meant that his death would be of pecuniary advantage to us? What had this wretched Hindu to leave behind him, except his turban and a few yards of spotless linen? Besides, it could not be the loss of him to which my guardian had thus alluded, for had he not once observed to me: 'I would not lose Sangaree Tannajee for ten thousand pounds.'

Sorely perplexed by these reflections, I sat up in our little drawing-room, vainly endeavouring to give my attention to anything else. I tried to write, but found my fingers involuntarily forming the mysterious Asiatic's name; I took up book after book, and the printed letters formed themselves into the same combination again and again; I went to the window, in hopes to see my uncle and his man—for without the latter I felt confident the former would not return—descending the zigzag; but I saw nothing but 'the flying cloud, the frosty night.' It had grown darker since my arrival, and presently the dusk was such that, in order to pierce through it with my eyes at all, I was obliged to extinguish the lamp. The wind, too, had risen, and howled dismally about our little house. Then I feared for my uncle's health, who, although a strong man in other respects, had been made by the Indian climate peculiarly susceptible to cold. We had fires at Hershell Point a month before other folks in the neighbourhood began them, on the ex-maharajah's account, at least as much as by reason of our more exposed position. He scarcely ever ventured out even in the autumn evenings, yet now he had departed without a greatcoat across the snowy downs to Daisyport. And once more I bitterly reproached myself for having been the unwitting cause of such a dangerous imprudence.

I went down to the kitchen, and enjoined on Martha to have something warm and savoury in readiness, and boiling water for a hot bath if necessary; and I kept up the fire in my uncle's bedroom—the only luxury, by the by, except his cheroots, in which he ever indulged—with my own hands.

At last, about one in the morning, I discerned two figures slowly wending their way down the zigzag. It was in the highest degree improbable that they should be any others than those for whom I waited; yet even as they drew near I could scarcely recognise them. The brisk elastic tread of my dear uncle was exchanged for the stumbling gait of an overtired and exhausted man; the slouching amble which generally characterised Tannajee, who, notwithstanding his huge proportions, was a speedy walker after his own fashion, had altogether disappeared. He moved with slow and hesitating steps, like one who walks in his sleep; and short as the distance was during which I observed them, I saw him stop suddenly half-a-dozen times, and receive his master's assistance before he could proceed. I ran out to meet them, and my uncle smiled and nodded, but it really seemed that he had no strength to speak.

'Get Tannajee to bed,' he murmured: 'the doctor at once.'

Certainly the Hindu looked wretchedly ill. As Martha used (not without some satisfaction) to express it, he always enjoyed bad health: his digestion I knew was dreadfully impaired, and I attributed it to drink; but I had never seen him look half so bad as on the present occasion. In the first place, he rolled from side to side like a loose cask on shipboard, and had no command whatever over his limbs. His eyes, which had never, within my recollection, failed to express disfavour at my approach, had now no more speculation in them than those of a corpse; and in spite of the bitter cold, he was in a profuse perspiration.

It was absolutely necessary for me to remain to assist him up the steps before our door; a task to which his companion, unaided, seemed wholly unequal; but no sooner had we got him within-side, than my uncle reiterated: 'The doctor at once, Marmy;' and off I flew into the village. I was back again in ten minutes.—Mr Glendell, the kindly Æsculapius of the place, having promised to follow me as soon as he could—when a strange sight indeed was presented to me. My uncle, his wet clothes still unchanged—for snow had fallen during the last few hours upon the downland—was walking Tannajee about from room to room, in spite of the Hindu's entreaties to be suffered to lie down and sleep. The garments of the latter had been exchanged for warm and dry ones, and the solicitude for his welfare expressed in his master's eyes was like that of some devoted brother. It was with difficulty, and only under promise of keeping the unhappy Tannajee in active exercise, that I could persuade my uncle to take measures for his own safety. I did not stop to inquire why such a task was imposed upon me, but hustled my remonstrating charge from parlour to kitchen with a 'No, you don't,' and the application of a pin's point, whenever he attempted to take a chair. 'Don't let him stand still, Marmy,' was my uncle's earnest direction to me, 'or permit him to sit down for a single instant; his very life depends upon it, and,' added he in a solemn whisper, 'your uncle's honour.'

Of course I was careful to obey such instructions, however inexplicable they might appear; but I pitied poor helpless Sambo from my heart, notwithstanding that ever and anon his flabby features were overspread with a baleful glance at his tormentor, to whom he evidently gave no credit for any good intentions towards him.

It was clear he was dog-tired and, but for me, would have fallen asleep as he moved; but besides that, he seemed to be in that peculiar stage of intoxication which is called 'sodden;' his senses appeared to be so steeped in liquor that there was no rousing them; and I could not but wonder that he was not permitted to obey the dictates of nature, and sleep away the effects of so gross a debauch.

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When the doctor came, however, and had exchanged a few words in private with my uncle, he quite approved of the very singular treatment to which the Hindu had been subjected, with the addition that cold water should be constantly dashed on his head, and directed that it should for the present be continued. 'The stomach-pump is what he *wants*,' said Mr Glendell thoughtfully.

'The very thing,' cried Uncle Theo with excitement; 'of course he wants the stomach-pump.'

'Yes; but unfortunately my little surgery does not boast of such an article,' returned the doctor; 'and I am afraid you, Mr Braydon, are not like Mr Alfred Jingle, who, you remember (in *Pickwick*), always carried that useful article in his portmanteau.'

My uncle sighed profoundly. 'No, indeed,' said he. The other's jocose allusion seemed to grate upon his feelings, moved as they were so powerfully by the spectacle before them.

'Don't be cast down, my good sir,' said Mr Glendell briskly; 'although your anxiety about our coloured friend here, I am sure does you infinite credit.' (Sambo's character as a domestic servant was not unknown to the speaker, who had also attended him professionally before.) 'It is my opinion that he has already tided over the worst of it. It is indeed entirely to your exertions that he owes his life; five minutes' sleep upon the downs yonder would have been his death-doom; but I do think you have pulled him through. If he had not been a confirmed opium-eater, such a dose would have killed him on the spot; but being so used to it—— There; he's opened his eyes quite wide, you see. I should have said "sulphate of zinc and powdered ipecacuanha," if I had seen him earlier; but it is too late for that sort of treatment now; and indeed he is too exhausted. He had a strong constitution originally, that fellow, but he has played the deuce with it. Opium and drink have undermined him, and I should fancy—at one time of his life at least—to judge by the look of him, overfeeding.'

'No; he has always been very temperate as to food,' replied my uncle.

'Ah, well, then he's been particularly unfortunate in what he did eat,' observed the surgeon drily, 'for he's a victim to dyspepsia. Perhaps that accounts for his queer temper.—Were you telling me that he actually took that laudanum, simply because you told him to come back with you from Daisyport?'

'He did indeed. I came up with him just before he reached the town, and insisted upon his return—upon his not leaving my house in that surreptitious and unpleasant manner. Then he flew into an outrageous passion, and declared all I wanted was his death.'

'The ungrateful nigger!' ejaculated the doctor.

'Well, I did not condescend to remonstrate with him; but seizing him firmly by the wrist, I compelled him to accompany me. He got very tired coming over the down, and presently we sat down to rest. Then he began to narrate his troubles; how badly he was treated at Hershell Point' (the doctor smiled contemptuously), 'and especially what indignities he had to put up with.'

Here I felt my cheeks burn, for I knew that my uncle was speaking as much for my own benefit as that of his other hearer.

'Do you feel better, Tannajee?' inquired I tenderly, as I administered another glass of water to his forehead, like a clergyman who baptizes a delicate babe.

He muttered something in the Hindustanee language in reply, which, being translated, means 'child of the devil.' It was his favourite term for me when he was in his cups.

'I don't think I have much to reproach myself with as Tannajee's master,' continued Uncle Theo gravely; 'and I told him so pretty plainly. Some high words passed between us. He jumped up, and attempted to run away from me, and I pursued and collared him—perhaps a little roughly. Then once more crying out that all I wanted was his death, and actuated by one of those childish fits of passion peculiar to his race, he produced a phial of laudanum from his pocket, and drank it to the dregs before I could stop his hand. Imagine my horror, Glendell, and the difficulties of my position! I am a powerful man; but to convoy, or rather to convey a person of his bulk for many miles, contrary to such will as was left in him, and against wind and snow, is no slight task. However, if I have indeed saved the poor fellow's life, I do not begrudge my labour.'

'You have behaved nobly, Mr Braydon, and I think have reaped your reward,' said the surgeon; 'although you will be lucky if you do not suffer in your own health from such exertions.—See; our patient is recovering his beautiful native colour under Mr Marmaduke's hands; and after some egg and milk, I think he may be suffered to have his sleep out.'

'He shall be put in my bed,' said my uncle; 'and Marmy and I will keep watch over him by turns.'

'I hope Mr Tannajee will be grateful for your kind attentions,' remarked the doctor severely; 'though he does not seem to have a very genial expression at present. But it is a good sign when a gentleman in his position begins to recover his usual looks. If he asks for anything to drink, which he is pretty sure to do, give him magnesia and water.' With that the surgeon took his leave; and my uncle and I led the already half-slumbering Hindu to his welcome pillow.

'I shall watch him for an hour or two, Marmy; and do you go to bed, my lad, for you must be sadly tired. If all seems to be going on well, I shall take my snooze on the sofa.'

In vain I endeavoured to combat this resolution.

'I have begun with this, Marmy,' said my uncle earnestly, 'and I will go through with it. Tired as I am, I should not sleep a wink while there was still cause for anxiety. I thank God that it has been in my power to do what I have done for this man. Yes; I am truly grateful for having been strengthened to do my duty. The devil has been sorely tempting me this night, Marmy, but he has not overcome me. I feel as though I had even taken a few steps towards heaven.' With a grave yet well-pleased look, my uncle Theo took both my hands in his, and kissed my cheek. 'Good-night, dear lad, and remember me in your prayers.'

Astonished as I was by my uncle's manner as much as by his words, I felt that it was no time to ask for explanations, but retired to my bed at once. I was awakened in about an hour's time by the sound of high words in my uncle's room. The patient and the watcher were quarrelling. They spoke as usual in the Hindustanee tongue, but I caught one word repeated by my uncle with extreme vehemence, with sufficient accuracy to remember it.

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The application of the term seemed instantly to silence Sangaree Tannajee, and I laid it carefully up in my mind for future use, should occasion arise for it on my own account.

SQUARING THE CIRCLE.

THERE must be a singular charm about insoluble problems, since there are never wanting persons who are willing to attack them. We doubt not that at this moment there are persons who are devoting their energies to Squaring the Circle, in the full belief that important advantages would accrue to science—and possibly a considerable pecuniary profit to themselves—if they could succeed in solving it. Quite recently, applications have been made to the Paris Academy of Sciences, to ascertain what was the amount which that body was authorised to pay over to any one who should square the circle. So seriously, indeed, was the secretary annoyed by applications of this sort, that it was found necessary to announce in the daily journals that the Academy was not only unauthorised to pay any sum at all, but that it had determined never to give the least attention to those who fancied they had mastered the famous problem.

It is a singular circumstance, that people have even attacked the problem without knowing exactly what its nature is. One ingenious workman, to whom the difficulty had been propounded, actually set to work to invent an arrangement for measuring the circumference of the circle; and was perfectly satisfied that he had thus solved a problem which had mastered all the mathematicians of ancient and modern times. That we may not fall into a similar error, let us clearly understand what it is that is required for the solution of the problem of 'squaring the circle.'

To begin with, we must note that the term 'squaring the circle' is rather a misnomer; because the true problem to be solved is the determination of the length of a circle's circumference when the diameter is known. Of course, the solution of this problem, or, as it is termed, the *rectification* of the circle, involves the solution of the other, or the *quadrature* of the circle. But it is well to keep the simpler issue before us.

Many have supposed that there exists some exact relation between the circumference and the diameter of the circle, and that the problem to be solved is the determination of this relation. Suppose, for example, that the approximate relation discovered by Archimedes (who found, that if a circle's diameter is represented by *seven*, the circumference may be almost exactly represented by *twenty-two*) were strictly correct, and that Archimedes had proved it to be so: then, according to this view, he would have solved the great problem; and it is to determine a relation of some such sort that many persons have set themselves. Now, undoubtedly, if any relation of this sort could be established, the problem would be solved; but, as a matter of fact, no such relation exists, and the solution of the problem does not require that there should be any relation of the sort. For example, we do not look on the determination of the diagonal of a square (whose side is known) as an insoluble, or as otherwise than a very simple problem. Yet, in this case, no exact relation exists. We cannot possibly express both the side and the diagonal of a square in whole numbers, no matter what unit of measurement we adopt: or, to put the matter in another way, we cannot possibly divide both the side and the diagonal into equal parts (which shall be the same along each), no matter how small we take the parts. If we divide the side into 1000 parts, there will be 1414 such parts, *and a piece over*, in the diagonal; if we divide the side into 10,000 parts, there will be 14,142, and still a little piece over, in the diagonal; and so on for ever. Similarly, the mere fact that no exact relation exists between the diameter and the circumference of a circle, is no bar whatever to the solution of the great problem.

Before leaving this part of the subject, however, we may mention a relation which is very easily remembered, and is very nearly exact—much more so, at any rate, than that of Archimedes. Write down the numbers 113355, that is, the first three odd numbers each repeated twice over. Then separate the six numbers into two sets of three, thus: 113) 355, and proceed with the division thus indicated. The result, 3·1415929 . . . . , expresses the circumference of a circle whose diameter is 1, correctly to the sixth decimal place, the true relation being 3·14159265 . . . .

Again, many people imagine that mathematicians are still in a state of uncertainty as to the relation which exists between the circumference and the diameter of a circle. If this were so, scientific societies might well hold out a reward to any one who could enlighten them; for the determination of this relation (with satisfactory exactitude) may be held to lie at the foundation of the whole of our modern system of mathematics. We need hardly say that no doubt whatever rests on the matter. A hundred different methods are known to mathematicians by which the circumference may be calculated from the diameter with any required degree of exactness. Here is a simple one, for example: Take any number of the fractions formed by putting *one* as a numerator over the successive odd numbers. Add together the alternate ones beginning with the first, which, of course, is unity. Add together the remainder. Subtract the second sum from the first. The remainder will express the circumference (the diameter being taken as unity) to any required degree of exactness. We have merely to take enough fractions. The process would, of course, be a very laborious one, if great exactness were required, and, as a matter of fact, mathematicians have made use of much more convenient ones in determining the required relation; but the method is strictly exact.

The largest circle we have much to do with in scientific questions, is the earth's equator. As a matter of curiosity, we may inquire what the circumference of the earth's orbit is; but as we are far from being sure of the exact length of the radius of that orbit (that is, of the earth's distance from the sun), it is clear that we do not need a very exact relation between the circumference and the diameter in dealing with that enormous circle. Confining ourselves, therefore, to the circle of the earth's equator, let us see what exactness we seem to require. We will suppose for a moment that it is possible to measure round the earth's equator without losing count of a single yard, and that we want to gather from our estimate what the diameter of this great circle may be. This seems, indeed, the only use to which, in this case, we can put our knowledge of the relation we are dealing

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with. We have then a circle some twenty-five thousand miles round, and each mile contains one thousand seven hundred and sixty yards; or, in all, there are some forty-four million yards in the circumference, and therefore (roughly) some fourteen million yards in the diameter of this great circle. Hence, if our relation is correct within a fourteen-millionth part of the diameter, or a forty-four-millionth part of the circumference, we are safe from any error exceeding a yard. All we want, then, is that the number expressing the circumference (the diameter being unity) should be true to the eighth decimal place, as quoted above.

But, as we have said, mathematicians have not been content with a computation of this sort. They have calculated the number not to the *eighth*, but to the *four hundred and fortieth* decimal place. Now, if we remember that each new decimal makes the result ten times more exact, we shall begin to see what a waste of time there has been in this tremendous calculation. We all remember the story of the horse which had twenty-four nails in its shoes, and was valued at the sum obtained by adding together a farthing for the first nail, a halfpenny for the next, a penny for the next, and so on; doubling twenty-four times. The result was counted by thousands of pounds. Even the old miser who paid at a similar rate for a grave eighteen feet deep (doubling for each foot), killed himself when he heard the total. But now consider the effect of multiplying by ten, four hundred and forty-eight times. A fraction, with that enormous number for denominator, and unity for numerator, expresses the minuteness of the error which would result if the 'long value' of the circumference were made use of. Let an illustration present the meaning of this:

It has been estimated that light, which could eight times circle the earth in a second, takes fifty thousand years in flying to us from the faintest stars seen in Lord Rosse's giant reflector. Suppose we knew the exact length of the tremendous line which extends from the earth to such a star, and wanted, for some inconceivable purpose, to know the length of the circumference of a circle of which that line was the radius. The value deduced from the above-mentioned calculation of the relation between the circumference and the diameter, would differ from the truth by a length which would be imperceptible under the most powerful microscope ever yet constructed. Nay, the radius we have conceived, enormous as it is, might be increased a million-fold, or a million times a million-fold, with the same result. And the area of the circle formed with this increased radius, would be determinable with so much accuracy, that the error, if presented in the form of a minute square, would be utterly imperceptible under a microscope a million times more powerful than the best ever yet constructed by man.

Not only has the length of the circumference been calculated once in this unnecessarily exact manner, but a second calculator has gone over the work independently. The two results, identical figure for figure, are presented in *The Lady's and Gentleman's Diary* for 1854, page 70; and for 1855, page 86.

It will be asked then, what *is* the problem about which so great a work has been made? The problem is, in fact, utterly insignificant; its only interest lies in the fact that it is insoluble—a property which it shares along with many other problems, as the trisection of an angle, the duplication of a cube, and so on.

The problem is simply this: *Having given the diameter of a circle, to determine, by a geometrical construction, in which only straight lines and circles shall be made use of, the side of a square equal in area to the circle.* As we have said, the problem is solved, if, by a construction of the kind described, we can determine the length of the circumference, because, then the rectangle under half this length and the radius is equal in area to the circle, and it is a simple problem to describe a square equal to a given rectangle.

To illustrate the kind of construction required, we give an approximate solution which is remarkably simple, and, so far as we know, not generally known. In the given circle draw two diameters, AOB, COD, at right angles to each other, and join CA, BD: then the two diameters together with the two lines CA and BD are very nearly equal to the circumference of the circle. The difference is so small, that in a circle two feet in diameter, it would be less than the two-hundredth part of an inch. If this construction were exact, the great problem would have been solved.

One point, however, must be noted; the circle is of all curved lines the easiest to draw by mechanical means. But there are others which can be so drawn. And, if such curves as these be admitted as available, the problem of the quadrature of the circle can be readily solved. There is a curve, for instance, invented by Dinostratus which can readily be described mechanically, and has been called the quadratrix of Dinostratus, because it has the property of thus solving the problem we are dealing with.

As such curves can be described with quite as much accuracy as the circle—for, be it remembered, an absolutely perfect circle has never yet been drawn—we see that it is only the limitations which geometers have themselves invented that give this problem its difficulty. It has, as we have said, no value; and no mathematician would ever think of wasting a moment over it—for this reason, simply, that it has long since been demonstrated to be insoluble by simple geometrical methods. So that, when a man says he has squared the circle (and many will say so, if one will only give them a hearing), he shews that either he wholly misunderstands the nature of the problem, or that his ignorance of mathematics has led him to mistake a faulty for a true solution.

BABBY JOHN.

Babby John was not a baby at all, but the Kafir corruption of the Dutch for our English baboon. Babby John—'a fellow of infinite jest, of a most excellent fancy'—was my tame baboon.

When I became possessed of this treasure, I was living in Pietermaritzburg, the capital of Port Natal, South Africa—a place which, previously unknown to most stay-at-home Englishmen, has recently acquired quite a celebrity as the abode of Bishop Colenso and his Zulu tutor in divinity. In a suburb of this town I had a little bachelor's cottage, where I lived with a naked Kafir as my henchman, and cultivated the acquaintance of the brute creation, of which I had a collection which made gardening out of the question. I laid

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out, or rather left alone my little domain to be a miniature menagerie, and of all living things to grace it I coveted a baboon. Now, Babby John was an established favourite at a hotel in the town, but the proprietor became bankrupt, and on the sale of his assets I became the delighted purchaser of his pet.

Arrived at home, my first care was to lodge Babby John for the night, till I could secure him properly in the morning. Among his native rocks and wilds, his genius might have found a thousand ways of diverting itself; but being in captivity, Babby John was wont to employ the whole powers of his mind in the devising, and the whole powers of his body in the perpetration of mischief. Like Shakspeare's Don John, 'Any bar, any cross, any impediment was medicinable to him.' For the first night, I tied him to a post in the verandah. He had a bit of bread and half a cup of coffee, then curled himself up and went to sleep, as I thought, for the night. Early in the morning, I was awaked by loud exclamations and guttural 'wanghs!' from my Kafir, and, on proceeding to learn the cause, discovered Babby John, though it was barely light, at work with a zeal worthy of a better cause. He had pulled up all the tiles, forming the pavement of the verandah, within his reach, broken all he could, and thrown the rest away. When I came to interrupt his pastime, he was hard at work on the house-wall picking out the mortar with his long lean fore-finger. He had already removed two or three bricks, and bade fair to make a considerable excavation in an hour or two. Without stopping for a moment in his work, he was making most diabolical grimaces whenever the Kafir approached him.

Next, I tied him up in a grove of Syringa trees; here he waged war against all passengers. Threatening, chattering, screaming, shewing his teeth, wrinkling his brows, and exhibiting his white eyebrows till he seemed as if he was being worked by a string inside like a doll, he effectually stopped all passage. Once or twice he laid ambuscades by concealing himself on a bough, and incontinently dropping on the head of any one passing beneath. Next, I fastened him to a tree in a hedge where he could do no possible harm. But here again his talent for ambuscades was so conspicuous that I heard screams all day long. His 'custom of an afternoon' was to lie snugly concealed at the top of the hedge; and when any one approached unsuspectingly on the road, Babby John would launch himself at his or her head; and though always brought up by his chain, still, to say the least of it, the totally unexpected apparition of a flying baboon *was* trying to the nerves.

After a day or two of these vagaries on the part of Babby John, I was favoured with a visit from my landlord. I found this gentleman standing in the garden, within easy reach of Babby John, whose thoughts, however, were apparently like those of the Dying Gladiator, 'far away,' as he sat with his back to us, picking his teeth with a thorn. 'Beg pard'n, sir,' said my landlord, 'but I've been ast to call by several parties respectin' that there hape, which he carries on to that extent, sir, what with a-throwin' of hissell at parties' 'eads when parties is a passin', and makin' of them there ojous faces, as well he knows how, specially at female parties, when female parties is a-passin', that—— O gemini! help! murder!' A sound blow with a stick dislodged Babby John from the terrified orator's shoulders, and prevented a laudable design he had conceived of pulling up that gentleman's whiskers by the roots. Many were my apologies, and I promised that for the future Babby John should lead a perfectly secluded life.

I now began to feel I had a most unmanageable pet in Babby John, and to think that if those ancient mariners of Solomon, who, in company with the navy of Hiram, went to Tarshish for apes and peacocks, returned with a cargo of Babby Johns, truly they had but a wearisome passage home.

Determined to place Babby John where he would be entirely harmless, I found a vacant space at the back of my cottage, and there I fixed a pole in the ground, to which I fastened Babby John, and indulged him with a chain of eighteen or twenty feet in length. I also furnished him with an old tin packing-case, which might serve him as a shelter by night, an umbrella by day, and a shield wherewith to shelter his ugly face when any visitor took a fancy to throw stones at him. The herbage in the spot I had selected was rank and luxuriant, and Babby John, when placed in his new abode, was entirely lost for a time to external observation. The novelty of his situation, and the variety of occupation suddenly thrust upon his hands, at first seemed almost to bewilder him. But soon recovering his presence of mind, he devoted himself to a thorough survey of his premises—at least I supposed so, judging from the constant movement in the grass, and the occasional apparition of a green arched back, when he gave a kind of 'buck jump' to express his light-heartedness. His next duty was, as became a colonial settler, to make a clearing. This he accomplished in the most workmanlike manner in the space of a few days, grubbing up most of the grass by the roots, and in a wonderfully short time causing his domain to appear as bare as a turnpike road. He did not, however, in the course of his practical labours neglect the duties of a savant. It was clear that all insect life was to be inquired into and banished, and accordingly very few beetles or small insects of any kind escaped an anatomical investigation. He had (what philosopher is without his weakness?) a superstition on the subject of lizards, and, when he met one, screamed and made faces at it till it retired. All the frogs and toads he saw he chased, caught, and then threw away. But in removing a thick tuft of grass, he discovered a snake; then his terror knew no bounds; it was by turns abject and frantic. He flew round his pole till he resembled a firework, and tugged at his chain till it snapped; when free, he rushed into the house, and sought shelter under my bed. Extracted from this hiding-place by the tail, he clung with the most suffocating fondness to my neck; nor, till he was satisfied that the snake was really gone, could he be induced to return to his pole.

Babby John frequently broke loose from his chain. It was to no purpose that I bought new and stronger chains; some part—the staple, the buckle, or a weak link—would in time yield to the efforts prompted by the thoughts of freedom which throbbed in that little hairy bosom. When he did get free, one was not kept long in ignorance of the fact; shrieks of chattering joy from the escaped prisoner, yells from the Kafirs, screams from passers-by, and the clash of chains over neighbouring roofs, proclaimed the glad news. At

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times, he contented himself with taking possession of my own roof, where his favourite pastime was to pull off the tiles, and throw them down the chimney. The only way to cajole him from 'that bad eminence' was by the offer of a glass of gin and water. This was a treat he, like many of his human brethren, could not resist. It cost him a pang, to be sure: he knew that he would be seized by the tail, and consigned again to captivity, if he descended to obtain the refreshment; but (O Father Mathew!) the temptation was generally too strong. At times, however, he would rush off at once to neighbouring premises. He seemed to know that his career of freedom would be short, and therefore, on these excursions, endeavoured—and I must do him the justice to say—generally with success, to eat the greatest quantity of fruit, and do the greatest amount of mischief, in the shortest given time. In upsetting anything, his talents came out very strong. Once I caught him on my dinner-table, busily employed in mixing the vinegar with the mustard, an operation which he effected with the air of a philosopher performing a chemical experiment.

One out of many of his pranks I particularly recollect. I heard one day so loud a chatter of pleasure and defiance, that I knew at once Babby John was at liberty. I rushed out of the house just in time to see him disappear in the direction of a house inhabited by a man of exceedingly irascible and litigious temperament. Not a moment was to be lost, for I knew that Babby John would at once proceed to obnoxious exploits, and accordingly I started at full speed in pursuit. But I had a considerable distance to go round, and the pursued had taken a more direct route. When I got to the house, I found all the windows and doors closed, the children screaming inside, and the owner, whose face was scarlet with fury, engaged in filling his pocket with large stones. Assuming an air of persuasive humility, I inquired, with all the politeness I could muster, whether he 'd seen such a thing as an escaped baboon there or thereabouts.

'You call 'im a baboon, you do?' he said pantingly.

I submitted deferentially that my description of the animal was zoologically correct.

'Then,' he replied, 'you may call 'im what you like; but I call 'im' (the rest of his definition may be best described as consisting of various parts of speech).—'What 's he been a-doin' on? Well, this is what he 's been a-doin' on. He 's been a-climbin' up the back of my 'ouse, and then a-droppin' permiscus on the 'eads of my children as were a-playin' in front of my 'ouse.'

'Yes,' said a shrill female voice from the partially opened window; 'and it 's a mercy and a goodness gracious blessin' if they don't have fits for the rest of their little lives.'

'May you,' continued the husband, in answer to a question of mine most meekly put—'may you come in an' capter of 'im? No; I'm dashed if you may.—What 's he a-doin' on now? Well, this is what he 's a-doin' on. Why, he 's a-settin' as unconcerned as nothin' in the back-garding a-rootin' up the inions.—What am I a-goin' to do with 'im? Why, I am a-goin' to kill 'im with these 'ere stones.'

So saying, he left me, and proceeded to the attack. I watched from the road. Babby John was fully equal to the occasion; in fact, he shone. He ducked, dived, jumped, and pirouetted in the onion-bed; he 'disguised fair nature with hard-favoured rage;' he used a flower-pot as a shield, and was critically interested when a stone broke it. And finally—but not till the patience and stones of his assailant were alike exhausted—he came home with an armful of spoils, and was peaceably secured.

The end of Babby John was tragic, though strictly in keeping with the tenor of his life. I gave him to a pastrycook; and after a week's residence in his new quarters, one night he broke loose, and entered burglariously into the shop, with intent to commit a felony. The crime produced its own punishment, for the next morning, Babby John was found stiff and stark on the floor, having, to say the truth, eaten himself to death with tarts. His white closed eyelids shewed ghastly in his swarthy visage, and his lithe black hands were clasped, in the pangs of indigestion, over his distended stomach.

Poor Babby John! He made, as far as appearances went, a very indifferent corpse. 'He who had bent him o'er the dead' would, in Babby John's case, scarcely be inclined to seek another opportunity of doing so. In fact, a 'late lamented one' of the monkey tribe is *not* a pleasing object; and therefore, let me seriously advise any intending emigrant, who may perchance some day be compelled to dine off monkey, not to see his dinner before it is cooked and served. Nevertheless, a common green monkey baked in a pie with slices of bacon is not bad eating. *Experto crede.*

IN AN OLD CHURCH.

THROUGH the chancel, quaint and olden,
Streamed the evening sunlight golden,
Firing purple pulpit-stair,
And the aged preacher there.

Sweet the solemn anthem soared,
Note on note, and word on word,
Ringing through the long defiles
Of the dim and ancient aisles.

And upon its calm surcease,
All the air, with inbreathed peace,
Seemed to gather force, and sway
Through the temple, either way.

And the preacher's tones at length
Rolled in circuit, gathering strength,
Swelled around the lofty nave,
Like a sea-hymn in a cave.

Echoing from the walls around,
Psalm and prayer, with sweet rebound—
Psalm and prayer, and discourse given,
Passed, or seemed to pass, to heaven.

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THE GENTLEMAN ON MY LEFT.

SOME twelve months ago, I attended a public dinner at the Freemasons' Tavern, London. The object of the dinner was to do honour to a distinguished Englishman; the price of tickets, one guinea; the attendance, in number about two hundred. Some persons find a relish in describing old dinners, and eating them over again in imagination; but this is a sort of chewing the cud very distasteful to me. I do not propose, then, to revive the dinner, but to direct attention to the gentleman who sat on my left, and his extraordinary revelations.

His age was about five-and-thirty; his manner, singularly easy and self-possessed, shewed me from the first that his experience of public dinners was more extensive than mine. He was irreproachably dressed, and I do not grudge describing him as a handsome man.

During the pauses of dinner, we conversed. The commonplaces with which we began were distinguished, on his part, by critical remarks on the arrangement of the table, with which he found much fault, and the bad service of the waiters; on mine, by a humble acquiescence in a judgment I felt to be matured by much longer study of such things than my own. I then hazarded another commonplace, to the effect that I concluded him to be a great admirer of the distinguished guest to whom we were doing honour. O dear, no—not at all; he certainly had heard his name, but had no idea what he was celebrated for.

I ventured to ask, apologising if the question were out of place, why he had paid a guinea to be present at a dinner to a man he knew nothing about.

'I attend here professionally,' he explained, and immediately became absorbed with his knife and fork. I turned over in my mind all the professional capacities in which a person may attend a dinner—the Press, Music, Toastmaster—and then tackled him again. No, he was not a member of the press, nor musical; and toastmaster, of course, he was obviously not.

Was my friend (whom, for convenience, I will call Mr Blain) of the medical, clerical, or legal professions? He might have belonged to any one of them from his appearance and manner.

'O no,' he replied, with something of wounded dignity at the bare idea.

I admit being inquisitive, and I had made up my mind I *would* know what he was, but to all my inquiries he simply answered No. I then confided to him my own occupation, and by rather recklessly talking about myself and my own affairs, sought to merit his confidence in return. But he was obdurate. Dessert passed—toasts passed—speeches were said and done. Mr Blain rose to go. He said: 'You tell me you are stopping at the *Charing Cross Hotel;* so am I. We may as well share a cab.'

It was in the cab Mr Blain first intrusted me with the nature of his profession. Although peculiarly abstemious at the table, the toasts he had drunk just served to make him communicative. I was utterly confounded when he said: 'My calling, as you seem curious to know, is that of *Waiter.* I take a high rank in that profession. Allow me to offer you my card; and should you at any time—— you will know where to get something done in style, and not as you have seen it to-night.—You wonder at my paying a guinea to attend a dinner? Understand, then, that I make it part of my business to attend dinners privately, in case I may pick up a hint, for I don't despise learning from inferiors. I could never keep pace with the times but for seeing the latest fashions in waiting as interpreted by others, however humble their position may be to mine. If I learn nothing else, I always, in a private capacity, discover some want which I can in future supply. To-night, the waiting was highly inartistic, and discreditable to the profession; but its very omissions are instructive to me. Look at the napkins, for example. Dis-grace-ful! If there is one thing more than another in which a man of talent may display the resources of a cultivated mind, it is napkins. What did we have? Only five styles, continually repeated, and those the

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very commonest, familiar to a benighted Boots—the single mitre, the boat, canoe, shoe, and slipper. How the public endures it at a guinea dinner puzzles me. That is my style at two-and-six per head. At a guinea dinner for one hundred persons, I give one hundred different designs in napkins, all of them artistic—tulip, lily, rose, *fleur-de-luce*, fountain, the five orders of architecture, pheasant, double mitre, and so on. Then, for the Chair and the Vice, the double fan, the finest conception of a napkin extant. I never saw the man who could fold the double fan quicker than I. It takes me half an hour, every minute of it; and will fold two out of three for a wager. When I say two out of three, I mean you can't always depend upon the laundress. You must have a yard-and-a-quarter napkin, starched as stiff as pasteboard, to turn out a work of art, and you can seldom get them starched up to it. A professional man would not risk his reputation by attempting to fold more than two out of three, not even if he is acquainted with the laundress.'

The cab stopped. I took out my purse. 'O dear, no; allow me, if you please,' said Mr Blain. He insisted on satisfying the cabman, and then invited me to his rooms to take a cigar. The apartments he occupied were some of the best in the hotel. Divining my surprise at the sumptuousness of his quarters, Mr Blain proceeded: 'You have no doubt been under the impression that as a class we are poorly paid. Our services are perhaps not recognised by a grateful public as they deserve, especially when attendance is charged in the bill; but it is a very poor head-waiter's place at a first-class country hotel that does not bring in three hundred a year. For my own part, I don't boast, but my income as a waiter is about eight hundred a year in a provincial town. My wages are a pound a week. Don't misunderstand me. The balance is not perquisites. I reckon hotel perquisites at not more than a couple of hundred. But let me explain, by telling you a little about myself.

'The *Golden Lion* is the oldest hotel in our town, a posting-house. We get good families stopping with us, and we have the town-club meeting there. I went to the *Golden Lion* ten years ago, as second-waiter. That's a bad berth. Suppose, now, you are a family, just come into our hotel. Our first-waiter comes and bows to you, shews you your apartments, and rings for me to wait on you. I attend you till the bill is wanted, then I have to fetch the head-waiter, who receives your money, and pockets all the pickings. It's hard lines on me, the second-waiter, as I look at it with a second-waiter's eyes, but not so when regarded from the position of first-waiter. You see, everybody must learn, and pay for learning. As head-waiter, you are responsible for everything, and have to teach everything to your junior, so it's only fair you should take what little there is to take, regarding it as a premium from an apprentice.

'You may think there's very little to learn in waitering; but then you don't know. In the first place, it takes a man five years at least to learn how to lay a cloth. No one has ever been known to do it under, not as it should be done. Let me see a man once put a cloth on a table, and I'll tell you to a year how long he has been in the profession, only by his knack of doing it. And when he lays the knives and forks, I can tell you how he keeps his pantry in order. Then there is the acquiring of an even temperament. No apprenticeship will ever teach that, except you have a natural gift for the profession. Whatever is said at table, you must take no notice. If your dinner-table, or family, as it may be, is in a roar of laughter, you must look like a mute at a funeral. If they were to describe an earthquake that has just taken place in the next room, it mustn't shock you, or disturb your unruffled countenance. Again, think of the strain upon the intellect. Take, for example, a public dinner, like to-night. One waiter to every ten persons. That waiter has to calculate to a nicety exactly how much every one of his people has eaten and drunk, and exactly what every one will want next. He has ten appetites on his mind in different stages of repletion, and his profession *as* a waiter is to forestall every want with such tact that no one shall ever ask him for anything, I mean no one of good taste or cultivated appetite, for there *are* people we unfortunately have to do with will bellow out: "Waiter, more soup," instead of lifting a finger to indicate their vulgar requirements. Of course we are not responsible for such unseemly exhibitions of depravity; but, in any other case, for a waiter to be asked for anything is sufficient to ruin him for life. I knew a waiter once, a most exemplary man, who had the reputation of having never forgotten a single requisite of the table. A gentleman once rang for him—"Waiter, there are no salt-spoons." He looked round, and saw it was too true. He said he would go and get them. He went—where to, nobody ever knew—it might have been to London—or it might have been into the river—his reputation was gone, and his body was never found, but he never sent for his clothes, which shewed he was either dead, or else so ashamed of himself that he would have liked to be.

'But these are trifles on the very threshold of the profession. When you get to be a head-waiter, you find how difficult it is to make the public part with its coin, in a copious manner, for gratuities, without becoming ill-tempered. A young hand fails to impress the public with that sense of the total indifference to silver which a master of the profession will render respectfully apparent without saying a word. A young hand trusts to his tongue: "Please to remember the waiter"—the public parts to the amount of half-a-crown, and growls. An old hand never asks for money, but makes the public feel as if it were cast away on a desolate island, without a friend or any means of communication with the outside world, except through the person of a very gentlemanly and superior being, who first makes them alive to their abject dependence on his pleasure by coy neglect, and then, by ministering to their wants at the last moment, appears to them in the light of a deliverer. It takes a deal of study to learn how to awe the public, and make the public feel its inferiority, and to know the exact moment to exchange your policy of neglectful indifference for one of condescending readiness to oblige before aggravation sets in. But once make the public feel its obligation, the public, if gentlemanly, will "part" freely. If not so disposed (and you can tell in two minutes after they come in the house), you abandon them to the second-waiter, or third if refractory, and never deliver them from his ignorant inattention.

'I worked my way on till I was appointed club-waiter. I got a young hand to take the public-room, billiard, and reading-room, and as I knew

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pretty well the average takings for gratuities in those rooms, I was able to keep a sharp eye on him. When I thought he robbed me less than usual, I would give him a shilling or two for his honesty. These rooms brought me a pound a week. My own attention was confined to the card-room; that was good for four to five pounds a week certain—not every week alike, mind you, but one week with another.—How so? I'll tell you, and you will know why I never missed the card-room bell.

'The members would sit card-playing in perfect silence—not a word spoken for hours. Whenever I saw an empty glass, I filled it; never asking for the money lest I should disturb the play. I made it my business to know what every member drank, and to supply him with that. It was my duty to tell them when it was twelve o'clock. I would respectfully do so, when a rubber was over. "Draw the curtains, Henry, so that the light don't shine through those cursed shutters; put out the gas all over the house; lock the front door; and go to your pantry."

'Down I would go, and sleep till three or four in the morning, when my gentlemen would always wake me up, so that I shouldn't get into a scrape; and they always paid half-a-crown, and sometimes a crown apiece for waiting for them. The winners (as is generally the case with gainers at cards, "light come, light go," you know) were particularly generous. Thus my perquisites as club-waiter would run to two hundred and fifty per annum, and my wages another fifty.

'I might have done very well at that, but it was not improving myself in the profession of waitering in its higher branches of cloth-laying as I could wish. So, when the head-waiter was compelled to leave, owing to a misunderstanding with one of the ladies of the kitchen, I took his place. In that position I devoted myself to the acquirement of every trick and wrinkle which could place me on a level with the most eminent waiters in the kingdom. I have never grudged a guinea to a Frenchman or a German who could shew me how to do a new figure in napkins, or a novelty in arrangement of fruit and flowers. By dint of study and judicious feeing, and patience, and observing the blunders of other waiters, and correcting them in practice, I have gained the reputation of being the first waiter in all the counties south of London. You may talk of the beauties of scenery, of handsome pictures, of fine statues—I never could see anything in any of them to compare with the beauty of a cloth well laid for a grand dinner—I don't care whether it 's my laying or another man's; I can give others credit for artistic ability when I see it. If any man who has got glass, and silver, and flowers to arrange on snow-white linen, and can put the dessert on the table at the same time, can't make a picture out of his work, he has no soul for the highest walks of art. I would recommend him, as a friend, to go into the church, or take to painting or literature—or to any kindred employment which may be congenial to his intellect.

'After the dessert has been removed, and the waiters are dismissed to their pantry to wash the silver, if the head-waiter, remaining with his one or two assistants behind the screen, in case anything is wanted, can lay his hand on his waistcoat and say he has not been asked for a single thing, he is a proud and a happy man. Such has been my blissful lot for many years. With that fiendish invention, "Attendance charged in the bill," the palmy days of the profession may be said to have departed. It is a most monstrous infringement on our ancient rights and privileges. A gentleman comes—as it may be yourself—stays eight days at our hotel, sees in the bill: "Attendance at three-and-sixpence per day, twenty-eight shillings." "Really, waiter," he says, "I can't give you anything in the face of this charge." "No, sir," I have replied; "it isn't to be expected; and I am so ashamed of the practice, I would scorn to take a fee from you; though I feel it right to state the waiter never receives a farthing of the money charged for attendance." This is mostly good for a crown, and besides, is really true. We *don't* get the money, so we have to make it up in other ways. It was partly from feeling that I should have to descend to many unprofessional means of eking out my salary, and partly that I felt I was wasting my abilities at an hotel, that made me leave the *Golden Lion*, and set up as a professional man on my own account.

'Our town is a large one, and great upon public dinners. The neighbouring towns are also large, and likewise great upon public dinners. I had become so well known in the town and neighbourhood as *the* waiter *par excellence*, that I had no fear of a dinner going into other hands. No one else could lay a dinner fit for those who had once been accustomed to my laying. I was not disappointed. Engagements fell in on all sides, so that I soon made about four hundred a year. Dissatisfied with this pittance, I bethought me of the scheme by which I raised my income to its present amount, which, as I tell you, is eight hundred per annum. I caused it to be known by private intimation through a dozen counties, that the only thoroughly qualified professional man as a waiter in the south of England was prepared to attend all public dinners, with a staff of competent assistants, *entirely free of charge*. The only stipulation I made was that I should have the care of the gentlemen's hats and greatcoats. This privilege is worth to me five of the eight hundred a year, all expenses paid, of which I speak.—You may stare, but it is true. Take the average of the year, I attend as many as three dinners a week in the twelve counties in question. Every gentleman who comes in to dinner has his hat and greatcoat respectfully taken from him by one of my assistants, ticketed, and placed on the oak pegs which form part of my movable stock in trade. He receives a duplicate ivory ticket. At the conclusion of the dinner, his hat and coat are courteously returned him on delivery of the ticket. *No charge whatever is made for the accommodation.* I find by careful study that, if it is left entirely to the generosity of gentlemen to give what they like, the average amount so given, take one with another, at a public dinner, for the care of a hat or coat, amounts to eighteenpence per head. If I were to *charge* this for the service, they would complain. If they were forced to pay a fixed sum *before* dinner, sixpence would look dear; but I find eighteenpence so accurately represents the appeal to the generosity of gentlemen after dinner, that I can tell to a very close shave if my assistants rob me. Shillings preponderate, of course; but the half-crowns tell up. About one person and a half give shillings to one who gives a half-crown, and that allows for one or two here and there who

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meanly remark: "No charge? oh, thanks!" and sneak off without giving so much as a copper.

'I was at the banquet to Her Majesty's ministers at X. Thirteen hundred sat down. I took a hundred and nine pounds hats and coats.

'The balance of the eight hundred per annum is made up by an extensive private practice among the nobility and county gentry, where my name is a sufficient guarantee that the table will be an artistic display. And, as you have seen, I occasionally attend dinners in a private capacity, to keep myself informed of the latest novelties.

'For all this, I am not well to do. I never save money.—What is my weakness? The weakness of the profession—horse-racing, and betting on it. I take long odds, and hedge before the event, on every horse that will rise. I make a book, so that I always stand to win in any case except some very unforeseen combination of circumstances should arise; but, somehow, such unforeseen combination of circumstances does very frequently arise, and the result is that I lose. I mean to give over betting, though, as soon as I have made just one *coup* that shall land me what I've lost, and then I think I shall sell my hat-and-coat business to a Limited Liability Company, and retire on the proceeds.'

With that I wished Mr Blain good-night.

A PERFECT TREASURE.

CHAPTER VII.—MRS BLUNT AND I AND SOMEBODY.

The event recorded in the last chapter was not without its effect even upon my youthful and elastic mind; it convinced me that, in some way or other, the fortunes of my dear uncle and myself were knit up with one whom I could not but consider a most unworthy object; and I felt degraded by the connection between us and him. The shadow of the mystery of our little household cast a gloom over me, that all Uncle Theo's kindness could not dispel. Far from reproaching me with the conduct which had, without doubt, been the immediate cause of Tannajee's flight, he seemed to redouble his attempts to make Hershell Point a happy home for me; but this was only heaping coals of fire on my head. He was ill; his exertions upon that inclement night had told upon a constitution unaccustomed to our English winters: although he looked as strong and as noble as ever, he had a cough, which never left him night or day; and when he coughed, I shuddered. Unreasoning, impulsive, full of presentiments for evil or for good, I already saw my benefactor slain by the consequences of my own foolish passion. Tannajee was as well as ever, grumbling whenever called upon to attend to his sick master; silent, but scowling, as respected myself, though I was as civil to him as though he were my brother. It was the most unhappy time I had experienced; yet a gleam of sunshine suddenly struck in upon me, which warmed me to the core. It may seem nothing to many of my readers, but a few will understand it. It caused me sensations, compared with which those of mere material success in life are feeble, and even the dawnings of first-love.

One morning, there arrived by the post no less than a dozen newspapers, all directed to Marmaduke Drake, Esq. They were duplicate sheets of the *Sandiford Mercury*, a periodical the circumstances of which did not enable it to offer pecuniary reward to its contributors, but which remunerated them for their services, besides increasing its own modest circulation, by sending them twelve copies of their works in type. My *Lines to* —— had actually been published; I was in print at last. How shall I describe to that now comparatively small portion of the public that does not write for glory or for greed what emotions were mine, what being in print means to the sucking author! What type can typify type itself? which is his *summum bonum*. I may say of it what a lover of music said to his pianoforte:

> No fairy casket full of bliss outvalues thee;
> Love only wakened with a kiss more sweet may be.

But I knew nothing about Love at present, and it seemed to me that I had reached the very goal of happiness.

I gave a copy of the *Mercury* to Martha; one to the maid-of-all-work, Nancy; and even one to Sangaree Tannajee, although he could not read a line of English, and not unnaturally set down my generosity as only another instance to be added to the long category of insults he imagined himself to have received at my hands. He managed to find out what was the particular attraction to me in the paper in question, and lit a cheroot in my presence with my deathless lines. As to my uncle, I gave him three copies; thus only retaining half-a-dozen duplicates for my own private delectation. The provincial printer had made about as many mistakes as there were lines in the poem, and though I corrected them carefully in each case, my heart bled to think what a false impression must be made on those hundreds of readers who saw, for instance, 'posture' in the place of 'pasture,' and 'silver forks' in that of 'silver frost.' It is not my intention to inflict upon the public those early (or later) productions, under which my kind-hearted editress suffered so patiently, but still I feel I owe it to my genius to set it right with the world in this particular case, wherein it has been so sadly misrepresented. The *Lines to* ——, too, were in fact addressed to Mrs Eleanor Blunt, and have therefore some general interest—or rather they did have at that time, for the great reputation of that charming writer has faded with each revolving year, and the present generation of readers worships other literary gods. At all events, the poem will give a fair idea of my quality as a verse-writer at the age of sixteen, or (by our Lady) nigh seventeen, and may so far serve to illustrate this little life-story. Looking back at it through these many, many years, it really seems to me to have some touches of grace about it; and certes I could write no such sonnet now, were it to save my life.

LINES TO ——, ON NEW-YEAR'S DAY.

> Dear Lady, and kind friend, my love to thee
> (But tell not thou the lady of my love *);
> Through all this New-Year's Day be blue above,
> And silver frost † on earth; from tree to tree
> The wreathed diamonds we poets see,
> And all the country round which thou hast made
> Thine own, and ours—heath, pasturemead, and glade—
> As thy glad heart would have it, so may't be!
> A happy year; a new year rich in good

* I need scarcely say that this was only a gallant conceit.

† Imagine my feelings at 'silver forks' in place of this!

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(For so I know to thee the happiest year);
Amid the poor, less frowns and better cheer;
And more like thee, to teach as teachers should,
Who, coming across my heart this Christmas-time,
Of love and graciousness could scarce escape a rhyme.

I must honestly confess that I do not think my uncle understood one word of all this, any more than Martha, or Nancy, or Tannajee; and that even if I had left uncorrected those infamous misprints, he would hardly have discovered their inappropriateness. But he was pleased to see me so pleased, and put his three copies of the *Sandiford Mercury* religiously away in his desk, as a sacred though mysterious treasure. Being informed, however, that the poem referred to Mrs Eleanor Blunt, he quite agreed with me that I should start at once to lay that offering at her feet in person; and for Seaview Cottage I accordingly set forth with a beating heart. I am sure no lover who bears a present to his mistress ever pictured to himself her pleasure at receiving it, with brighter tints than those with which I painted my kind friend's satisfaction at what I had produced for her, from the depth of my heart and by the sweat of my brain. Nor was I disappointed with its reception. Mrs Eleanor Blunt was charmed (or she had a very charming way of persuading me so) with my little act of homage.

Even great authors, and especially authoresses, are mortal; and, perhaps touched with my simple flattery, she let her personal feelings tinge her judgment; but unquestionably she henceforth expressed a higher opinion of my literary promise. She did not now think it so much too soon to aid me to venture into print, since I had already got there without her help—although it must be confessed that the *Sandiford Mercury* was not a journal of European reputation; and we took counsel together as to how the thing should be done.

For my own part, notwithstanding this recent gleam of success, I was rather tired of being rejected by editors, who had shewn themselves worse than even the unjust judge in the Scripture, who was overcome by importunity; and Mrs Blunt, on her side, was not perhaps desirous to ask any personal favour of them on my account. 'I know So-and-so, and So-and-so,' said she, naming the conductors of some very first-class magazines indeed, to which even my ambition had not aspired; 'but I know so well what their cut-and-dried replies would be: "Your young friend must fill his basket first;" and so on. Besides, although it does no hurt to an old hand like me, magazine-writing spoils the style. I tell you what you shall do, my dear—what, at all events, will prove that you have patience, a quality indispensable to one of your proposed calling—you shall write a three-volume novel.'

This idea transported me; I could have sat down and begun at once.

'This will take you a year at least,' mused she (my countenance fell); 'and then, at eighteen, you will have entirely to rewrite it.' (It might have almost been written in my face, it became so blank.) 'Then, with a few hints from me, and some corrections, you will most likely be able to get some publisher to bring it out at his own risk, or even pay you something for it; but money will be a very secondary consideration; the point is to place yourself before the public. If the book has any worth at all, you will then have a little reputation to trade upon, and the magazines will be glad enough to get you.'

I have no doubt I still looked the reverse of enraptured with this tardy scheme.

'Such is my advice, my dear,' continued the old lady firmly; 'and it should not be unpalatable to one who really believes that he has got something in him. If you find yourself able to make an income, however small, by literature by the time you are nineteen, you ought to be more than satisfied. As it is, I am stretching a point to please you, for readers prefer seasoned brains; and any less prejudiced mentor would, I am certain, postpone your public appearance at least until you are one-and-twenty. There is no case in which the line "Raw Haste, half-sister to Delay," more exactly applies than to the literary aspirant. Indeed, were your own circumstances less exceptional than they are, you would have found me much more unrelenting.'

'I daresay you advise me for the best,' murmured I, endeavouring to look grateful.

'I am sure of it, my dear,' said the old lady quietly. 'But unfortunately, in these affairs, one can give nothing *but* advice. You must help yourself, if you wish Heaven to help you. Young people less sensible than you, but bitten by the same mad dog, have often come to me for ideas, for plots, for literary material of all sorts. Now, that's absurd: every author is bound to find (or steal) his own materials; not to mention that when I happen to get possession of an idea, I do assure you I keep it for myself.'

'I *have* got a plot,' said I, raising my head for the first time.

'Of course you have, my dear; half-a-dozen of them; and mind you take great pains to select the best. When you have written twenty chapters—that is, in about six months hence—you may come here (if I am alive), and read them to me.—You see,' added she, smiling, 'what I am content to suffer for your sake.'

'You are very good to me, dear Mrs Blunt; and I am a sad thankless fellow,' said I earnestly. 'However, I will obey your bidding to the letter.'

'There's a good boy.—Now, let us "sink the shop." Tell me all that's going on at Hershell.'

'Well, madam, my uncle (of whom, if I had been less egotistical, I should have spoken before) is far from being in his usual health.'

'What! the Maharajah ill? I should not have thought that possible! He looks to me like one who would maintain all his energies till about ninety-five, and then suddenly die in his bed.—How did he manage to get out of health?'

Then little by little, and very unwillingly, I found myself telling Mrs Blunt, who was a perfect sleuth-hound after a mystery, and delighted in it above everything, all I knew about Sangaree Tannajee and my uncle, but under the strictest seal of secrecy. It had not been actually enjoined upon me to be silent on the matter, and I really felt it a great relief to unbosom myself to such a sympathising friend. She listened with the utmost interest, and when I concluded with, 'All that I feel certain about in the matter is, that whatever hold this wretched Hindu has upon his master, it does not arise from anything of which my uncle need be ashamed,' she only nodded assent, and sat staring at the fire.

'I am too old to be astonished at anything,' said

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Mrs Blunt presently; 'but certainly what you tell me is very remarkable. Now, if my friend, Mr Edgar Allan Poe, were here (one of the most sagacious men about other people's affairs, and *the* greatest fool about his own, I know), he would get at the bottom of this mystery before he slept to-night. Let us see; what does your uncle say about this fellow? "I myself may be very rich some day, but it is almost certain you (his nephew) will be so." Then: "I wouldn't lose him for so many thousand pounds;" and again: "We shall never find out his worth until he is gone;" and all the time this "Perfect Treasure of a servant," as he also calls him, is an ill-tempered and idle drunkard, and not even devoted to the master who thus eulogises him. Putting aside the idea of this fellow's having any hold upon your uncle arising from his master's misbehaviour (which I agree with you that we may safely do); still, imprudence often proves quite as strong a snare as vice, or even crime. In some way or other, Sangaree Tannajee has so secure a footing in your household, that no ill conduct can make him lose it. Your uncle evidently estimates him very highly in one sense—doubtless a material one—and yet without entertaining for him a particle of esteem. Now, the question is: How are we to reconcile this inconsistency? How are we to'——

'Madam,' interrupted I hastily, 'we are both wrong; but I am most to blame. If my uncle had intended me to find out the mysterious connection between Tannajee and our own fortunes, he would have revealed it to me himself; on the contrary, he has enjoined me not to open the sealed packet in his desk which contains the solution of this affair until after his death. Is not that equivalent to forbidding me to inquire into the matter at all?'

'Frankly, I think not,' said Mrs Blunt. 'It appears to me that your uncle is under some solemn promise—and indeed any promise would be solemn to a man of his chivalrous nature—to keep silence upon the affair himself; but the very fact of his not having laid a similar injunction upon you, proves that he wishes you to use your freedom. He did not chide you, it seems, for making your own observations upon the Hindu's misconduct, and his master's singular mildness towards him. He would have said, had he wished you to be gagged and bound like himself: "For the future, whatever you may observe in my servant's behaviour or in mine, you need take no notice." Do you see what I mean?'

'Yes,' said I; 'and I should like to believe it. Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to discover this secret, and thereby possibly set free my uncle from the trammels in which he is certainly involved. But my own idea is, that the mystery, whatever it may be, is so obscure, so altogether sunk in the past, that my uncle, himself a simple and incurious man, believes it to be wholly incapable of solution, except by the key that lies within that packet, and which he is justly convinced I would as soon cut off my hand as make use of before the time appointed. He acts with the same consciousness of safety as a man who lets his private desk lie about the house, since it is fastened by one of those letter-padlocks, the "open sesame" of which it would take a lifetime to discover by trial. At the same time, since the necessary combination might just, within the range of possibility, be hit upon by accident, he would not wish the children of the house to be trying their luck with it all day.'

'He would tell them not to do so then,' persisted the old lady.

'At all events, my dear Mrs Blunt,' said I gravely, 'I must beg of you'——

Here I was interrupted by the entrance of a servant announcing a name which I did not catch, and ushering in a young lady, who threw herself into the arms of my hostess with affectionate warmth.

'You dear little darling,' cried the latter; 'how glad I am to see you back again! And only to think of your thus flashing in upon me all of a sudden like a sunrise at sea! How dared you do it?—And you—yes, you'—and here the scornful finger of Mrs Eleanor Blunt caused me to blush from head to heel—'how dare you, sir, to come from Hershell Point with what you call your news, and never to say a word about my Rosa's return to England?'

CHAPTER VIII.—MISS GLENDELL.

'My Rosa,' as my literary godmother called this unexpected stranger, was a girl of about my own age, dark as an Andalusian, but tall, and so frank-faced, that you could not mistake her for aught but Saxon. Her cheeks, aglow with brisk walking through the frosty air, grew yet more crimson as her attention was thus drawn perforce to me by Mrs Blunt's appeal. I had never seen her before, but I could make a very good guess as to who she was.

'I did not know this young lady was expected so soon at home,' said I, 'far less that she had arrived.—What a pleasant surprise you must have given to your father, Miss Glendell; he has so often spoken about you to my uncle and myself, who are very warm friends of his, you must know;' and I stepped forward and held out my hand with my best air.

She took it without the least embarrassment. 'I have often heard,' said she, 'from Mrs Blunt here, as well as from dear papa, of Mr Marmaduke Drake, and his uncle, the ex-maharajah;' and a sunny smile lit up her glorious Spanish face. Her tones were soft and low, but very distinct. She had the easy grace of a woman of the world of twice her age. For the first time in my life, I felt abashed, confused, and subjugated: she was mistress of herself and me.

'Well, it seems you don't want an introduction to each other, young people,' observed Mrs Blunt, regarding us with a pleasant twinkle of her eyes. 'You must be good friends, you two; you may be of great mutual service to each other; for this young gentleman, Rosa, is in a position to give you lectures on the British Classics, which I daresay you have shamefully neglected while in Frogland; and this young lady, Marmy, can teach you French, besides every modern accomplishment that was ever heard of.—So you are "finished" now, my dear Rosa, are you? A perfect professor of languages and the fine arts, including calisthenics and the use of the globes, eh?'

'Yes, my dear madam; or, at all events, thank goodness, I have done with Paris, and have come home, to be with dear papa a year. He has promised himself that treat, as he calls it, before I go out'—here the young girl hesitated, then added, with particular distinctness, as though ashamed of a weakness she had overcome—'before I go out as a governess, you know.'

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I felt myself growing scarlet: the idea of this lovely creature being compelled, at so early an age, to work for her own living, made me quite indignant.

'A year hence will be about the time that you too, Marmy, will be making your first appearance on the stage of life,' observed Mrs Blunt. 'I shall regard your *débuts* with interest, for you have both, in some sort, been my pupils; although you, Rosa, have been so long a truant, that you must have forgotten my instructions years ago.'

'I have not at least forgotten your many kindnesses, dear madam,' replied the young girl affectionately. 'You have no idea, by the by, how useful your letters of introduction have been to me. Madame Boncieux was quite proud of having a pupil in whom so many eminent persons professed themselves interested; and then how good you have been to correspond with me so often, you who have so many calls upon your pen. It is impossible for one to imagine, without having been an exile from home, as I have been, how welcome is the handwriting of a friend!' The speaker's eyes filled with honest tears. Her manner, which had a certain graceful demonstrativeness about it scarcely English, was so inexpressibly touching that I could have wept myself.

'My poor Rosa!' exclaimed Mrs Blunt with tenderness, 'it seems to me your fate has been a hard one.'

'Not at all, dear madam,' replied she cheerfully; 'for I assure you I have been almost always treated with consideration. My aunt, who sent for me to live with her when my poor mother died, was very kind; and when God took her, it was my own wish to go to Madame Boncieux. My dear father would have sent for me home at once; but how could I learn in Hershell village to get my own living? to cease to be a drag upon his efforts? For he is very poor, you know, and is no longer young. If he had had his will, his love would have rendered me useless; he and you would have downright spoiled me; but now, as you say, I have learned to teach everything to everybody;' and for the first time she laughed so merrily as well as musically that it was clear her experience of life, however severe a burden, had not destroyed the elasticity of youth.

'And, with all your fine Parisian ways,' said the old lady, who was obviously as proud of her Rosa as though she had been really her mother, 'you have not forgotten how to walk, it seems. How nice it is of you to have trudged all this way to see me so early.'

'Well, I think it would have been good of me to leave papa,' returned the other smiling; 'but the fact is, he had to go over to Daisyport, to see a patient;' and I thought I should just have time to run down and have a kiss of you, and back again, before he returned home.—But I really must bid you good-bye now, for the present; for he is like a child with a new toy, and cannot bear me to be out of his sight.'

'If you must go, dear Rosa, you must; but since you and Marmy live at the same out-of-the-way, end-of-the-world place, you may as well walk home together.'

I blushed, and bowed, murmuring something of the great honour which I should esteem it to be Miss Glendell's escort; while the young girl expressed her pleasure with the arrangement in a much less embarrassed manner. 'Only,' said she, 'I must just say "How do you do?" to Sally, lest she should think I had forgotten her.'

Sally was the cook at Seaview Cottage; and while Miss Glendell sought the kitchen, Mrs Blunt inquired of me whether I did not think her protégée charming.

'Yes, indeed,' said I earnestly. 'But why never have spoken to me of this wonder?'

'Because I wished her to make her own impression upon you,' returned she frankly. 'There's a heroine for your new novel, sir! None of your blue-sashed, bread-and-butter young misses, but a genuine—— Hush! here she comes.—Sally is as fat as ever, is she not?—Almost as fat as her mistress, you were going to say. Well, you were thinking so, at all events; naughty Rosa!—Good-bye, my darling; teach him French.—Good-bye, Marmy; introduce her to the British Classics.—Dear heart alive,' added she with fervour, 'what would I not give to be as young as you two!'

This pleasant old lady, our common friend, of course afforded us a ready subject for conversation; and, besides, there was Rosa's father to talk about, and my uncle, about whom she expressed herself curious to hear. But there was each other's life-history also, concerning which, at seventeen, one is by no means reticent. That of Rosa I was already in part acquainted with from her own lips; and she now completed what was wanting. Having lost her mother at an early age; and her aunt, who lived abroad, volunteering to take charge of her, Mr Glendell had very unselfishly parted with his little daughter, for the sake of her own future benefit. His widowed sister was reported (falsely as it turned out) to be in good circumstances, and it was hoped would make the child her heiress. But she had died poor. Rosa, declining to return home, to be a burden upon her father's scanty resources, had been educating herself for the last three years, with a view to getting her own living as a governess, which she was now fully competent to do. As for me, I spoke of my own affairs with a candour that was half-frankness, half-egotism; and they seemed to interest my new companion mightily. The idea of choosing literature for my profession in life delighted her; much as a young gentleman in the middle ages might have pleased some youthful maiden by the confession that he intended to devote himself to knight-errantry. She had been introduced through Mrs Blunt to some eminent men of letters in France, all decorated with ribbons or crosses, and to whom Madame Boncieux had evinced an unwonted respect; and she esteemed that calling very highly. Even in France, it was exceptional; but in England, save our friend at Seaview Cottage, she had never met with an author. 'How droll!' (this expression I did not quite approve of); 'and had I written much? And was it prose or poetry? She doted on poetry. They read Voltaire's *Henriade* and Lamartine's *Napoleon* at Madame Boncieux'. And were these charming things in manuscript, or were they actually in print?' How I blessed the editor of the *Sandeford Mercury!* Twenty-four hours ago, I should have had to confess that I had never written anything that had been published; but now I replied with affected carelessness that 'some of my works were in print, and some were not; nay, it did so happen, by the by, that I had in my pocket at that moment a printed copy—if she would do me the favour to accept it—of some verses addressed to her old friend and mine, Mrs

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Eleanor Blunt.' I would not permit her to read them, as she wished to do at once, upon the open road, which I did not consider a favourable spot for their proper appreciation; but when we reached her home, and found the surgeon had not yet returned, the *Sonnet to* —— received the most favourable criticism; and I promised, without much pressing, to shew her some more productions by the same hand.

I was already charmed by this beautiful young creature's air and appearance; but now that I had come to know the capabilities of her mind, 'Here,' said I to myself, 'is Perfection indeed!'

When Mr Glendell came home, we found he had been not only to Daisyport; he had called at the Point on his way back, to see the ex-maharajah, upon whom he always now looked in twice or thrice a week.

'You found my uncle better, I trust?' said I, after some talk.

'Well, the fact is, Marmy,' observed the surgeon gravely, 'I am not easy about the ex-maharajah.'

'Good Heaven! sir,' cried I, seizing my hat, 'is my uncle ill?'

'Not in the sense you mean, my lad; he is no worse than he was yesterday, for instance. But strong as he looks, and indeed is, as respects mere vigour, there is something wrong with his lungs, I feel convinced. I have persuaded him to-day, for the first time, to let me use the stethoscope; and the result is far from encouraging.'

'O sir,' said I, turning suddenly pale, and feeling my heart, that had just been beating so blithely, become as cold as a stone, 'must my dear uncle die?'

'Nay, nay; I don't say that there is anything so serious the matter at present; but his constitution, outwardly iron-plated, has a weak spot within—a fact which I believe he has himself long suspected. Whether that be so or not, he received what I thought it my duty to tell him this afternoon with the utmost coolness. His only anxiety is upon your account, Marmy.—What a fine, brave, unselfish fellow he is!'

'Yes, Mr Glendell, and as tender-hearted as any woman.'

'Ay, Marmy, he has been, indeed, as you once told me, mother as well as father to you. Against that, there is nothing to be said, for you have been a good and dutiful lad; but this kindness of heart in him in some cases becomes mere weakness. I protest that the conduct of that Hindu villain, whose life he saved, but at the expense of his own health—for that night's work upon the downs has brought out all the dormant mischief into activity—fairly makes my blood boil. At this moment, that copper-coloured villain is drunk; and your uncle, who needed his attendance, and of course applied for it in vain, has nothing more severe to say than "Poor fellow." It 's worse than weakness—it 's downright wicked. Why, there are a dozen honest men in this village who would make Mr Braydon good and faithful servants, in place of this lolloping heathen, and yet he persists in retaining him. Moreover, what seems so odd, I verily believe your uncle knows him to be a worthless scoundrel. What do you say, Marmy?'

'I don't think Uncle Theo has a very high opinion of him,' said I evasively, for my conscience was still tender concerning the revelation I had already made upon this subject to Mrs Blunt.

'Well, then, why does he keep him? Why does he put up with him? There must be some uncommonly strong reason for it, you know.'

'I am sure I don't know, Mr Glendell, nor even suspect.'

'Then all I can say is, that you are a very stupid fellow (Don't you think so, Rosey?), to have lived in the same house a dozen years, and never to have discovered the skeleton in the cupboard!'

'Sangaree Tannajee is not much like a skeleton,' said I with a forced laugh, 'as I am sure Miss Rosa will say when she has seen him.'

'It 's no laughing matter, Marmy,' pursued the surgeon. 'Setting aside the inconvenience of having such a brute in your house at all, it is just now absolutely necessary that your uncle should be closely looked after and well tended. He is careless of himself, and needs to be reminded to take his medicine, and the nourishing food that has become so necessary to him. Martha and Nancy are well-meaning women enough, but forgetful and boorish. A good body-servant would be, just now, invaluable about your uncle, and instead of that, here is this drunken baboon.'

'If you will only tell me, Mr Glendell, what you wish my uncle to do,' pleaded I, 'I will answer for it nothing shall be forgotten; he need not surely require a servant when I am by his side to minister to his wants. It would be a very small return to make to him for all he has done for me, even should I become his valet and his nurse.'

'My good lad, I know all that,' said the surgeon approvingly; 'but, unfortunately, he would never let you do him any such service; although, from a servant who knows his duties, he might accept it as a matter of course.'

'It seems to me,' said Miss Glendell rising, and putting an arm round her father's neck, 'that this dear ex-maharajah, whom you and everybody loves so much, is one of those impracticable persons who hate, even when ill, to give their fellow-creatures trouble, and have an absurd disinclination to be nursed.'

'That 's just so, my dear,' answered the surgeon, chuckling with pride, as a hen chuckles over some promising chick. 'You could not have described him better had you known him all your life.'

'Very well, papa, then I tell you what I mean to do, now I shall have so much idle time on my hands. Among other accomplishments I learned at Madame Boncieux'—where there is a school infirmary—I learned to nurse; and I shall just take this ex-maharajah into my own hands, and nurse him myself, without his knowing it.'

UNDER THE SEA.

Among the very few Frenchmen that seem capable of understanding England and the English, M. Alphonse Esquiros holds an honourable place. His opinion of us is, on the whole, good, yet by no means enthusiastic; he endeavours to regard us not as enemies of his own people, but only as their rivals in the great work of civilisation. It is easy to see that he has some contempt for our immobility, our incapacity for getting excited about an idea; while, on the other hand, he is ready to acknowledge our superiority in practical matters. Our scientific acquirements evidently excite his admiration, and his account of them—as instanced in various government departments—is singularly graphic. At the same time, he is greatly given to digression. His latest work, entitled *English*

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Seamen and Divers, might with greater truth have been entitled *English Seamen and Divers other Matters*. A third of the volume is devoted to a very detailed and interesting account of Greenwich Observatory, and the work carried on therein. He tells how Professor Airy is worried by applications from persons who confuse astronomy with astrology, and demand of the astronomer-royal to have their horoscopes cast, though it is fair to add that they also enclose postage-stamps to repay him for his trouble. But not only does the professor decline to inform young ladies whom they are to marry, or to give advice, drawn from a celestial source, to young men as to their future conduct; he sets himself resolutely against all dealings with the stars which are not of the most practical character. He leaves to other establishments the occupation (so dear to human nature) of discovering spots in the sun; he resists the temptation, so seductive to the astronomer, of observing the figures of the planets, the mysteries of the *nebulæ*, the eccentricities of the comets. He refused for the use of his Observatory 'the largest refracting telescope in the world,' lest it should lead him, or any member of his staff, away from their simple path of duty, which is the observation of the Heavenly Bodies, with a view to their influence on Navigation. At the same time, we must not misunderstand this to mean that the highest ends of science are neglected. What is lost in extent is gained in depth and exactness; and 'the delicate observations which are being carried on at Greenwich, on account of the very precision which distinguishes them, serve as the groundwork for the greater part of the speculative views which are taken up as to the system of the universe.'

Out of the thousands of people who yearly go to stare at the 'motor-clock,' set in the Observatory wall, and to wonder at its four-and-twenty hours, not one in a hundred, probably, has any definite idea of the practical advantages conferred by the institution before them. Without it, they have a general notion that we should lose our standards of measurement, and our accurate record of Time, and have to return to barley-corns for the one, and hour-glasses for the other. Yet it is to Greenwich Observatory that every mariner in his trouble turns, as to a faithful friend who will not deceive him. 'The astronomer,' says M. Esquiros, 'watching the celestial movements on the little hill in the park, stretches out over the immensity of the ocean a helping hand to the sailor wandering from his course on the great watery waste, and, as it were, compels the stars to lead him safe to his port. But how can this be the case, and what are the means adopted for finding out the longitude at sea? Let us imagine a vessel at the mercy of the wind at night-time, and near rocks or sandbanks which are supposed to be still far distant. The sky is clouded with gloom, and the pilot has, in fact, lost his way. Suddenly a clear spot breaking between the clouds allows a group of stars and the moon to become visible. The navigator at once consults his *Nautical Almanac*, and then, with the help of instruments and calculations familiar to mariners, he is not long in discovering, by the situation of the stars, what time it is at the spot where his vessel then lies. Next, by comparing this time with that of his chronometer—regulated before his departure by the clock at Greenwich—he easily ascertains his longitude. It is a well-known fact that in these cases the difference in time gives, by a simple rule, the difference in distance. Confidence is at once restored to the hearts of the sailors, for they now know where they are, and foreseeing its snares, can sail fearlessly over the deep.'

This *Nautical Almanac*, it should be stated, is printed years in advance, for the benefit of those who undertake long voyages; it predicts each day the position of the moon and the planets, and all the celestial phenomena that the seer upon Greenwich Hill foresees will occur, so that when the world is rolled up like a scroll, or swallowed up in fire, there will actually be an accurate record in existence of what would have taken place had it been permitted to continue for years. A curious illustration of the accuracy of astronomical observation was afforded in 1844, with respect to the definition of our North American territory. 'Between Canada and the northern portion of the United States of America there lies an impenetrable region, where dark virgin forests, deep ravines, and dismal marshes have long defied the efforts of the two governments and all the appliances of geodetical science. On account of all these obstacles, the boundaries of the two countries had not been definitely fixed in these regions. In 1843, Lord Canning wrote to the astronomer-royal to call his attention to the subject; and Mr Airy advised him to send to the spot some military engineers, to whom he, Mr Airy, would previously give some useful instructions. In consequence of this advice, some officers of the above corps repaired to Greenwich, whence, after certain preliminary studies, they left for Canada. Two groups of observers, each party being furnished with a telescope, a chronometer, and some other instruments, placed themselves at the two lateral extremities of the wild country which it was their business to divide. By means of calculations, dictated in a great measure by the movements of the celestial orbs, they traced out a boundary-line in conformity with the nature of the treaties which had been signed between England and the United States. The two parties being placed at a great distance from each other, they had no means whatever of coming to any understanding as to the progress of the operations. The studies and calculations being terminated, one of the two groups of engineers advanced slowly through the forest, cutting out a path in a straight line in the direction previously arranged, which they followed on the credit, as it were, of the stars. How great was the astonishment and joy of these gallant geometricians when, having cut their way through forty-two miles of brushwood and trees, they perceived from the summit of a hill the goal they had been aiming at! Right in front of them, on another eminence not very far off, they caught sight of a gap cut in the dense and sombre curtain of the woods. This gap became more and more extensive, and soon disclosed to view the other body of engineers approaching from the opposite side of the district. The two lines thus met end to end; the difference between them did not exceed three hundred and forty feet, and this very slight deviation was owing to an error of only one second in the difference of longitude. England and the government at Washington hastened to recognise as the boundary of the two states this line marked out by the authority of the heavens.' It is not to be supposed that the watchers of the stars on Greenwich Hill are scientific Sybarites, who, lying (often at full length)

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in the most comfortable of arm-chairs, admire at their leisure the wonders of the Heavens. It is very cold work indeed to be stationed for hours on a winter's night, under an open roof, and with one's eye glued to a telescope; while the patience and microscopic accuracy demanded of these ministers of science are something that ordinarily careful and punctual folks are unable to imagine. Formerly, for observations in the daytime, they had to descend into a dry-well, one hundred feet deep, in order to see the stars, but the progress now made in science renders this unnecessary.

From the Observatory, M. Esquiros ingeniously glides—by way of 'the Admiralty'—to sailors, and from sailors to the diving-bell, whose operations he went to witness at Plymouth breakwater. It was rather disappointing to find that this instrument was not a bell at all, nor in the least like the machine M. Esquiros had seen, and descended in, at the Polytechnic, in Langham Place. It is a box of glass and iron of the shape of a parallelopiped, and capable of accommodating half-a-dozen inmates, of which our author in vain endeavoured to make one. The authorities in charge assured him that he would have a rush of blood to the head, and be deaf for days; and when that argument had no effect upon this heroic man, they told him that a descent would cost twelve pounds—which certainly seems a good deal of money for a 'dip' in the sea. However, he was permitted to watch all the operations. The workmen do not seem to have any particular apparel for their subaqueous duties, which they perform precisely as on land with axe and shovel. 'A dozen convex lenses, eight or nine inches in diameter, and firmly set in copper frames, receive the rays of the sun spread through the water. In some cases, the *bull's-eyes* are protected externally by iron lattice-work against the blows which they might suffer from the rocks or other solid matters which are occasionally met with in the sea. The light which is thus shed into the interior of the bell varies, however, very considerably in colour and intensity, according to the state of the ocean and the depth to which they have sunk. In places where the water is troubled by sand, the diver often passes through a kind of twilight or submarine fog, which compels him to light his lamp. More often, on the contrary, the light is sufficiently strong to enable one to read a newspaper printed in small type. A story even is told of a lady who wrote a letter in the diving-bell, and dated it thus: "16th June 18—. At the bottom of the sea." Her courage obtained for her among the divers the *sobriquet* of the Diving-*Belle*.'

As for the prime necessity, air, that is supplied by an air-pump, which four men keep in motion, the element passing through a leathern pipe, which resembles a boa-constrictor unwinding its coils, into an orifice in the roof of the bell. The submerged workmen have various methods of communication by signals. 'They generally make use of a hammer hung by a cord to the dome of the bell, and this hammer plays an important part in the mysterious language of these submarine messages. No noise coming from the surface of the water can reach the ears of the divers; but, on the contrary, sounds ascending from the diving-bell are distinctly heard by those whose duty it is to listen for them in the open air. A particular sense is attached to the number of blows struck by the hammer on the resounding sides of the bell. Thus, a single blow means "more air," or "pump faster;" two blows signify "hold hard;" three, "hoist away;" four, "lower down;" &c. It is easy to see that something of a system has ruled in the formation of this telegraphic language, and that the orders which they are compelled to give the most frequently are transmitted by the smallest number of blows. They also avail themselves of other means of making signals; for instance, by the help of small buoys which they send up to the surface of the water. On some occasions, they even exchange messages by means of a cord, one end of which is fastened inside the bell, and the other to the vessel up above. The workmen down below write what they wish, either with pen and ink on a morsel of paper, or with chalk on a piece of plank, and send this communication up to the surface.'

When the bell reaches the bottom, its inmates jump off their seat, and begin to dig into the moist sand to get out the stones: sometimes the water is muddy, but generally it is so transparent that even the passage of a cloud in the sky is visible at the bottom of the sea. The bell can be moved at will, by signal, through means of 'a traveller' on four wheels, running over two tramways, north, south, east, and west. Curiously enough, these workmen, who labour half their time under water, and half on the great causeway which they have helped to construct, are not paid higher than mere landsmen; sometimes by the piece, sometimes by the day, but in neither case do their wages average more than twenty-five shillings a week; and then they have their dead season, when the swell is so violent that they cannot go down into the bell. Notwithstanding the comparatively modern character of the trade, these divers have already their legends. One of them, which they delight to tell to their children, perhaps themselves to be amphibious labourers, is as follows.

'*Jack* (for this is the name given to a diver who lived "once upon a time") had been busy for some weeks in gathering up the relics of a shipwreck, when one day he saw appear at one of the windows of the bell the pale face of a woman, with long hair intertwined with seaweed. He had often heard tell of the beauty of mermaids, who are, as every one knows, lovelier than the most lovely of women; but Jack never believed that any creature so perfect as this could have existed. With a voice softer than the murmuring of the waves under a gentle breeze, she said to him: "I am one of the spirits of the sea. On account of your kind disposition, I have marked you out among the rest of your companions, and I will protect you, but on one condition only, which is, that you shall be sure and recognise me under any and every shape into which I may be pleased to change myself." The vision disappeared, and Jack remained very much surprised, but with a strong feeling of joy in his heart's core.

'From this moment, everything succeeded with him. Where other divers gained one crown, he gained three. Recollecting what the siren had told him, he took the utmost care to treat with kindness every inhabitant of the sea. When the bell went down into the water like a hollow column, he used to see distinctly a little below his feet the fish and other marine creatures; but he took pains never to frighten them away. More than once, when the bell was ascending to the surface, and the warm vapour covered with a mist the loopholes of his prison, he looked, but looked

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in vain, for the vision of the *Lady of the Sea*, for he longed very much to see her again. But she never shewed herself to him any more.

'Nevertheless, everything went on prospering with him. His wife and children began to believe that it was owing to the dried sealskin he wore under his clothes, and that this brought him luck. He had not dared, in fact, to mention to them about this sea green-eyed mistress of his who watched so carefully over him. One day, however, he worked several hours in succession without finding anything of value. The ground-swell obscured the light in the interior of the bell, and prevented him from discerning the objects around him. As he was returning home in rather an ill-humour, he came upon a frightful polypus that the ebbing tide had left lying on the sand. Jack, forgetting his habits of kindness to all the denizens of the sea, crushed it with his foot, and went home to eat his supper. The next day, soon after he had reached the bottom of the sea, what was his terror to see through the glass window of the bell, not the attractive face of the mermaid, but a monstrous shark! The creature approached almost close to the face of the diver, and said to him: "You have disobeyed me, and must therefore die." *In fact*, some days afterwards, an accident happened to the machine, and Jack was drowned.'

Thus the divers have not only got their tale, but the moral to adorn it: 'Never to mix their pleasure or their pride with sorrow to the meanest thing that feels.'

Of course, so indefatigable a sight-seer and explorer as M. Esquiros was not going to put up with not being suffered to go under water; there are as good divers in the sea elsewhere as are to be found at Plymouth; and off to Whitstable went he in search of a marine experience. Here he met with John Gann, the famous contractor-diver, who undertakes works below the waves, and has had many a sturdy triton in his employ. His fishing up one hundred thousand pounds from the *Lady Charlotte*, was perhaps his greatest coup. On the coast of Ireland, too, where some Whitstable men were employed, there were got out of a sunk Spanish vessel barrels of dollars, which, though the wood-work had gone, still retained the barrel form, so that the coins were gathered in lumps like figs; and a row of houses built with the proceeds at Whitstable bears the name of Dollar Row.

Of course, these divers use the apparatus—helmet, waterproof, &c.; and hearing that some of Mr Gann's men were working at Dover, M. Esquiros hurried thither, resolved to wear that all-attractive uniform. He found his men in a ship moored at sea, from which they descended and to which they returned as to head-quarters. On a platform stood the air-pumps, with the men appointed to work them, and who are forbidden to exchange a word with anybody, or with one another, while the men, whose lives are dependent on their attention, are under water.

He watched the professional divers go about their weird business, descending into and ascending from the deep, and his soul was fired with the desire to do likewise. 'I asked the divers whether, being already so far advanced on the road, I might not attempt to descend to the bottom of the Channel in good earnest. They stared at me with wondering eyes, in which I fancied I read a feeling of doubt and anxiety. "At all events," said one of them, "he can do as he likes."'

M. Esquiros did not in reality much like it, though he was resolved to go through with it. It is one thing to feel confident that two reliable men do watch over you when under water, just as a nurse does over a child walking with 'leading-strings,' but it is another to test it—to actually intrust yourself at the bottom of the sea to their kind attentions. However, being properly encased, he actually ventured upon the experiment, with no very satisfactory result. He got to the bottom of the ladder, and even set his feet upon the floor of ocean, but he held tightly on with his hands to the friendly staircase; for the fact is, he was half-suffocated and wholly frightened—as indeed most of us would be. Wishing, however, to carry back with him a tangible proof of where he had been, and a *souvenir* of his adventure, M. Esquiros stooped down and picked up a pebble from the bottom of the sea, and was going to put it into his pocket, when he suddenly discovered that he had none. If it was kittle kattle coming down, it was 'the deil and a'' getting up again; and his dress, when he endeavoured to disrobe, stuck to him like a limpet.

This diving apparatus, however, when one gets accustomed to it, is much more useful, and more extensively used than the more cumbrous Bell. The hull of a ship at sea often receives damage which can be repaired by this means, and thus the *Great Eastern* was once preserved from possible destruction, on its way across the Atlantic. So conscious, indeed, is the government of the advantage of the apparatus, that a certain number of the sailors in the fleet are now trained to the use of it. It also rectifies much that goes wrong in mines. It is well known that the operations for raising the remains of the *Royal George* at Spithead were carried on in this manner; but although a thousand persons perished in that shipwreck, very little money was found, and only twenty-three out of the one hundred and four guns were recovered. During this work, 'two soldiers of the Royal Engineers, who had for a time exchanged their military garb for the uniform and helmet of the diver, began quarrelling, when at the bottom of the sea, as to the right of ownership in some of the remains. As they were both working at the same part of the wrecked ship, the question was, who should be the master in that particular locality, and who should appropriate the spoil. A fight ensued, during which one of the divers struck his adversary with his fist on the visor of his helmet, and thus broke the glass. He was at once obliged to go up to the surface, and the other laid violent hands on the booty.'

When a ship has sunk, the great marine insurance companies, such as Lloyd's, employ their own divers, and when they have done their best, sell the 'gleanings' of the salvage to speculators. Thus, the relics of the *Royal Charter* were disposed of for one thousand pounds; after which a bar of pure gold, weighing nine and a half pounds, was brought up, besides a box containing three thousand pounds.

In a steamer sunk off Lundy Island, destined to run the American blockade, in 1865, some very costly machinery was sunk; and an engineer, named M'Duff, went down in the apparatus—forty-two feet under water—and brought the whole of it up, piece by piece. Perhaps Victor Hugo may possibly have taken one of the most striking scenes in his *Toilers of the Sea* from that surprising feat.

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From the *Malabar*, which went down in 1860, and remained at the bottom of the sea untouched for months, the whole amount of the great treasure it carried—two hundred and eighty thousand pounds—was similarly recovered.

Thus, the poet's phrase of 'the deep's untrodden floor' has no longer any application. It often presents an animated spectacle to the helmeted intruder. 'At the bottom of the sea, just as on its surface, there is a horizon by which the visual rays are limited, but the submarine horizon is, of course, much more confined in its extent than the other. Within the narrow circle which is embraced by the sight, all kinds of animated forms appear from time to time, like ships under sail on the upper horizon—very often it may be a shoal of small fish, which are swimming for their lives to escape from the pursuit of one of the devouring ogres of the ocean. On the contrary, when all is quiet, the fish, attracted no doubt by the metallic glitter, come and swim round the head of the diver like a flight of small birds, and will even imprint a kiss with their mouths on the outside of the helmet. Some of them will occasionally take more audacious liberties with their strange visitor: not long ago, a diver was bitten in the shoulder by a dog-fish.'

The Prussian engineer, M. Euber, with a companion, had once to take refuge within the shattered timbers of a submerged wreck, from the attentions of a shark, which swam round and round them with an astonished air.

The diver who has made his business in the deepest waters yet explored has only descended one hundred and sixty-five feet: this was in the Mediterranean; and he was obliged to load his belt with balls of lead, and to return to the surface every twenty-five minutes. 'One hundred and sixty-five feet! Certainly it seems a great depth; but when we hear of twenty-five thousand feet of water in certain parts of the Atlantic, it is enough to make one give up the contest in despair. Beyond forty or forty-two mètres down, the light begins sensibly to diminish. Can there be a point where light ceases to exist? There is, I think, every reason to conclude so.'

DAISY'S CHOICE.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.

Mr Vivian was lounging by the surgery-window, in no very good temper. He had been watching for Daisy, and she had not appeared, and that provoked him; and besides, the doctor had been away for an unconscionably long time, making his country rounds, and Vivian had been left to his own resources. In truth, he had one of those irritable tempers which are apt to accompany poetic genius, and he was easily put out of sorts. His grievances at present were not many, inasmuch as he was left sole occupant of a snug room, well furnished with books, and was at liberty, if he felt so disposed, to take his fishing-rod, and stroll down to the river. But he was in a grumbling mood, and disinclined to go out; so he sat at the window, grumbling at Daisy for staying in the house, at the doctor for attending to his own business, at the sun for shining into the room, at the flies for buzzing, and at the whole course of things in general.

Presently, the sound of a horse trotting down the street was audible, and the doctor came in, mud-stained—for the roads were soft—but cheerful.

'What! are you here still, Vivian? I thought I should find you somewhere by the river.'

'What a time you have been!' said Vivian discontentedly.

'I am sorry you have wearied. You see I must attend to my patients, even though it involves leaving you so much alone.'

'O yes, I know; only I wouldn't be such a slave as you are to these country boors, not for ten times the money.'

The doctor opened his grave eyes wide for an instant. It struck him, as he looked at the peevish face before him, that there was a worse bondage than that of honest work—a bondage to one's own whims, and fancies, and evil tempers. But his profession had, among other things, taught him reticence, so he wisely held his tongue. He went to the window, and laid his cool hand on Vivian's brow. It was drawn away, very much after the manner of a petted child.

'I think you are not quite well,' he said kindly. 'I notice that people always take gloomy views of things when they are dyspeptic.'

'Nonsense,' said Vivian, looking grievously insulted.

'Truth,' answered the doctor smiling, and going across to his big press, where he began to pour things that 'fizzed' into tumblers. 'Drink this,' he said rather peremptorily, returning to Vivian.

That gentleman pshawed contemptuously, but obeyed. 'It is not so bad,' he acknowledged.

The doctor left the room, to change his muddy attire; and on returning, he found that the whole expression of Vivian's face and position had altered. He had drawn back behind the curtain, and was watching earnestly, intently, with a curiously pleased look in his dark eyes, a figure in a blue morning-dress, that was moving about the garden. Daisy had come out to gather a bouquet for her drawing-room, and, unconscious of being looked at, she was daintily putting one bit of bright colour to another, pausing every now and then to study the effect.

It was a pretty picture to look at; but in Vivian's face there was an expression which meant something more than even pleased admiration. The doctor glanced at him, and then walked quickly across the room, and stood for a few minutes with his back to him, leaning his arm on the mantelpiece, and looking absently down into the empty fireplace. Vivian hardly noticed him. He went on watching Daisy for a little while, till suddenly turning from the window, he moved towards the door.

'Where are you going?' asked the doctor, turning round to look at him.

'Into the garden. Miss Barton is there.'

'Will you wait for a few minutes? I have something to say to you.'

Vivian looked annoyed. 'Will it not keep till another time? I want to go out now.'

'I would prefer saying it now, if you will allow me,' said the doctor. He spoke very gently, but gravely, and he was rather paler than usual.

Vivian came back unwillingly, and threw himself into an arm-chair on the side of the fireplace opposite to the doctor. 'I wish you would be quick, then,' he said discontentedly. 'Miss Barton will be gone presently.'

The doctor resumed his former attitude, leaning

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on the mantelpiece, and looking into the empty grate, which was filled by no pretty device, as it would have been if a lady had lived in the house, but shewed plainly all its bare desolation. 'It is about her that I wish to speak,' he said.

'Miss Barton?' asked Vivian suddenly interested.

'Yes. I ought—I feel now that I ought to have told you before. She has been engaged to me for some time.'

Vivian had been lounging back in his chair, in one of his usual careless attitudes; now he suddenly sat upright, and stared at the doctor with flushing cheeks.

'To *you*!' he said in a low voice. 'That beautiful young girl engaged to marry *you*?'

There was something almost insulting in the way he said it; but the doctor kept very quiet. He only bowed slightly.

'And why,' Vivian went on, getting angry, 'have you not told me this sooner? I have been here a fortnight, and you have seen that I have been much with her. You ought to have told me; it was not fair.'

'Perhaps I ought. I did not think it necessary. I may have been wrong.'

Vivian rose, and walked excitedly up and down the room. Daisy was still in the garden, but he no longer looked at her.

'Carleton,' he said at last, 'you must excuse me if I say that you have not behaved well to me. And besides—really, I think that if you mean to marry Daisy—Miss Barton, I mean—you were not wise to let her see so much of me.'

There was something in this cool assumption of superiority which nettled the doctor, little as he was given to thinking much of himself. He lifted his head rather proudly. 'I trusted her,' he said.

'And you thought me of no consequence,' retorted Vivian.

This reproach was deserved, and the doctor said nothing.

'But, to tell the truth,' Vivian went on, 'I am thinking less of myself than of her. Poor little pretty thing!'

The doctor looked at him. 'Do you mean,' he said, speaking sharply, 'that you think she will not be happy with me?'

Vivian was silent. He was treading on delicate ground, and he knew it.

'Answer me,' said the doctor. 'I know you think so. Tell me why.'

'Because,' said Vivian slowly, 'during this fortnight, while I have been so much with her—your own doing, remember'——

'I know. Go on.'

'I have seen that she has thoughts, fancies, aspirations, which you could not possibly understand—that she leads quite a different inner life from yours.'

'And you think that you understand her?' asked the doctor calmly.

Vivian looked at him, and made a great mistake; he mistook perfect self-command for indifference. 'I do,' he said boldly. 'And she understands me, as very few have ever been able to do.'

He walked up and down the room again, and came to a stand-still just in front of the doctor. 'Carleton,' he said, 'have you not taken an unfair advantage of that child?'

He did not know how very near the doctor was to knocking him down at that moment. He could easily have done it if he had tried; perhaps that very fact deterred him. 'What do you mean?' he asked, without losing his outward calm.

'It is evident that you have been much with her since her childhood. You have shewn her kindness, no doubt, as you could hardly help doing in the circumstances. She can have seen very little society in this out-of-the-way place: even if she had been inclined to fall in love with any one else, there was no one in the way to be fallen in love with. You, who have been much with her—to whom she is accustomed, and to whom she perhaps feels bound by a tie of gratitude—you watch her growing up to womanhood—and naturally, when the flower has bloomed, you want to pluck it. And she—well, I can hardly speak confidently of what her feelings may be.'

'Tell me what you think they are,' said the doctor.

Vivian had been speaking warmly; now he hesitated. 'I think—that I could hardly have been with her so much, without finding out that she loved you, if such were really the case.'

The doctor leaned rather more heavily against the chimney-piece, but said nothing. He was silent so long, that Vivian went back to the window, and looked out into the garden. It was empty now, for Daisy had gone into the house, and he rested his arms on the window-sill, and looked at some tall white lilies, of the kind that are often painted in the hands of angels.

The doctor broke the silence first. 'Vivian, what are your feelings towards Daisy?'

Now, Vivian had hardly made up his mind about that. He did not want the doctor to have her, but he had not thought of marrying this little country girl himself. But he had begun a game, and it was necessary to play boldly. 'I love her,' he said in a low voice, and in so saying he did not lie.

'And if you could—if I did not stand in the way'——

'I would win her.' This perhaps was not so true.

There was another long silence. What Vivian had said was nothing new to the doctor; he had thought it often enough, in a vague way, and had been troubled about it, and now that it had been put into words for him, he felt it very bitterly.

When he spoke again, it was in a hard, dry tone. 'Vivian, you are right. I have been unfair, and she is too good for me. I love her, God knows I do. I love her so, that if she would be happier with you than with me, I 'll give her up, and say: "God bless you both."'

Vivian had not expected this, and he turned in astonishment. 'Do you mean what you say?' he asked.

'Yes. If it is as you say; if she does not love me—and there 's very little in me for her to love—and if you can win her love, do it. Perhaps,' he added, with the first touch of bitterness in his tone, 'perhaps you have won it already.'

Vivian did not answer. He was taken aback by the suddenness of his victory. The doctor went slowly out of the room, but if Vivian could have seen his face he would have been startled, for it was ashy gray, like that of a man in deadly trouble.

Vivian went out, not to see Daisy, but across the old bridge, and away by the path up the river-side among the willows. 'He was very cool about it,' he thought. 'A thick-headed fellow like that doesn't feel things very acutely, I suppose. And now—how shall I play out the game? Make her

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love me? Of course, that is easy enough. It is rather an exciting game to play, the winning her from him. I will do it.' And he turned homeward, and spent the evening in Daisy's drawing-room, while the doctor was miles away, galloping across the country to see a dying woman.

CHAPTER IV.

Mr Vivian was not a good man, but he was something of a gentleman. Not a gentleman in the highest and noblest sense of the word, for there are those who can trace their pedigree back to the time of William the Conqueror who have yet no true title to that grand old name. But he had certain ideas of honour, though those were not according to the highest standard; and though his conscience allowed him to use all means of winning Daisy's affections from the doctor, it revolted against doing so while he staid under the doctor's roof. He lingered there for a few more days of idle sauntering out into Daisy's garden, or down by the river-side; but before the third week of his visit had closed, he declared it to be necessary for him to return to London. The doctor did not press him to continue his visit. Since that one conversation, he had never mentioned Daisy's name to Vivian, and, indeed, had seen little of him, except when sitting down to the same table. It happened that there was a good deal of sickness during that long bright summer, both in Thornregis and in the surrounding country, and the doctor was more than usually busy. He used to come in, tired and dusty, from a long day's visiting and cantering over the breezy uplands, and through the deep woody lanes; and going across to Mr Barton's, would find Daisy seated in her shady arbour, where she could hear the perpetual murmur of the river, and smell the scents of her roses and stocks, listening to Vivian's musical voice as he read Tennyson's *Idylls* or Longfellow's *Golden Legend*. Or they would be in the drawing-room, where Vivian generally sat at the piano, talking by fits and starts, and every now and then letting his fingers wander over the keys in some low dreamy melody, or singing those wonderful thrilling notes of his, while Daisy listened in a sort of trance.

The doctor knew she was drifting away from him, and that he was powerless to bring her back. He felt, more than ever he had done before, the difference between her dreamy poetical girlhood and his practical middle age; and he doubted whether, even if he had the power, he would have had matters as they had been before. And yet he had never loved her more devotedly than now, when he seemed about to lose her. As yet he had spoken no word to her of any change in their lives; she was still his treasure, and he would not give her up till she compelled him to do so, by telling him that she could not be happy with him. And his manner had hardly altered towards her; there had always been in it more of grave, fatherly tenderness than of lover-like passion, and if she had cared to notice, she would have seen that he was even more gravely tender than of old.

At the end of a week, Vivian went back to London. 'You need not be surprised to see me back again,' he said to the doctor, who was too honest to say that he would be glad to see him, but confessed that he would not feel any surprise.

And in another month he did come back, taking up his quarters at the modest little hotel in the High Street, from which he could look across the Drew to the open country and blue sea-line behind. And all through hot July, and August, and September, and cool, brown-tinted October, he staid there, spending long days with his book and fishing-rod beside the Drew, and sending many baskets of silvery trout for Mr Barton's breakfast. He had come to be regarded as a familiar friend in the old gray house—one whose frequent and unceremonious comings and goings were to be looked for; and this easy, friendly footing was of all others the one which the doctor had most cause to dread. People said that the doctor looked graver and paler during that summer than he had ever done before; he worked harder, too, grudging no labour or sleepless nights, or long rides to visit patients who he knew could never pay him in this world, except by their blessings.

In autumn, Vivian again went to London for a few weeks, and when he came back to the quiet Thornregis hotel, it was close upon Christmas. He had made acquaintance with most of the little circle of village society, and on his return, he found an invitation waiting for him to a party at the Rectory on Christmas Eve. The Rectory was a great rambling house, standing nearly opposite Mr Barton's, behind a hedge of clipped box. Mr and Mrs Cornwall were easy-going, popular people, who did a great deal of good in their own quiet way, and were held in great respect and liking by all Thornregis. They had no children, and Mrs Cornwall had a motherly love for Daisy, so that Mr Vivian was sure of meeting her there, and was glad to accept the invitation.

Christmas Eve was a fine mild night; no snow had yet fallen, and there had been little hard frost, so the grass was yet green, and the chrysanthemums were still rich in purple and yellow blossoms. The party at the Rectory was a very pleasant one; all the young people available in Thornregis were there, and there was no lack of the soft, fair, girlish beauty which is our English pride. But it was evident that Daisy, in her floating white lace robes, and wreath of holly leaves and berries, was the queen; and Vivian's dark eyes lighted up with pride and admiration as he looked at her.

They had been playing games, such as old-fashioned people like to keep up on Christmas Eve, and Daisy had entered into them with almost childish gaiety. Vivian had rather hung back; he had an intense dislike of doing anything undignified; and after a noisy game at the 'Post,' he managed to get near enough to whisper: 'This room is getting so hot; do come out into the hall, and get cool.'

She smilingly agreed, and in another minute they were pacing up and down the wide old lobby together. The night was so mild that the front-door stood open, and they stepped out into the porch. Vivian snatched up a light shawl which some one had left lying in the hall, and put it round Daisy's shoulders.

'What a lovely night!' he said. 'Look how glorious Orion is.' He drew her out into the star-lit garden, where they could hear the gay voices and laughter from within, and they walked slowly across the broad gravel-walk, to where a drooping beech-tree formed a sort of natural arbour. It was bare and leafless now, but the night was so still, that, as they stood beneath its shelter, they felt no breath of wind. They looked at the stars, which

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were singularly clear and brilliant, and tried to find out the constellations, and then between them fell one of those silences which are very dangerous to such a couple out together and alone on a starlight night. Daisy's little white gloved hand rested on Vivian's arm, and her face appeared ethereal in the dim light. Vivian looked at it, and determined to speak. 'Daisy,' he said suddenly, 'you are very beautiful.'

She gave him a startled look. 'Oh, please, hush!'

'Why? I have been silent long enough; I must speak now. You can't help knowing that I love you, Daisy.'

She drew her hand from his arm, and he saw, even by the starlight, that she grew paler. 'You must not speak to me so, Mr Vivian. If you love me, I am very sorry; yet I can hardly believe it possible, for you must have known all this time that I belonged to another.'

'You are right. I did know it.'

'Then, knowing that,' she said with quiet dignity, 'there should have been no words of this kind between you and me.'

She would have left him, but he caught her hand. 'Daisy, you must not leave me; you must hear me speak this once. Even knowing of your engagement, it was impossible that I should help loving you. How could I help seeing that you would be wasted on a man like him—one whose thoughts rise no higher than the ailments of country boors.'

'I will not hear this,' she cried, trying to get her hand away from him.

'You must hear it,' he answered passionately; 'you must hear the truth this once, and then, if you will, you can sacrifice yourself to him. You do not love him, Daisy—not as you might love me. Think how much older he is—how utterly different his whole sphere of thought and feeling. My darling, you would be miserable, tied to a man like that.'

Daisy leaned against the tree, and covered her eyes with her free hand. 'He is a very good man,' she said; 'the best man I have ever known.'

'Good!' he exclaimed scornfully. 'And what will his tame goodness do for you? Will it satisfy the cravings of your nature for deeper things than he knows of? Will it fill your heart and life enough to make you happy? Think what it will be to drag on year after year here, in this dreary place, for it is dreary, but for you. Think what it will be to have no change in your life, always the same monotonous round of faces, and things, and ideas. Think how you may become narrowed down to it yourself, and grow into something different from what you are now, my bright high-souled darling.'

Still she leaned there silently, keeping her eyes covered, listening to the voice of the tempter, but not yet carried away by it. Her instincts were higher than his, poet though he was; she had a dim idea that this goodness which he scorned was really the highest thing in the world; moreover, she knew right from wrong, which he did not.

'And I love you so,' he pleaded. 'What is his love to mine?'

'No; don't say that,' she said, uncovering her eyes, and looking at him. 'His love is the growth of many years; yours, of a single summer. He does love me; I know it.'

There was a pause: the voices and music from the Rectory came floating across the garden to them, sounding near, and yet strangely far away, they were so completely out of it all. Vivian was not the man to be too scrupulous about his assertions when he had a point to gain, so he said, after that minute's hesitation: 'I believe you are mistaken; I do not believe he loves you. If he had done so, he would not have been so ready to give you up.'

'What do you mean?'

'I mean that, when he told me some time ago of your engagement to him, he spoke in such a way as to make me understand that he was not very anxious about its being fulfilled.'

Daisy had been leaning against the stem of the beech-tree; now she drew herself up, proud and straight, and Vivian saw that her pride was touched. She looked away from him silently, at the lighted windows in front of them, and he could hardly understand the wistful look on her face. 'I can hardly understand that,' she said at last, speaking very low. 'He has always been so very kind to me. And, Mr Vivian, if he does love me, I will be true to him; I can be true in heart and soul, in spite of all you have said.'

'I do not believe he is true to you, in the way you mean.'

Unfortunately for Vivian, another person besides Daisy had heard the last sentence. The doctor had been detained by some patients from joining Mrs Cornwall's party till far on in the evening, and being a privileged person, whom no one expected to come at fixed hours like other people, he had as usual just come when he was able. The gate to the road had been left open, and on coming in he had heard the voices of Vivian and Daisy, without their hearing him. He felt angry with Vivian for keeping her standing out in the night-air, which, however mild, was apt to be treacherous in its effects, and acting promptly, as he was in the habit of doing, without giving much heed to what people might think of him or his doings, he crossed the grass sward to bring her in. His steps were not very audible on the turf, and he was close to the beech-tree before either of those under it were aware of his presence; and so it happened that he heard Vivian's words: 'I do not believe he is true to you.'

In another instant he was standing before them. 'What is he saying to you, Daisy?' he asked.

She came close to him, and laid both her clasped hands on his breast. 'Oh, doctor, he says that you don't care for me—that you would give me up.'

'The first of those assertions is untrue,' said the doctor, speaking quietly and sadly. 'As for the other, my little Daisy, I would rather see you happy than be happy myself. I fear I've been a selfish old fellow, thinking more of my own pleasure than of yours. I've been feeling more than ever lately the difference between us; I fear you would not be happy as my wife; I'm too old, too common-place for you.'

He nearly broke down; but he was so certain that she was glad to be free, that he tried to speak cheerfully. 'I daresay it was all a mistake, Daisy. Think of me as a foolish old fellow, nearly old enough to be your father, who dreamed in his folly that you might be something nearer to him than only a dear little friend. Forget about that foolish dream of mine, Daisy, and go and be happy with the man you love.'

She had never moved, but stood with her hands clasped on his breast, looking up eagerly into his

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face. 'Say you don't love me, then,' she said. 'Say just once: "Daisy, I don't love you any more."'

He was silent, and she saw his lips tremble. 'Say it,' she urged. 'If it is true, you will say it.'

He put her gently away from him. 'I cannot,' he said hoarsely, 'for it is not true.' Without another word, he walked away from them towards the house; but half-way across the grass, he turned and came back. 'I meant to ask you,' he said, addressing Vivian for the first time, 'not to keep her longer out in the night-air. She is not very strong, and needs to be taken care of.'

Curiously enough, this little bit of care-taking, such as she had received from him ever since her fragile, motherless childhood, touched Daisy more than anything had ever done in her life before. Quite a new sensation, such as she had never before felt for the doctor, never at all for the fascinating young poet, stole into her heart, and made it thrill and tremble. She hardly knew what it was; she only thought, 'He could not say that he didn't love me;' and silently she put her little cold hand into his, and went back with him to the house, leaving Vivian to follow, a little sulkily, but by no means despairing. The notion of his taking the trouble of being the rival of a stupid village doctor, and failing, was not to be thought of.

In the drawing-room, dancing had begun; and when Daisy went and sat down in a corner of the sofa, away from both her lovers, Mrs Cornwall came and remonstrated with her for sitting still. 'I shall think you are not enjoying my little party,' said the good lady, 'if you sit moping there in a corner, when every one else is dancing.'

'But no one has asked me,' answered Daisy, trying to laugh; and then Vivian presented himself, with an imploring look, and she was obliged to dance with him.

'I know there is no use in asking you, doctor,' said Mrs Cornwall; 'we have long given up hopes of your ever becoming a dancing man.'

'No,' he answered, smiling a little sadly; 'I must be content to be one of the old people, and look on while the young ones are happy.'

He was watching Vivian and Daisy as he spoke, and his quick practical eye noticed that the skirts of her white lace dress fluttered perilously near the fireplace every time that they whirled past. 'Excuse me, Mrs Cornwall, but have you no guard that you could put before the fire? The ladies' dresses are in some peril, I think.'

Mrs Cornwall protested she had been very stupid not to think of it sooner, and went out of the room to look for one, while the doctor watched anxiously every time that Daisy swept past the fire. Some one called off his attention for a minute, and then he heard a cry. What he had been fearing had happened; Daisy's lace robe had been swept against the ribs of the grate—the dry, light material caught like tinder, and in less time than it takes to tell it, the flames had spread to the muslin petticoat beneath.

Vivian was not exactly a coward, but physical courage was not one of his strong points, and his first impulse, on discovering that the lady he was dancing with was in flames, was to let her go, and start back. I think that he would probably have recovered his presence of mind, and tried to save her, had time been given him; but before any other action was possible, the doctor had pulled from the sofa a gaily striped Affghan, and had wrapped it round Daisy, crushing out the flames with that and with his hands, regardless of the burns he received in the process. The room was all in confusion: some one pulled the cover off a table, pulling down the ornaments on the floor with a crash; and some were screaming for water, and running for Mrs Cornwall. She came, poor lady, crying and wringing her hands, and met the doctor carrying poor unconscious Daisy down-stairs.

'Oh, won't you bring her to my room?' sobbed Mrs Cornwall. 'There's a bed there, quite ready for her. Dear doctor, do let her stay here.'

But he shook his head. Her father's house was only a couple of hundred yards away, and he knew it would be better for her to be there. He carried her out into the starlit garden, from which he had led her in only half an hour before; and holding her as if she had been a baby, he bore her down the village street, and into her father's house; there he laid her on her own little, white-curtained bed, and proceeded to cut off the charred garments from her poor scorched limbs.

And for many weeks, he came and went, spending hours both of day and night in that darkened room, where Daisy moaned faintly in pain.

THE CHESTNUT WALK:

TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

LINGER, my spirit, in the chestnut walk,
If anywhere on earth thou lingerest;
The place is dear for no fond-hearted talk,
No college comrade, but for lonely rest.

There on the bench, within a spreading tent
Of chestnut foliage, have I reclined;
There in pure quiet hath my soul unbent,
And thoughts like summer airs refreshed my mind.

And there the beauty of 'the Rylstone Doe'
Before me passed, and fed me with delight;
And in my thoughts the poet's thoughts would blow
Like roses sweet and delicate and white.

The rippling light upon the leafy boughs
That hung in graceful fall above the stream;
The walk's soft shadow, growing, like repose
O'er a sweet face, the avenue's day-dream;

The bridge, where men have leaned, as youths, whose deeds
Make history sparkle, and whose clear pure thought
Is fresh as summer waves, or new-mown meads,
Though long ago they paced our cloister court;

The chapel bell, or music's distant voice,
Or white flocks bleating down the road beyond;
And many sights that made my eye rejoice,
And many sounds of which my ear is fond:

These things remain; though flitting, they remain,
Like forms upon the stream, most clear in calm;
Like hues in pearl, they live within the brain,
To perish only when that meets with harm.

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POLAR ICE.

AMONG the navigators and scientific men of former times, it was disputed whether salt water was capable of being frozen. Experience—in many cases a stern teacher—has set that question at rest, proving that within the polar circles the sea is, for hundreds of miles, covered with masses of ice, which form a sullen, unyielding barrier to the poles. Maury describes the agencies at work in these terrible solitudes in a famous passage: 'There icebergs are framed and glaciers launched; there the tides have their cradle, the whales their nursery; there the winds complete their circuits, and the currents of the sea their round in the wonderful system of oceanic circulation; there the aurora is lighted up, and the trembling needle brought to rest; and there too, in the mazes of that mystic circle, terrestrial forces of occult power and of vast influence upon the well-being of man are continually at play. Within the arctic circle are the pole of the winds and the poles of cold; the pole of the earth and of the magnet. It is a circle of mysteries; and the desire to enter it—to explore its untrodden wastes and secret chambers, and to study its physical aspects—has grown into a longing.'

Marine ice is whitish, opaque, and rough on the surface, and consists of thin flakes of a porous spongy texture. From the quantity of strong brine enclosed in its substance, it is very heavy and dense, and projects only one-fifth above water. When sea-water begins to freeze, it partially deposits its salt, which, thus set free, retards the process of congelation below. Old floes are almost fresh, but a thaw renders them brackish. The polar seas do not congeal until the temperature falls to 28¼ degrees of Fahrenheit, which takes place in September in the north, and March in the south; though even in summer, a slight increase of cold is sufficient to form young ice several inches thick. The sun sets early in November, and the severity of the arctic winter begins in December, continuing to the end of January, during which time the thermometer ranges to about 40 degrees below zero. A week or two of milder weather comes on; but the middle of February brings with it the sun, immediately followed by the most intense cold of the whole winter. After that, the sun's influence begins to be felt, and in July, the ice breaks up. During the three summer months, the sun never sets, but noon and midnight are equally illumined by brilliant sunshine. A few stars appear in September. The darkest part of winter is from the middle of December to the middle of January, when the aurora transforms the sky into a vault of fire, and paraselenæ appear, surrounding the moon with blazing crosses, circles, and mock-moons, scarcely surpassed by the wonderful deceptions of the solar rays. The intense cold of February is accompanied by considerable twilight; and in the latitude of Banks's Land, there is even at the end of January tolerable light from 9.30 A.M. to 2.30 P.M., so much so, that at noon Arcturus is the sole star unquenched by the increasing daylight. The only navigable time is from July to September within the northern, and January, February, and part of March within the southern circle. During the rest of the year, the arctic regions are impenetrably sealed by vast fields of ice, both 'floe' and 'pack,' covering every foot of water, from the shallowest inlet to the wide expanse of Baffin's Bay or Melville Sound.

Floes are often several miles in diameter, and fields stretch away out of sight from the mast-head; while the great pack of Baffin's Bay extends for hundreds of square miles, unbroken by a single crack shewing blue water. Bay or young ice forms most rapidly near land, where the water is shallow and soon cooled throughout its depth; hence the name. The small round discs called pancake ice result from the soft crystals formed by frost when it first grasps the surface of ruffled water, or, as some say, from snow falling into the sea without thawing; the motion of the waves in both cases driving the loose mass into these shapes. They next unite into a continuous sheet, increasing in thickness with increasing cold till it becomes floe, from two to seven feet thick in summer, and fifteen or even

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twenty feet in winter. This is often broken up by the joint action of wind and tide; and when the huge fragments are piled into hummocks sometimes fifty feet high, and of the most fantastic shapes, whirled and jammed together by these unseen forces, and again firmly cemented by frost, the whole is called a pack. The edge of a heavy pack always consists of old hummocks of the largest size wedged together. In summer, these break up in small holes of water connected by narrow lanes, with occasional openings in the edge of the pack. A peculiar groaning, which arises from the pressure to which the floe is subjected, announces the approaching 'nip.' The ice 'buckles,' that is, rises in an arch, and crashes over, piling the fractured pieces along the line of disruption with a sharp shrieking sound. This is caused chiefly by the force of tides or of a ground-swell. When the wind brings two floes into collision, the effect is similar at the moment of contact, except where one is very heavy, in which case it underruns the other. Woe to the unfortunate whaling-vessel that lies between two opposing floes when a nip is inevitable, giving her no time to saw a temporary dock in the ice! She is forced up and thrown on her beam-ends, or crushed to pieces; or worse, if she be deeply laden, the ice may rise up and overwhelm her altogether.* Sometimes a nip comes almost noiselessly, with scarcely any groaning, and turns up great masses with 'quiet but appalling grandeur.' There is a strong swell, and the colour of the water changes on approaching a great body of ice. The clouds also assume a deceptive appearance of land. A comparative calm prevails throughout the arctic regions, in strong contrast to the antarctic seas. The wind is rarely above a force of five, though in some parts storms are frequent.

Scoresby gives thirteen feet as the average depth of a winter floe, but this varies greatly. In Kennedy Channel, Dr Hayes met with broken pieces four times that thickness. This is thawed to a depth of perhaps four feet by the sun, and the action of the waves also reduces it considerably. Narrow channels and bays are soon cleared, but the main body of the ice *never* dissolves. Through the one long summer day it floats, driven hither and thither at the caprice of wind or wave; and, whether encircling the land like a white girdle, or lying far out at sea, scarcely distinguishable on the horizon but for the spray flashing in the sunshine, as it beats on the windward edge of the ice, it remains changeful yet steadfast, unyielding till the winter frosts creep on, and its bright enemy sinks in death-like cold. Every winter, the great barrier puts forth two tongues of ice from Melville and Smith Sounds. They drift southward, and unite to form the great pack or 'middle ice' of Baffin's Bay, which goes rolling on through the wild dark night to its dissolution in the open ocean. It is in motion from December to May, and by July is floated out sufficiently to enable the whalers to cross the 'north water' from Melville Bay to Lancaster Sound. The old *Resolute* was drifted alone in the pack a distance of fifteen hundred miles without a scratch on her rusty sides; and the steamer *Fox*, after being beset in the north water, drifted during the whole winter back to Cape Farewell, with the same icy landscape around her when she finally broke out as when she commenced her unwilling backward voyage. Once let a vessel get entangled in the pack, and she is fast for the season, if not indeed for the winter.

Ice-blink, or the light on the horizon reflected from snow or ice, varies in tint; over field-ice, it is a very pale, clear yellow; over pack-ice, pure white. The blink of young ice has a slightly grayish tint, and that indicating snow on land is a deep yellow. In the antarctic regions, the latter is paler than in the north. Besides these, a peculiar darkness on the horizon, called a water-sky, is a sure herald of open water in the direction to which it points. Frost-smoke is merely steam from the sea, produced by its contact with the colder air.

The levels called 'tidal terraces' are usually supposed to have been caused by geological changes in the gradual upheaval of the coast during long successive ages. Belcher's theory is that they are produced by bay-ice, under strong pressure, being forced up the beach, grazing its surface until the motive-power is arrested. This may happen several times, each successive sheet sliding over and beyond the last, and the whole freezing into one mass. Naturally, when it is afterwards broken off or thawed in summer, it leaves the impress of its bed on the gravelly slopes in a tidal terrace.

The interior of Greenland is occupied by vast glaciers, which encroach on the coast, filling the deep dark fiords with frozen snow. As summer advances, those portions of the glacier that project into the sea are undermined by the waves, and fall with tremendous noise, rocking in the foaming water till they gain equilibrium, when, perfect icebergs, they float here and there, impelled by winds and currents. Many are borne by the polar current southward. They meet the warm waters of the Gulf-stream in latitude 50 degrees, where they melt, and deposit the loads of earth and stones borrowed from the Greenland soil. According to Maury, this has probably, in course of time, formed the Grand Bank of Newfoundland. They are in incredible numbers. As many as five hundred have been counted in sight together, ranging from fifty to three hundred feet in height, and of all sizes up to a mile in extent. Their appearance is very beautiful and no less extraordinary. Gothic churches, Egyptian temples, aërial palaces with pillars and arched windows festooned with crystal draperies, are only some of the inconceivable varieties of form displayed, while they gleam under the summer sun like mountains of burnished silver, with pinnacles and cliffs of clear sapphire or the palest green, from which rush cataracts of limpid water mingled with fragments of ice. These various hues arise from several causes. Bergs are originally composed of fresh-water ice of different ages, but that formed from salt water frequently overlays it in parts. A great deal of snow lies on their summits, and forms large ponds of fresh water, when dissolved by the heat of the sun. Finally, the solar rays touch the bergs with colours changing with the position of the spectator. Only one-eighth of their total thickness is seen above water. Frequently bergs capsize in consequence of the sea undermining their base. An ominous rolling motion gives notice of this event; it continues for some time, and at last the berg heels over and disappears with a terrific plunge, sending

* 'Wherever the wind can act on water, and the tide-ripple obtain play it will break up the heaviest floe.'—*Belcher.*

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up columns of spray. It reappears bottom upwards, balances itself, and floats quietly on with a changed face.

All the antarctic land yet discovered consists of gigantic cliffs without a single opening, three thousand feet high in some places, descending in others to one hundred feet. The whole is faced with ice of enormous thickness, and covered with snow, so that at a glance the eye can scarcely imagine it to be land at all, but for spots shewing the dark stone where the cliff is too perpendicular to admit of even ice maintaining its hold. Nothing is so tenacious as the cold of the antarctic regions. In February, the warmest summer month of 1841, the thermometer never rose above 14 degrees at noon near the continent. It is rarely above 30 degrees in the sun at mid-day during summer, and falls in winter more than 50 degrees below zero. The sun stays a week longer north of the equator than it does south, making the winter and night of the antarctic regions longer. South Georgia, in a latitude corresponding with that of Yorkshire in the northern hemisphere, is always covered with frozen snow, and produces scarcely anything but mosses and lichens. The immense preponderance of water south of latitude 50 degrees, allows the fierce westerly winds to blow round and round the world, a perpetual cyclone, keeping the sea in constant agitation. Hence it is but natural that pack-ice should prevail. A single level floe-piece is rarely more than a quarter of a mile in circumference, so broken and pressed together is the ice by the fury of the waves, which beat heavily against the pack-edge. To leeward it is smoother, and a calm opens the pack in all directions. Exploring expeditions have had no need to winter *here*. They cruised about during the summer months, January and February, and returned in March through a yet open sea; therefore little is known of these regions in winter. Even in summer the cold is so intense that everything wetted freezes instantly; and the progress of vessels would be seriously impeded by the accumulation of ice on their bows and lower rigging, if it were not chopped off every day with axes. On one occasion, when the crew of the *Erebus*, Sir James Ross's ship, were performing this duty, they found a fish six inches long firmly embedded in the ice. It must have been dashed against the side and instantaneously frozen in. The temperature being scarcely ever above the freezing-point, ice seldom melts, and the constant damp and precipitation in one form or another increase it. Bergs have little variety of form, unlike those of the far north. A freshly formed antarctic iceberg is stratified, flat-topped, and perfectly wall-sided, varying from one hundred to six hundred feet in height, and reaching sometimes an extent of six square miles. In different stages of decay, they take curious shapes, which relieve the monotony of the usual enormous square blocks of ice. Large fragments constantly fall from them, forming a stream of heavy pieces to leeward. Wilkes believes that their formation in strata may be owing to the berg having been originally a piece of drift-ice, upon which successive layers of snow, rain, and fog have frozen. The sea being nearly always of the same temperature, they do not melt, but float for a long time, perpetually added to by the moisture. If, as is probably the case, they fall from the cliffs, their form may be accounted for by the perpendicular, angular character of that tremendous barrier. A difference of temperature between sea and air occasions cracks in the ice. A sudden change in the arctic regions during winter causes great fissures many miles in extent, diverging to every point of the compass, and attended by loud explosions, similar to those unexplained noises called by seamen 'bolts cracking.' These last must be produced by submarine movements of the ice, for they take place without the smallest apparent motion; and, as Belcher justly says, a vessel would drop to pieces before the winter was half over if her bolts snapped at the rate at which these sounds are heard. In winter, the air of the antarctic regions is probably 40 or 50 degrees below zero, and the sea 28 degrees above—a difference which causes large masses to break off the cliffs of ice, to be drifted by the south-westerly winds to warmer latitudes, there to melt.

Brash or powdered ice, of a brownish yellow colour, was found near land by exploring parties. Melted and poured through blotting-paper, it left a thin sediment, from which, when dried, a very fine powder was obtained. Analysis proved this to be minute animalcula, probably the colouring matter in all stained ice and snow, not excepting the much discussed red snow seen by Ross and others on the Crimson Cliffs of Beverley.

Sometimes the tops of bergs are crowned with a cloud of white mist, occasionally so dense as to envelop it altogether. There the process of evaporation is busily going on. Every particle of air above those seas is heavily charged with moisture.

From this it will appear that the two polar circles differ greatly in physical conditions. The antarctic has a marine climate, that is to say, it is equable. Though wet and stormy, it is not subject to extremes of temperature, and it is believed that the south pole must be warmer than the north in winter. Arctic sunshine raises the thermometer to 66 degrees or 70 degrees, and hung in the shade immediately after, the mercury falls to the freezing-point. The arctic climate is continental—dry, calm, and variable. The thermometer has a range of about 120 degrees; and while the round of the seasons brings but little change in the frightful antarctic wastes, nothing can surpass the beauty of the arctic summer—'an endless blaze of light, the air and sea and earth teeming with life,' plains glowing with richly tinted flowers, and strange, glittering forms sailing past 'in stately and solemn procession.' Its currents are strong, and bear large numbers of bergs to meet the warm Gulf-water, and, as it is natural to suppose, bergs are found to be most numerous where the drift is strongest. The antarctic seas are in direct opposition to this. Not only are its currents sluggish and feeble, but the most powerful of them, Humboldt's Current, carries few bergs along the Chilian coast, while the main ice-drift is towards the Falklands on one side, and the Cape of Good Hope on the other, where there is scarcely any motion of the water. This is a fact which no navigators are able to explain, except perhaps on the supposition that there may be strong submarine currents at a great depth below the surface. Bergs have been observed in Baffin's Bay drifting rapidly to the north, when there was a powerful surface-current running against them, shewing that in consequence of their weight and immense draught of water (in some instances more than a thousand feet), they must be influenced by some 'resistless undertow' yet stronger.

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Unfortunately, all our knowledge of the poles of the earth is confined to scientific guessing. The north magnetic pole in Boothia is known; so are the poles of winter cold, one of which lies near Yakutsk in Siberia, and the other not far from Wellington Channel. The poles of summer cold are not so well established. From various testimony, it is all but certain that the true north pole is warmer than is currently believed. Dr Kane discovered beyond Smith Sound a perfectly open sea with tides ebbing and flowing, and shores abounding in animals and birds. Captain Penny sailed upon a similar open sea. The ice-field which baffled Parry's heroic effort to reach the north pole in 1827 was travelling southward, borne by a current like that of Baffin's Bay, and must have left open water in the latitude from which it started, at most only five degrees from the pole. No bergs are met with in the seas of Northumberland Sound, but immense hummocks, which might sometimes deceive a careless eye. Ice is frequently piled on the western side of Queen's Channel, apparently from tidal motion. After a nip, the piled fragments grind each other to powder, and involve all in a smooth coating of brash-ice resembling a small berg. This adds to the evidence regarding tides in the polar sea, and, as some think, proves the non-existence of land there; for, as it is a maxim that wherever icebergs are found, land to produce glaciers cannot be far off, it is argued that the reverse holds good. Others believe, on the same principle, that as bergs are met with in Kennedy Channel as far north as it has been traced, Greenland must extend to an infinite distance, and might possibly afford tolerable sledging the whole way to the pole. It may be that the tidal wave comes in from the Atlantic round the northern end of Greenland, it may be that it is generated at the pole itself; that these questions are no nearer decision than they were ten years ago, is to be regretted. Another material point of evidence remains. Immense numbers of birds, including water-fowl, migrate *northward* in winter from the heart of the frozen seas. Reason asks why this is, if they do not expect, with their unerring instinct, to find a warmer climate and an open sea. Long before the North-west Passage was discovered, the whalers asserted that it must exist, because whales, that cannot pass the tropics, had been met with in Behring's Strait, wounded by harpoons that were stamped with the private mark of Atlantic whaling-vessels. Experiment has proved the correctness of their assertion; *that* problem is solved, and the poles may one day yield up to us their deepest secrets.

A PERFECT TREASURE.

CHAPTER IX.—MRS BLUNT SEES HALF THROUGH THE MILLSTONE.

It was customary with Rosa Glendell, as I came in time to learn, to say as wise and true things in jest as most people can compass in earnest. She had indeed described my dear uncle's characteristic when she called him 'impracticable' as a patient. She was also a girl of her word. She had undertaken to nurse him without his knowing it, and she went through with that. Of course, Mr Glendell took an early opportunity of bringing her with him to 'the Point,' and she made conquest of the ex-maharajah on the spot. This result astonished nobody but herself; but it was the most complete success imaginable. My uncle was actually induced, because her lovely hands had brewed it, to take a cup of tea—a beverage I had never seen him touch; and he pronounced it admirable; nay, he was even heard to murmur something about the sugar being unnecessary, during the delivery of which sentence he blushed profusely. We never had so merry an evening in our little home before. The host exerted himself to amuse his youthful guest in the most unwonted manner; everything he possessed that was rare and curious was taken from its repository, and received its appropriate history. The cause of this was, in the first place, the admiration which my uncle entertained of Rosa's character: the efforts she had made to support herself; her self-denial and self-exile—all which he had heard from her father's lips. But it was impossible for him to resist her personal attraction. When she left us that night, it seemed that the house had lost something much more than a beautiful ornament. 'The presence of that excellent girl, Marmy, positively does one good,' said my uncle between the puffs of his cheroot.

So Rosa came to our house to teach me French, instead of my going to Mr Glendell's. By the end of the week, I shewed her the portrait of the Begum, and assured her that she had effectually erased the memory of that interesting female in the ex-maharajah's heart.

The surgeon expressed a hope that his daughter would bear herself meekly, if chosen to succeed so eminent a personage, and not be supercilious to her nephew by marriage.

As to my uncle, he openly expressed his regret that a man might not marry his grand-daughter. He submitted to this charming creature's dictation without resistance, and from her hand would take anything that was good for him. Always kindly and good-humoured, he was now become quite jocose and sprightly. Mr Glendell seemed to grow younger daily from the time his daughter returned home. As for me, I dwelt in the seventh heaven, only descending from it to write my novel, which I wished, above all things, to make worthy of the approbation I knew would be bestowed upon it by this new critic, so much easier to please than the literary veteran at Seaview Cottage.

Those were happy, happy days.

The only person in our household, and, indeed, in the village itself, who did not seem to be touched by the wand of this good fairy, and altered for the better, was Sangaree Tannajee. He ought to have been at least grateful to this young girl, who took all trouble off his hands, as respected his sick master's needs, and smiled even on himself—for she was like the sun, that smiles upon the unjust as well as on the just—but he only scowled upon her as he did upon everybody else. He was jealous of her influence with my uncle, notwithstanding that he himself never strove to gain any: and doubtless he disliked her for liking me. Insolent as he was, however, he did not venture openly to shew this. He was not deficient in cunning; and perhaps he felt that any impertinence to Miss Glendell would be the one thing that my uncle would not pass over.

Rosa and I were very diligent as teacher and pupil, and again as pupil and teacher. I hardly know which I enjoyed most, the learning or the teaching; the listening to her soft clear tones making music of a strange tongue, or the reciting

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to her the melodies of Keats, and Shelley, and Coleridge—my favourite poets, and whom I wished her to love as I did.

When she was not by my side, I worked hard, but not hurriedly, at my novel. It was not worth much, of course, but it was at least twice as good, thanks to Mrs Blunt's advice, as my last crude attempt at fiction.

At the end of six months, I took what I had written to Seaview Cottage; and, in a few days, repaired thither again for judgment.

I was by no means so nervous this time as when I was edited before. I was conscious of improvement; and, besides, there was nothing to be decided upon on this occasion as regarded my future calling.

'There is one thing, Marmy, that has interested me greatly in your novel,' was the old lady's first remark.

'My dear Mrs Blunt,' said I, reddening to the ear-tips, 'I am delighted to hear it. What is it?'

'Well, Marmy, I take a lively interest in young people's "goings-on," as we say at Sandiford; and your novel has convinced me that you are in love.'

I blushed from head to heel.

'It's perfectly charming,' continued the old lady, 'and just as it should be—your united ages being *thirty-five*, and neither of you having a shilling to call your own.'

'I could not help it, madam,' pleaded I, with simplicity.

'Of course not. You would have been a heartless young wretch, only fit to make money, if you had failed to fall in love with Rosa Glendell. But still, you have not begun to think of marriage, have you?'

Notwithstanding her good-natured banter, I saw there was something serious in my kind critic's mind.

'No, indeed, madam: it would be very foolish to do so, for the reasons that you have named. I will not attempt to hide from you—although I did not know that I had revealed it in my story—that I do love Rosa with all my heart. I would die to save her little finger from hurt; I worship the very'——

'Yes, yes; that's all *here*, my dear,' said the old lady, pointing to the tell-tale pages. 'But have you told her so?'

'We have promised never, never to marry anybody except each other,' murmured I bashfully.

'And your uncle and her father, do they know of this eternal compact?'

'No, madam.'

'My poor boy,' said the old lady tenderly, laying her still plump hand upon my shoulder, 'you are dreaming, you two—you are not living in this world at all. I have lived there more than seventy years, and know how things really turn out. Rosa Glendell, who is a most charming girl, and has had a first-rate education in Paris, will presently marry a most respectable banker, a widower of about fifty-six.'

'What banker, madam?' exclaimed I indignantly. 'I am sure that if Mr Glendell has any such intention of disposing of his daughter's hand, she will never obey him.'

'You wish her to wait for you, then, Marmy—to wait, and wait, until, perhaps, her beautiful black hair turns gray, and she is no longer worth waiting for?'

'Madam,' cried I, 'I will not listen to such words. Why do you insult me thus? I have won her love: I hope to prove myself worthy of it. I will work—God help me—like ten men, to earn a living for us both; and she is not a mere child of fashion, to whom every luxury is a necessary; she is a brave good girl—the bravest, best in England.—And please, madam, I will take my manuscript away, and not trouble you.' I never was so angry with any one in my life, not even with Sambo, and I am afraid I made a snatch at the parcel.

'Nay, sir,' said the old lady, holding up a reproving finger; 'you should not treat me so indeed. If I have the misfortune to be obliged to write for my living, I am a gentlewoman still.'

'I had not forgotten that indeed,' said I, humbled to the very dust, 'but only that I was myself a gentleman. Forget it, and forgive me, my dear madam. I am behaving like a brute, but indeed I scarcely know what I do. To hear that my sweet Rosa is to marry a banker, who is a widower of fifty-six—it makes me mad to think of it!'

'My good Marmy,' said the old lady soothingly, 'there is no particular banker in the case, I do assure you; I was merely casting Rosa's horoscope. From my experience of life, I judged that such a thing was likely to happen—that's all. Everything does turn out so exactly the reverse of what Youth pictures to itself. You must not be angry with me for reasoning from analogy, instead of being transported by your passion. I am not (as I said) at all surprised at your falling in love with Rosa, nor, I may add, you very nice boy (only you are not so good-tempered as I thought you were), at her reciprocating your attachment. But I don't like these serious promises of marriage between young folks who are poor; a long engagement of this sort generally ends in the self-sacrifice of the girl. In this case, here is a penniless lad, upon the threshold of the most uncertain profession in the world, exacting a promise—well, at all events, interchanging promises of eternal fidelity with one whose chief attraction, beauty, will fade in course of time—whose value in the matrimonial market, to speak the bare truth, will be depreciated with every year. I say you have no right to call upon her to nullify her own natural advantages, to destroy her chance in life for such a far-off contingency as you can offer. In short, Marmy, you are acting very selfishly in this matter, although I am sure you were unaware of it. You see what I mean now, don't you?'

'Indeed, I do, madam,' sighed I; 'and my duty is plain enough. I will release Rosa at once from her engagement. I am very much obliged to you for pointing out what ought to be done, Mrs Blunt; and you have broken my heart in doing it.'

How strange it seems, looking back on that scene now, through the many intervening years, that I should have been obliged to hide my face in my hands, lest that old woman should see my tears; but I did cry like a child. I had such confidence, you see, in my mentor's sagacity and wisdom, that I felt things must all turn out as she foretold, and that I and Rosa were never to be man and wife.

And ah! how I loved that girl!

Then, when I looked up at last with as cheerful a face as I could compass, I saw Mrs Eleanor Blunt was crying also. 'Don't cry, Marmy,' said she; 'that's very foolish: it is time for tears when everything else fails.'

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'Everything has failed, or will fail,' murmured I gloomily. 'You have told me so yourself.'

'No, Marmy; I have not said that. You may release Rosa from her promise, and yet marry her, if things turn out well! You have two strings to your bow, yet, remember. In the first place, there is this book of yours—a most creditable performance for so very young an author. You have improved in your style, my dear, immensely.'

I shook my head: my case was past receiving comfort from 'improvement of style.'

'Now, if this novel has even a very moderate success, Marmy,' continued the old lady cheerfully, 'it may place you at once in a position to earn your own living. It will then become only a question of time for you to earn enough for two. Supposing it to be finished, and to extend over three volumes of print, then the question will be, how to get it brought out. Do you think the ex-maharajah could spare a hundred pounds or so, to get it published on your own account?'

'I am quite sure he could not, Mrs Blunt: we are growing poor up at "the Point" yonder; I can see that, although my uncle would conceal the fact. I would not ask him for a penny.'

'First books are sometimes published by subscription,' remarked the old lady thoughtfully. 'Now, how would that be?'

'Well, madam, my uncle would subscribe; and perhaps Mr Glendell; and then, since you are so kind, there would be a chance of one more. Besides those,' added I bitterly, 'I don't know of anybody else that would be'——

'Fool enough,' ejaculated Mrs Blunt, completing my unfinished sentence. 'An edition of three!' Her plump shoulders began to 'wobble,' and her eyes to twinkle with suppressed mirth.

For my part, I was intensely grave. 'I should not like publishing by subscription,' said I, 'in any case. Nothing but rubbish comes out in that way.'

'I won't say that, my dear, because my own first book was published by subscription,' observed the old lady. 'But you are quite right in the main. I have found cause to repent of it myself. Everybody who put down his guinea on that occasion, of course made me his debtor, and some of them have taken out the obligation since in patronage of a most unpleasant sort. There is a master-butcher who sometimes reminds me to this day that but for his one-pound-one, laid down half a century ago, nobody would ever have heard of Eleanor Blunt. That is what one may call exacting compound interest, which the law holds to be usurious, even when one raises money on one's expectations. Drat the man!'

The picture of this master-butcher (perhaps in blue) introducing Mrs Blunt into the Temple of Fame upset even my gravity.

'There are lots more,' continued she comically, 'of the same sort, only not quite so bad. Most of my original patrons are gone where there is nobody (I hope) to patronise; but some of their offspring or executors have not given up their lien upon my reputation yet. A few of those are, moreover, in such bad circumstances, that I have paid all the money twice over in hard cash. Yes, you are certainly right, Marmy, not to bring out your novel by subscription.'

'But how is it to be brought out, Mrs Blunt?'

'Well, it must take its chance in "the Row," Marmy.'

I thought she meant in 'the battle of the books,' in the mêlée of novels, all struggling for acceptance with the public, so I said: 'Of course it must; but how is it to be got there?'

'You foolish boy, I mean it must go to the booksellers' — must find a publisher for itself. Fortunately for you, my own mishap with those gentry—five of whom missed a fortune by rejecting me—has made the road to publication smoother than it was. Sooner or later, this manuscript is sure to be in print, Marmy; I will promise you that; though, in my opinion, the later it happens the better.'

This was but cold comfort, after all the depressing things with which Mrs Blunt had treated me during this interview; and I did not feel so grateful for it as perhaps I ought to have done.

'You said there was another string to my bow, madam—may I ask to what you were referring?'

'Well, that is a subject, Marmy,' answered she hesitatingly, 'upon which you have shewn some unwillingness to enter. But it is my earnest hope that your trump-card may turn out to be something apart from literature altogether. I have been thinking a good deal of that conversation we had together, six months ago, concerning—I won't say the secret between your uncle and his servant, since you wish to respect it, but concerning those future expectations of which Mr Braydon hinted. It is now plain to me from his expression: "I may be rich, and you almost certainly will be," that everything hinges upon the question of survivorship. If somebody or other dies before your uncle, the ex-maharajah will come into the property; and if your uncle dies, and you survive this said person, you will reap the same benefit. Mr Braydon being so much your senior, has, of course, a less prospect of inheritance than yourself, which fully accounts for his observation. Again, by the way in which he speaks of that prospect—for he *may* be a rich man, he says—it seems to me that he has about an equal chance of survivorship with this unknown person.'

'I think you are right,' cried I suddenly. 'I remember now to have seen my uncle more than once poring over a little book all composed of figures, and which I think was called the *Tables of Annuity;* but, to my knowledge, he has not done so for these many months.'

'Just so, my dear; that is because he feels himself far from well, poor fellow. His chance is no more as it used to be, a matter of simple calculation.—Now, how old is this Sangaree Tannajee? His looks are not much of a guide; but allowing for the effects of opium and a bad temper, I should judge him to be about his master's age.'

'I have heard my uncle say that Tannajee is by two years his senior.'

'Just what I expected, Marmy,' chuckled the old lady triumphantly. 'The master, then, until within these six months, had a slight advantage over the man. You may depend upon it that somehow or other—else why did your uncle say, when he saved his life, that he had resisted a great temptation?—that unpleasant Hindu, valueless as he appears to himself and to everybody else, stands between you and a great fortune.'

'Then what is it you recommend me to do, madam? To put him to death?'

'No, Marmy; because, although very nice, that would be dangerous and wrong. I advise you, for the present to stick to literature. But have your

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eyes wide open—not to spy upon your uncle—I am the last person to propose such a thing as that, I hope—but to keep a very sharp look-out on Sangaree Tannajee.'

'But what can he, personally at least, have to do with wealth of any sort, my dear madam?'

'I don't know, my dear; I only know your uncle took very great pains indeed to prevent his running away from you; and it's my belief that your hope of winning Rosa Glendell lies not so much in the success of this novel, as in retaining that Hindu vagabond's services *for life*.'

CHAPTER X.—I BRING THE HINDU TO REASON.

As the summer advanced, my uncle seemed to improve in health, and thereby supplied the one thing that was lacking to the happiness of our little household, in which—since they were so often with us—I include Mr Glendell and Rosa. But his spirits did not rise proportionably; they were very variable—almost always good when our pleasant neighbours were with us, but flagging, although he strove his best to keep them up, when we were alone. In the solitude of his own room, I had good reason to fear that they broke down altogether. His complaint still tormented him at night, for I often heard his hard dry cough for a whole hour together; and sometimes (though seldom now) he would get up and sit in a chair, for greater ease of breathing. From this, since I call him 'better,' it may be judged how very ill he had been; but the doctor expressed himself of good hope that his patient had 'turned the corner,' and would be tolerably strong before the ensuing winter. It would have been desirable for my uncle to have sought during that season a home less exposed to wind and storms than Hershell Point; but we all knew that it was useless to attempt to persuade him to do so. Like most men at an advanced age who have no domestic ties, which make a home wherever we carry them, he clung tenaciously to his own place.

Rosa, as before, could do anything with him short of getting him away; but he was as disinclined to be ministered to by any one else as ever. Often and often I have got up, hearing him in pain and trouble, and gone no further than the door of his room, where I have waited for an hour without going in, so well I knew that such an evidence of solicitude upon his account would distress him. But upon one occasion about this time, I experienced a novel cause of alarm. I had not heard my uncle cough at all that night, which I ascribed to my having slept more heavily than usual after a long day's walk; but I was awakened by hearing him move about in the study. The moon was shining at intervals through clouds, and I saw by my watch that it was about two o'clock in the morning. The house, of course, was profoundly still, or the noise of his slippered, or, as it seemed, naked feet could not have reached my ears. It would not have aroused me of itself, but a chair, or something he had probably stumbled over in the dark, had fallen.

I had never known him go into that room, which lay on the other side of mine from his own, at night before. There was some brandy there, of which perhaps he was in search; but if so, he must be much more unwell than usual. I slipped out of bed, and softly approached the study-door, which stood ajar. The name of this apartment, as has been hinted, was a misnomer, for it did not boast of half-a-dozen books, and even the desk had very rarely any ink in it. There was a cupboard, in which were kept the brandy and my uncle's cheroots; and the turning-lathe and a few chairs were all the furniture. It was not even entirely carpeted, the spaces next the wall being quite bare. If they had not been so, I should not have heard the footsteps at all. I could now hear nothing, and the moon was hid, so that I could see nothing, as I watched and waited in the dark passage. Presently, however, I heard a click, which I recognised at once; the desk made that noise whenever it was opened, which was often enough, for my uncle kept all his housekeeping money there, and, characteristically enough, not under lock and key. There was the sealed packet there also, but nothing else. What could my uncle possibly want at such an hour out of his desk? The idea of a burglar never entered into my mind; such a being at Hershell Point was more rare than the dinornis: he was only not extinct because he had never existed. I heard the muffled chink of money, as if it was being counted coin by coin, and I noticed there were fewer than usual kept in the desk. A fidgety man, who fancied he had made some mistake in his domestic calculations, might perhaps have risen even in the night to assure himself respecting them; but my uncle was not fidgety. There was now another noise, which I had only once heard before; the secret spring had been touched, and the drawer containing the packet rattled out. At this moment, the clouds cleared away from the moon, and I saw a figure standing against the window with something in his hand. I have no recollection of doing so, but perhaps I gave an involuntary start. In an instant the figure turned, and I fled swiftly and noiselessly to my own chamber, though not so fast but that ere I entered it my ear caught once more the snap of the spring and the click of the desk. Directly afterwards a door was softly shut, and I heard my uncle's short dry cough on the other side of my room.

I would not have had him find me thus spying on his actions for ten times the gold in his desk, and I lay for a minute or two with beating heart, and scarcely venturing to breathe. But presently I began to consider, was it possible for such an invalid to have left the study and reached his chamber within that short space? The partition between our rooms was thin, and yet I had not heard the bedstead creak, as it was wont to do when it received the weight of the still stalwart ex-maharajah. Perhaps it was not my uncle at all who had visited the study. Who then could it have been? Who else had any right to count the money in the desk? or, supposing that had been done with some dishonest motive, who could possibly have any concern with the packet except one person, Sangaree Tannajee? I slept no more that night, but listened for every sound. If the Hindu's door had opened again, he would have found me armed—for my uncle had recently given me a pair of ancient pistols, beautifully inlaid, with which I practised shooting daily—and resolute to prevent his leaving the house. But all was still. What strengthened my suspicion that he might have premeditated some abominable *coup*, such as robbery and flight, was the fact that he had kept himself sober the preceding evening.

At breakfast, in answer to my inquiry, my

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uncle informed me that he had passed a particularly quiet night, his cough having scarcely harassed him at all.

'Then you did not rise and go into the study for brandy?' said I as carelessly as I could. 'I certainly thought I heard you, and was afraid you were unwell.'

'Certainly not, Marmy. You are too anxious about me,' said he, with a little annoyance in his manner. 'I felt greatly better last night; and so far from running about the house, I scarcely even turned on my pillow. You must have been dreaming.'

My uncle was incapable of dissimulation, far less of a lie. I knew therefore at once whose figure it was that I had seen standing at the study-window; the only question was, should I reveal what I had seen? I decided to consult Mr Glendell upon this point, and I did so. The surgeon was aware of all that I knew myself respecting the mysterious connection of the Hindu with my uncle's fortunes, but he was not so curious about it as Mrs Eleanor Blunt was. Doctors, generally speaking, know too much of the secrets of their fellow-creatures to be greatly interested in such matters; and they are honourably discreet about what they know. With the exception of his jocose allusion to the skeleton in our household, he had never pressed me upon the matter, and for that very reason I had been the more induced, when I came to know him intimately, to repose in him my whole confidence. He had not been communicative of his ideas upon the subject; but when I told him what Mrs Blunt had said regarding it, he had nodded acquiescence in her views, and remarked drily that 'that old lady ought to have been a Bobby'—by which I understood him to mean a detective policeman.

He congratulated me on my good sense in having concealed what I had witnessed on the night in question from my uncle.

'Half his disease, my dear Marmy,' said he, 'is attributable to worry, anxiety of mind, and that's why Rosa and I make a home of your house: the more he is won from the solitude of his own thoughts, the better; bad news, in particular, should be studiously kept from him; and what you now tell me is *very* bad news. It is clear to me, that if there had been more shots in the locker, more money in the till, that whity-brown scoundrel would have bolted with it last night. What he wanted with the packet, I can't tell. Perhaps, having decided not to decamp, he only wished to assure himself that it was there. That he knows it contains something of importance, I have not the slightest doubt; but to steal it while his master lives can do him no good, since your uncle would, I conclude, simply have to rewrite the thing. Well, you must let this fellow know that you have your eye upon him—that you are not deceived in his character, although his master may be—in short, you must make him afraid of you, and that will not be difficult, for he is not, I should fancy, remarkable for personal courage.'

'He is the most cowardly cur,' said I contemptuously. 'How he could ever have cut his way through the Begum's troopers in that brilliant manner he used to describe to me when I was a child, I cannot imagine.'

'Your uncle was behind him with a loaded pistol, my good lad—one of the most powerful incentives to bravery it is possible to conceive. He had got all the ex-maharajah's money and jewels about him, and was well aware that he would not be permitted to indulge in pusillanimity—it would have been too expensive a luxury just then.'

'Very well,' said I grimly, 'I will endeavour to convince him that to run away from Hershell Point with our housekeeping money would be a dear-bought amusement also. I will shew this villain that since our last little affair together, "Master Marmy," as he still has the impudence to call me, has grown to be a man.'

The opportunity I wished for of coming to an understanding with the Hindu did not occur for many weeks, during which he gave me constant occasion for desiring it. Twice, under the influence of bhang, he was most impertinent in his manner towards Miss Glendell; and nothing but her own earnest entreaties, and consideration for my uncle's health, which any mental agitation would be sure to injure, prevented my taking vengeance on his fat carcass. Within the last few months I had grown surprisingly both in length and strength, and felt myself no longer an antagonist such as that hulking scoundrel could afford to despise. But it was not a mere thrashing that could effect any permanent improvement in him, although, without doubt, it would do him good.

At last my chance arrived. My uncle announced his intention, one morning, of accompanying Mr Glendell in his gig to Daisyport, where the surgeon had an appointment; so that, in case of any explosion of Tannajee's wrath taking place (in consequence of what I proposed), the smoke would have time to evaporate, as it were, before his master's return, who might therefore be spared all knowledge of the matter.

It was very seldom that my uncle now left the house, except for an hour or two; and no sooner had he departed on this occasion, than, as I fully anticipated, Tannajee proceeded to get comfortably fuddled upon such liquors as he had by him in his own room. I did not molest him in that apartment, first, because it lay near the kitchen, and I was unwilling that Martha or Nancy should be listeners to our altercation; and secondly, because it was important that what I had to say should be said in the study, whither I well knew he would presently repair, to enjoy his master's cheroots. Accordingly, as soon as the smoke thereof informed me of his being there, I slipped into my own room for an article which I placed into my coat-pocket, and then presented myself at the study-door. The Hindu was seated cross-legged on the carpet as usual, a bundle of cheroots on one side of him, and the brandy-bottle on the other; it was a liquor he did not get hold of every day, though he liked it best of all, even better than opium; and he looked perfectly well satisfied with his position. Not a trace of embarrassment appeared in his features at being thus discovered in this act of petty larceny; but they were darkened with a scowl at the intrusion of so unwelcome a visitor.

'You need not rise, Tannajee,' said I, although, indeed, he had not moved a limb. 'I must have a few minutes' conversation with you, and we might as well both be comfortable after our several fashions;' and I took a chair immediately opposite to him.

He did not utter a word; but I knew, by the puffing of his cheroot, that my manner caused him some excitement, if not alarm.

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'We are not very good friends, you and I, Sambo' (I could not resist that word, when I saw the gleam of hate lit up his fishy eyes); 'but it is not about that I am come to talk to you: it is about my uncle Theo, and your conduct towards him.'

By no means the least provoking of the Hindu's characteristics was his pretence, whenever it suited him, of not being able to understand the English language, with which he was in reality well acquainted, and he affected this ignorance now.

'The Maharajah's out, Master Marmy,' said he—'gone to Daisyport, to catch another cold.'

'You ungrateful scoundrel,' cried I indignantly, although I had made up my mind to keep my temper; 'you dare to sneer at your master's illness, which he incurred in saving your own worthless life!'

'The Maharajah is very ill; he will die soon, and leave Master Marmy all alone, except for the little black girl. But she cannot become his wife, because he will have no money.'

'If you ever dare to speak of Miss Glendell in that manner again,' cried I, hoarse with passion, 'I will beat you to a mummy—not merely kick you, as I did before.' My cheeks were aflame; my whole frame tingled with rage, and yet I knew that I should *spoil* all if I hurried matters.

The Hindu had placed his hand in his girdle, doubtless feeling for some weapon, and the dusky glow upon his face shewed me that he felt the taunt.

'I repeat, Tannajee, I am not come here to talk of my own affairs at all, but rather of yours.'

'Of mine!' answered the Hindu contemptuously.

'Yes, of yours, and your master's. You have a common interest, you know.'

It was indiscreet of me to have hazarded this remark, and too late I perceived my folly.

The Hindu's breathing became oppressed; his fingers clutched at what his girdle still kept concealed, and his cheroot dropped from his other hand upon the floor. 'Uncle Theo, then, has told his nephew something,' said he slowly.

It seemed to me that this man would have stabbed me to the heart, had I answered: 'I know all.'—'Nay,' said I, as unconcernedly as I could, 'he has told me nothing except concerning your long service, the many years you have lived together as master and man; which should surely beget a mutual regard. Why, then, does it not so? Why are you callous to his sufferings? Why do you repay his kindness with insult?'

The Hindu's temporary excitement had quite subsided; he was smoking as before with his eyes half-closed, and a sottish sneer upon his lip.

'You are not moved by these reproaches, Sangaree Tannajee. You have neither sense of gratitude nor of duty; but there is one thing which I am determined to put a stop to—you shall not again walk in your sleep, my friend.'

For once, I do believe that the Hindu's air of not understanding what was said to him was not feigned—he even exhibited some faint trace of interest in my last observation.

'Sleep-walk?' said he. 'What does Master Marmy mean? Brandy not good for boy like him, only for men like Tannajee.'

'Master Marmy is sober enough, Sambo,' replied I very gravely; 'and this is what he means. You must not again come here, into this study, at night, to open your master's desk, and count his money, nor meddle with that secret drawer—*Chorwallah!*'

The Hindu had been gathering together his supple limbs while I was speaking, but at the word chorwallah (thief), which (as has been written) I had once overheard my uncle apply to him with particular emphasis, he was upon me in a moment with his naked knife; at the same instant, the shining barrel of my pistol met his wicked face, and he shrunk from it, an incarnation of baffled fury and cringing fear, back to the very wall.

'Drop that ugly knife, you scoundrel, drop it,' cried I, 'before I count three, or, by heavens, I pull this trigger. One—two!'

The weapon fell from his trembling hand, and clanged upon the boarded floor.

'Now, sit down where you were sitting, and listen to me, Tannajee.'

He cowered upon the carpet like a flogged hound, murmuring abjectly: 'Yes, yes; put away the pistol, Master Marmy.'

'No, not Master Marmy,' said I sternly; 'for the future, it's to be always Mr Marmaduke. You must henceforth mend your manners to me, as well as to your master. Let there be no more disrespect, no more rebellion, and as little drunkenness as you can help, you sot. A word from me, remember'—I pointed to the violated desk—'and I can send you to jail, where there is no opium, no strong drinks, and no cheroots. You have had your own way long enough, and have now come to the end of your tether. There is nothing left for you but either to behave yourself properly in my uncle's service, or to run away.'

I saw a momentary gleam of satisfaction cross his listening face.

'But you won't run away, you cur,' continued I with stern distinctness, 'for this most excellent reason, because, if I catch you at it, or overtake you after having done so, I will blow your brains out, as surely as your name is Sangaree Tannajee.'

This threat was perhaps not quite authorised in a legal point of view, but no decree of *Ne exeat Regno* could have had so much effect upon its object as had these pregnant words, assisted as they were by the application of the cold iron of the pistol-barrel to the ear-tip of the trembling Hindu. To add anything to that last touch would I felt be a bathos; so I rose without another word, and left Tannajee to his reflections.

HORSESHOES.

THE Romans shod their horses, though not in the same way as we do. Their *pedillum* lapped over, and therefore occasioned a rattling sound. Winckelmann has published a drawing of a Roman gem, shewing one man holding up the foot of a horse, and another man shoeing it. An iron horseshoe is mentioned by Appian; but shoes (*carbatinæ*) made of raw hides were, as Aristotle and Pliny attest, put upon camels in the time of war and during long journeys. Nero is said, by Suetonius, to have shod his mules with silver. Pliny records of Poppæa, the empress of Nero, that she used gold for the same purpose. These shoes had probably the upper part only formed of the precious metals, or perhaps they were plated out of thin slips.

In the horseshoes found in the German barrows, says Fosbroke, the shoes project not downward, but upward. At Colney, in Norfolk, were found Roman urns, and a horseshoe of uncommon

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form—round and broad in front, narrowing very much backward, and having its extreme ends almost brought close behind, and rather pointing inward, *with the nail-holes still perfect*. An early instance of nails in horseshoes is furnished by one of a horse buried with Childeric I., who died 481, which was fastened with nine nails (*Archæologia*, iii. 35). Du Cange and Carew mention the custom of shoeing only the fore-feet. La Brocquiere describes the oriental horseshoes as being very light, rather lengthened towards the heel, and thinner there than at the toe. They were not turned up, and had but four nail-holes, two upon each side. The nails were square, with a thick and heavy head.

The present mode of shoeing horses was introduced into this country by the Normans, at the time of the Conquest. The Britons had been taught the use of them by the Romans, but their *pedolan* were probably considered too clumsy to be adopted by the Saxons. The Franks in the ninth century, and probably also the Normans, shod their horses in winter only.

It may be mentioned, *en passant*, that the male horse only was ridden by knights and people of any distinction in the middle ages; and that to ride a mare was always looked upon as a degradation. This was either a religious superstition, or an old Teutonic prejudice. In the thirteenth century, horses were obtained from Turkey and Greece, and at a later period from Barbary. The lord rode the *destrier*, or war-horse; the lady, the *palefroi*, or palfrey; the servant, the *roncin;* and the luggage was carried by a *sommier*, or sumpter. White horses were most prized, after them, dapple-gray, and bay or chestnut. It is curious to find that, in 1435, the queen of Navarre gave carrots to her horses. The ordinary price of horses in England, in the reign of Edward I., was from one to ten pounds. When St Louis returned to France from his captivity, the Abbot of Cluny presented to the king and queen each a horse, the value of which Joinville estimated at five hundred livres—equal to about four hundred pounds of our present English money. Feats of horsemanship were much practised; one of these was to jump into the saddle in full armour:

> No foot Fitzjames in stirrup staid,
> No grasp upon the saddle laid,
> But wreathed his left hand in the mane,
> And lightly bounded from the plain.

Horses were frequently given as bribes. The widow of Herbert de Mesnil gave King John of England a palfrey to obtain the wardship of her children; and one Geoffrey Fitz-Richard gave the same monarch a palfrey for a concession in the forest of Beaulieu.

A large pitcher, ornamented with horseshoes, was found in a Norman pottery, discovered on the estate of Lord Scarsdale, near Derby. It is figured in *The Reliquary*, and is a very interesting example of the period. The decoration is the badge of the ancient lords of the soil on which the vessel was made, and it was probably designed for castle use. The badge is that of the family of Ferrars, Earls of Derby, Ferrars, and Nottingham, who held Duffield Castle from the time of Henry III., when the lands were confiscated.

The out-of-the-way little capital, Oakham, has a unique prerogative: it claims a horseshoe from every noble or royal personage who lodges within its walls, or passes through its streets. In its ancient Norman hall may be seen these iron *souvenirs* of distinguished visits, some adorned with a coronet, and marked with the names of donors from Queen Elizabeth down to Princess Victoria. The castle was built by Wakelin de Ferrariis, *temp.* William I. The Smiths' Company at Chester was in existence there long prior to 1498, in which year Prince Arthur, son and heir of King Henry VII., paid a visit to the quaint old city. The prince's horses required to be re-shod, and the services of Thomas Edyan, master-smith, and senior alderman of the Smiths' Company, were called into requisition on that duty. This work was completed so entirely to the prince's satisfaction, that he then and there presented to the said Edyan a silver badge, bearing a shield, on which were engraved a horseshoe, pincers, and hammer, surmounted by a *fleur-de-lis* crown, which he granted to be thenceforward worn by his said master-smith, Thomas Edyan, and his successors, the senior aldermen of the Smiths' Company, for ever. A grave-stone, excavated at the western end of St John's Church, Chester, contained a fleur-de-lis cross, on either side of which were sculptured a horseshoe and a smith's hammer and pincers—clearly commemorative of a defunct member of the Smiths' Company at Chester, and possibly of that very Edyan whose workmanship had so won the prince's favour.

In Lord Herbert's Life of Henry VIII., printed in Kennet's *History of England* (ii. 17), we read that Henry 'having feasted the ladies royally for divers days, did depart from Tournay to Lisle (October 13, 1513), whither he was invited by the Lady Margaret, who caused there a joust to be held in an extraordinary manner; the place being a large room, raised high from the ground by many steps, and paved with black square stones like marble; while the horses, to prevent slipping, were shod with felt or flocks (the Latin words are *feltro sive tomento*), after which the ladies danced all night.' Shoeing with felt is mentioned by Shakspeare (*King Lear*).

Aubrey, in his *Miscellanies*, says: 'Under the porch of Staninfield Church, in Suffolk, I saw a tile with a horseshoe upon it, placed there to hinder the power of witches, though one would imagine that the holy water would have been sufficient.' The charm of the horseshoe lies in its being forked, and presenting two points. Thus, Herrick, in his *Hesperides*, says:

> Hang up *hooks* and sheers, to scare
> Hence the hag that rides the mare,
> Till they be all over wet
> With the mire and with the sweat;
> This observed, the manes shall be
> Of your horses all knot-free.

Even the two forefingers held out apart, are thought to avert the evil eye, or prevent the machinations of the lord and master of the nether world.

The pentacle, or seal of Solomon, is supposed to possess great power, as being composed of two triangles presenting six forked ends, and therefore called pentacle erroneously.

Mr Timbs states, that when Monmouth Street was a fashionable locality of London, it was noted for its number of horseshoes nailed over the doorways or on the sill. In 1813, Sir Henry Ellis counted here seventeen; in 1841, there were six;

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but in 1852, there were eleven; now there are fewer. Nelson had great faith in the horseshoe, and one was nailed to the mast of the ship *Victory*. 'Lucky Dr James' attributed the success of his fever-powder to his finding a horseshoe, which he adopted as the crest upon his carriage. A horseshoe is very conspicuous at the gate of Meux's Brewery, at the corner of Tottenham Court Road, and on the trappings of the horses of the establishment. The lucky belief in the horseshoe may have led to its having been adopted as the ornamental portion of a scarf-pin.

Messrs Larwood and Hotten, in their *History of Signboards*, state that the horseshoe by itself is comparatively a rare sign. The three horseshoes, however, are not uncommon; and the single shoe may be met with in many combinations, arising from the old belief in its lucky influences. The sun and horseshoe is still a publichouse sign in Great Titchfield Street; and the magpie and horseshoe may be seen carved in wood in Fetter Lane —the magpie perched within the horseshoe, and a bunch of grapes being suspended from it.

DAISY'S CHOICE.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER V.

'Doctor, when may I go out into my garden again?' She was lying on a couch in the drawing-room, and he was sitting beside her. She was looking out of the window, through which, as she lay, she could see the tops of a couple of poplar-trees, rocking gently to and fro in the March wind. If she had looked at the doctor's face, she would have seen a shadow flit across it.

'I think it will be soon now, Daisy,' he said.

'How soon?'

'I can hardly tell you, exactly. You have been very patient; I know you must be weary of being a prisoner.'

'No; I am not so tired of that. I just took a sudden longing to go out and see the flowers in my garden. I know the crocuses must be all standing up in their stiff rows: they always used to remind me of soldiers, in yellow, and purple, and white uniforms. And my dear little hypaticas, they will be nearly over by this time.'

'How very stupid I have been,' said the doctor suddenly rising, and going out of the room. He went down-stairs, and out into the garden, where he pulled a great bunch of crocuses and hypaticas, and one or two late little snowdrops, that were nodding their delicate heads in a shady corner, under a rhododendron bush. His face wore a curious mixture of expressions as he pulled those flowers; there were both pain and pleasure in it, and above all, a sort of wistful tenderness, as if the flowers had been a bit of Daisy herself. He brought them to her, and laid their cool faces to her cheek.

'Thank you, oh, thank you!' she whispered, and her eyes filled with tears.

He brought her a vase to put them in, and left her arranging them; and every morning after that, he brought a bunch of flowers with him: she knew by them how the season was gliding away. After the crocuses came anemones and wall-flowers; and then, by and by, little fragrant rose-buds. One day, when he gave her a bunch of those, she said: 'I thought that I should have been able to gather those for myself by this time.'

He sighed a little, as he sat down beside her couch. 'You must be patient for only a little while longer,' he said. 'I must let you go soon.'

'Let me go!' she repeated wonderingly. 'You speak as if you were almost sorry about my being nearly well again.'

'I am very glad and thankful that you are so nearly well, Daisy,' he said.

She turned her head, and looked up in his face. 'You may be thankful, but you certainly don't look glad.'

'Do I not? But I *am* glad, or at least I try to be. Only, people are very selfish in this world, Daisy. When you were in pain, my child,' he went on in a low voice, and holding his face so that she could not see it, 'I suffered with you. I would have given my life to save you from suffering. But now that the pain is over, I only feel that you are mine as long as you lie here, and I am loath to let you go. But for all that, you know I won't keep you lying here an hour longer than I can help.'

'I know that,' she answered, smiling at him. He rose to go away. 'Doctor,' continued she, playing with her rosebuds, and not looking at him, 'I want very much to ask you a question. Will you answer me truly?'

'If I can.'

'When I rise from this sofa, shall I be quite well and strong?'

'I hope so; I truly hope so, Daisy.'

'Shall I not be a—a cripple? a helpless burden to other people?'

'I am almost sure you will not be that. At one time, I had fears for you; now, I have none.'

'Thank you,' she said, looking up at him; and her flushed, smiling face was very lovely. 'I believe you have really told me what you think. I know you are very true—you would not try to deceive me.'

'I think I know why you have asked that,' he said, looking at her a little wistfully. 'It is as I knew it would be; when you rise from that sofa, you will go away from us all. But I would not keep you here, if I could; I shall try to be glad to let you free from me and my care, Daisy.'

She gave him an odd little glance, and he thought she was going to tell him something, but she only said: 'I shall expect you in the evening; try to come early;' and he went away. She lay looking out of the window, at the lazily playing leaves of the poplar-trees against the blue summer sky, with that curious smile on her face. The smile staid even though her eyes became wet, and she had to wipe away a good many tears that rolled down her cheeks.

Curiously enough, almost the first person whom the doctor met after leaving Mr Barton's house was Vivian.

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'When did you come?' he asked, shaking hands with him.

'Only this morning.—How is Daisy?'

'Nearly well. She will be quite well soon, I hope.'

'Really quite well?' asked Vivian sharply. 'Is there no risk of lameness, or anything of that sort?'

The doctor looked at him with something very like contempt. 'You need not be afraid; I think there is no such risk.'

'When may I see her?'

He considered for a minute. 'I think there is nothing to hinder you from seeing her whenever you like.'

'Now? To-day?'

'Yes, if you wish it.' Vivian did not know what it cost the doctor to say these words. 'Send up your card, and say I said you might see her, and they will let you in.'

He walked away, and Vivian went straight to Mr Barton's.

Daisy was lying just as the doctor had left her, when his card was brought. She flushed a little when she saw it. 'Did he say that he had seen the doctor?'

'Yes, Miss Daisy,' answered the servant; 'and the doctor said that you might see Mr Vivian.'

'Shew him up then;' and the next minute he was in the room.

His first impression was that she was lovelier than ever. She was dressed in a pale-blue wrapper, and her hair was lying in tumbled curls on her pillow. He looked anxiously at her face; there was no ugly fire-scar, such as he had dreaded; her beauty was etherealised by illness, her skin looked more transparent, her eyes larger and more brilliant. Her hands were folded on her breast, and she held the bunch of rosebuds which the doctor had given her. Vivian was too much of a poet not to see the exquisite beauty of the picture before him; yet even in that first minute he wished he had waited a little longer, that he might have seen if she could walk like other people, and he hastily resolved to commit himself to nothing. Yet the manner with which he went forward and took her hand was perfect, and his splendid dark eyes were full of tears.

'Dear Daisy,' he said almost in a whisper, as he sat down on the doctor's chair, 'I have been longing so to see you again.'

There was nothing to be said to this, so she only smiled, at the same time gently drawing away her hand, which he had continued to hold.

'I needn't tell you,' he went on, 'how I have suffered for you all this time. It has been a time of terrible anxiety to me.' He had managed to enjoy a tolerable share of London gaiety, and those who saw him there had certainly not guessed that he was suffering any very acute pangs.

'I am sure you were very sorry,' said Daisy. 'But I am nearly well now. Frank says that I shall be quite well soon.'

Now, Frank was the doctor's name, but Daisy had never before in her life called him by it, either to himself or to any one else. Why she did so now was best known to herself.

'Frank!' repeated Mr Vivian, looking mystified. 'Oh, you mean the doctor. Yes; he told me so.' And then there was rather an awkward pause, during which he became dimly conscious that Daisy was not exactly the Daisy he had known five months ago, and he resolved still more firmly not to say anything foolish.

'You must have had a tiresome time of it, lying here,' he said in his most sympathising tone.

She laughed brightly. 'O no; not after the actual pain went away. You know I have seen so much more of Frank than I do when I am well.' She said it more naturally this time. 'Usually, he is so busy that he can hardly spare time to be much with me; but since I have been ill, I really think he must have neglected his other patients to attend to me.'

Vivian had not come there to hear the doctor's praises, and he felt himself change colour, which annoyed him.

'I am sure he is an excellent doctor,' he said, with some slight shade of ill temper visible.

'Yes, he is,' answered Daisy gravely. 'No one can ever know what he has been to me at this time. I sometimes think that I must have died, had it not been for him.'

Then there was another silence, still more awkward on Vivian's part than the last, and he had always so hated awkwardness. He tried to get up a conversation, such as she had once delighted in, but somehow he failed to interest her. He felt uncomfortable, and wished ten times in the course of half an hour that he was back in London, or anywhere else except in Daisy's drawing-room. He was intensely relieved when it occurred to him to say that as she was not strong, he would not tire her by staying too long. She bade him good-bye very calmly, and he left her, the sense of failure strong upon him; and failure to such men as Mr Vivian is very painful.

The doctor had promised to be with her early, but it was past his usual time. When she heard his step on the stairs, she knew from the sound of it, as he slowly mounted, that he was tired, and she quite expected to see the worn, wearied look in his face. He looked round the room when he came in, evidently expecting to see some one else.

'I thought,' he said hesitating—'I did not think you would be alone.'

She smiled, and held out her hand to him. 'I have been alone nearly all day. Mr Vivian only staid a very little while.'

'If I had known that,' he said in a low voice, 'I would have come sooner. I thought that he would be here, and that you would not want me.'

She lay looking at him, silently; her eyes were moist, but the curiously sweet smile played round her mouth.

'Frank,' she said suddenly.

He started violently. She had never called him so before.

'Frank,' she repeated, 'I want to make a confession to you. May I?'

He looked at her. The sun was setting just opposite the window, and the rosy light was streaming in on her wavy hair, on her little folded hands, on her sweet calm face. It was very calm, and her clear eyes were raised to his. He was much agitated.

'I think,' he said, 'that I know what you are going to say. I have been expecting it. Don't say anything that pains you, Daisy. I can understand without your telling me.'

'I don't think you can,' she said smiling; 'and I don't think that you know in the least what I am going to say.'

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She was very calm, he thought. He had expected a confession made with blushes and tears, not this smiling radiance.

'Once upon a time,' she went on, without moving her eyes from his troubled face—'it seems a long time ago—when I was very young and thoughtless, a good and noble man did me the great honour of asking me to be his wife. I didn't know what an honour it was then, but I do now.'

He raised his hand, as if to stop her; but she went on. 'I promised, not in the least knowing what I did—not knowing what a solemn thing it was to resolve to give my whole life to him; for I know now that I did not love him.'

She paused, trembling a little now.

'Dear Daisy,' he said, 'you need not go on. I know that; I know how selfish I was. Do not pain yourself needlessly, my child. I will make all the reparation in my power for that selfish act.'

'I know; but I should like to tell you all about it, if you will let me. You must have seen that when Mr Vivian came, I was greatly fascinated by him. He was different from any one I had ever known, and it seemed to me then that in a great many things he was nobler and higher. And I began to compare him with—the other, and at first I was foolish enough to believe that the advantage was on his side. He was so clever, he seemed, as I have said, to have something very noble about him. But, after a while, I began to find out that though he was a clever man, he was not a good man. I don't know how I found it out. I felt instinctively that he was not quite true, and that he loved himself better than any one else in the world. But I did not know till just the evening of my accident what it was to love any one. Then I found out; and all this time, while I have lain so much alone here, I have been thinking how foolish and wicked I was. But I didn't know—then. Frank, will you forgive me?'

She had hidden her face on his arm, and he bent his face close to her hair.

'What do you mean, Daisy?' he whispered. 'I don't understand.'

She put both her arms round his neck, and laid her cheek to his. 'I mean that if you will forgive me, and take me back, and let me be your wife, it will make me very happy, for I love you very dearly.'

He clasped her close to his breast. 'Oh, my love, my love!'

'I would have told you all this long ago,' she whispered, after a happy silence, 'but I feared that I was going to be a cripple, and I couldn't speak till I knew.'

'My darling! As if that would have made any difference to me,' he said with a joyous laugh.

Daisy had been six months married, when one day, as she was working in her garden, she heard her husband call to her. He had made the window of the surgery into a glass door, that she might get to her flowers without going out to the street, and he was sitting inside reading the papers.

'Look here,' he said, pointing to a paragraph, and giving her the paper. 'Our old friend has married an heiress.'

She read it, smiling. 'Frank,' she said, looking in at him through the half-open door, 'supposing I had married Vivian, would you have forgotten me so soon?'

'If you had married him, I would have lived single all my life, for your sweet sake,' he said fondly.

And I really believe that he spoke the truth.

ACROSS THE WALNUTS AND THE WINE.

In after-dinner talk
Across the walnuts and the wine.—*Tennyson.*

EVEN at Housewife's pleasant table, the elections and the change of ministry have of late infected the conversation. The few remarks connected with this subject that are at all adapted for our uncontroversial columns were made by Mr Bitter Aloes, with whom all governments are bad, although some of them may be worse than others. He was speaking with his accustomed pungency of a very great statesman indeed, whose aspirations, as we contended, were by no means so Democratic as they are supposed to be.

'There is no one,' said he, 'in the present Cabinet who is so tenderly attached to that hereditary aristocracy who has done so much for all of us. To see him shake hands with a duke, sir, is a most affecting incident. He does not know how to let go of him. *It is like Jacob wrestling with the angel.*'

'And, by-the-bye,' cut in Funnidog swiftly, 'have you heard Lord Derby's last riddle? It is notorious, now that he has given up statesmanship, that he passes his time in constructing conundrums, which are the only means by which he can assist his party: everybody knows that.'

'I don't believe a word of it,' exclaimed Colonel Thunderbomb excitedly.

'Let us, however, hear the riddle,' insisted Housewife, whose principles are 'progressive.'

'Well, it's a Charade,' said Funnidog in a tone of deprecation.

'Off, off!' cried the company with one voice: 'no charades!'

'He will be asking a double acrostic next, you mark my words,' said Aloes darkly; 'and I would as soon have a double-barrelled gun pointed at me.'

'Upon my word of honour,' pleaded Funnidog, 'it is as simple as snapdragon. Even Thunderbomb will guess it; he will indeed.'

'I'll bet he don't,' growled the colonel confidently.

'"I should be my First," said my Lord Derby, "if I could throw my Second at my Whole."—Now, what's that?'

'I see,' cried Housewife, like a small boy in a *vivâ-voce* class.

'Of course you do; everybody sees,' muttered Aloes; 'it's mere child's play.'

'Come, Thunderbomb, I promised you should guess it,' urged Funnidog. 'It's the name of a great statesman—a premier.'

'Disraeli,' ejaculated the colonel.

Roars of laughter.

'Well, no, it's not *exactly* Disraeli,' explained Funnidog. 'It's Gladstone.'

From this (not unnaturally) the conversation turned upon the perception of the Humorous, the faculty of understanding jokes. Housewife instanced Samuel Rogers's story of the posts in the Green Park. One of those unfortunate persons who talk for the sake of talking, asked Sidney Smith why the posts at the Park entrances had been put more closely together, as had lately happened.

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'Ah!' replied the Wit with gravity, 'you have no idea what fat persons used to get into that Park.'

Rogers considered the nature of the reception of this reply as the best test he was acquainted with of the humorous faculty. If a man saw no fun in *that*, it was his opinion that he would see fun in nothing.

Mr Macpherson protested, on the part of his fellow-countrymen, that although in England such obtuseness might exist, no human being north of the Tweed could have taken the reply as serious.

'And yet on the Mound, at Edinburgh,' observed Mr Bitter Aloes, 'I solemnly declare that I have seen a beggar stand for weeks, with this inscription written upon his breast: "Blind from my birth. I have seen better days."'

'And what for no?' inquired Mr Macpherson gravely.

The laughter, this time, was not only general; it even included the colonel. 'Why, don't you understand,' explained he, 'that the beggar shewed he had no sense of fun, since he had written on him that he had "*seen* better days," when he had been blind from his birth!'

'I take exception to the syllogism a'thegither, colonel,' replied the imperturbable Caledonian. 'The term "seen" is clearly employed in a metaphorical sense, and has nae connection with pheesical vision; and secondly, I deny that the man shewed himsel deficient in the humorous faculty, inasmuch as bein' blind he couldna see anything amiss in his superscription. If there be any contradiction in terms, it must lie at the door o' some ither body. Besides,' continued Mr Macpherson, taking a lucifer-match box from his pocket, 'you needna gang to the Mound, at Edinburgh, for examples o' blindness, whether pheesical or mental, when Messrs Bryant and May here — which, I believe, is no a Scotch Firm—can find nae mair apposite trade-mark for their lucifers, that are sae grand a *Security against Fire*, than an Ark, which is more commonly associated wi' security against an antagonist element. Nay, in this very day's paper, I read, amang the literary advertisements, the following: *New Magazine: Under the Crown; price one shilling.* Noo, I reckon it might hae struck the enterprising proprietors, or, at all events, the dootless intelligent editor, that the words *Under the Crown* are quite superfluous, if the cost o' the periodical is stated to be a shilling.'

'You have given the Southron as good as he gave,' observed Housewife; 'but, talking of new magazines—which seem to be as plentiful as blackberries, and like them (in many cases), not to be devoured if you can get anything else—there is one I see called *The Idealist*, which invites all our youthful poets to contribute to its columns. Can its editor be aware of what a comprehensive invitation he has issued, or of the nature of the guests he has thus welcomed? I should like to see his photograph "before and after" the first week of his editorial labours; his experience of the *Ideal*—and the Real.'

'Just so,' interposed Funnidog, with his usual precipitation: 'that reminds me of a story about false teeth. I have a female cousin—a worthy soul, and I daresay a blessing to her immediate belongings, but whose hospitality to strangers (and distant relatives) is not prodigal. In fact, she is one who looks twice at a shilling before she parts with it, and does not always part with it even then. But she was inclined to be liberal and even lavish in one special direction. I don't know what wore out her teeth—it was certainly not over-feeding—but they were not good, and her secret ambition for years had been to procure a set of false ones, such as should defy the shocks of Time, and be the admiration of all beholders. At last, she accumulated the sum required—it was said to have been saved by curtailing the household expenses—and invested it in ivory. She paid a hundred guineas for the set, and was naturally very proud of them. She put them on for the first time last New-year's Day, when about to visit some friends at Margate. Her husband, whose constitution had perhaps been a little deteriorated by her domestic economy, was for journeying thither in the usual manner by railway; but the good lady maintained that it would be a sin and a shame not to take advantage of the unusually mild season, and go down cheap by the steamer. Now, mark the sequel, which bears a noble moral for those who would be economical at the expense of others: the winds blew, and the waves arose, and the usual consequences took place among the passengers. The ship had scarcely reached the mouth of the Thames before those costly ivories escaped from that of this good lady. It would have been almost as cheap to her, and much more pleasant, to have taken a special train.'

'The views, however,' observed Housewife, 'which folks entertain respecting economy are often extremely curious. A girl who is pretty, good-tempered, sensible, and altogether charming, is considered a bad match; while some wholly undesirable young woman, who happens to have a few thousand pounds, is reckoned a good one; notwithstanding that the former may understand how to keep house and manage affairs, which is a fortune in itself. I knew a case in which a most eligible damsel was pronounced by his friends as unfit to marry a certain young divine, because, forsooth, she was "without a penny." He was weak-minded enough, after having proposed to her in form, to give way to their remonstrances, and she was strong-minded enough to bring an action against him for "breach of promise." The damages were laid at five thousand pounds, and she gained them (I am happy to say) in full. The impressionable defendant, who had reaped nothing but ridicule from his former advisers throughout this trying ordeal—which included a protracted cross-examination by Serjeant Valentine (always retained in these delicate cases)—was now brought to reason. He addressed the young lady in a strain even more fervent than before: "I have behaved infamously," he owned, "but if you will only forgive and forget, we may be happy yet [with other verses]. The only objection which my friends had to you is now removed. They can no longer say that you are without a penny, since you have five thousand pounds of your very own." And the happy pair were married accordingly.'

'Talking of marriage,' remarked Funnidog, 'reminds one of the Hatch, Match, and Dispatch (as folks used to call the Birth, Marriage, and Death department of the *Times*), in connection with which a curious announcement has appeared in the Irish papers. Some noble Lord, it seems, presented a pair of Ostriches to certain zoological gardens, with the understanding, that if anything happened in the feathered family, he was to be informed of it at once. He accordingly received this notice from the committee of management:

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"My Lord, we have the pleasure to inform you that the female ostrich has laid an egg. She does not, however, concern herself further with the cares of maternity, and we hardly know what is to be done. For the present, therefore, we have engaged the greatest goose we could procure to sit on the egg, *until your Lordship comes yourself.*"

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE Hyde Park and City Railway, another project of underground engineering, is now brought forward, with promise of a tunnel from the Marble Arch to the Post-office, under the present line of roadway. By this selection of the course of a public thoroughfare, where land will not have to be bought, the cost will be L.1,400,000, instead of L.4,500,000. Mr Hawkshaw, engineer of the proposed line, states that it shall be constructed without any interruption of the street-traffic, between the hours of six in the morning and ten at night. Any diggings made during the night will be covered in, and the paving replaced before 6 A.M. There will be, in all, nine stations; the trains are to be drawn by wire-ropes from fixed engines at each end, so that the air of the tunnel will not be poisoned by the smoke and vapours of locomotives; and as there can be no collisions, trains will start every two minutes. When the Blackwall Railway was first opened, and for some years afterwards, the carriages were drawn by wire-ropes; and in the opinion of competent engineers, the substitution of locomotives for ropes was a mistake, whether regarded from the scientific or the economical point of view, as will perhaps be demonstrated when the new line here noticed begins to work.

In England, Scotland, and Ireland, there are 3381 telegraph stations from which messages are sent, of which number 738 are exclusively for railway service. The total length of wire employed by all these stations—including the quantity twisted in 4695 miles of under-sea cable—is 103,783 miles. These figures enable one to form a notion of the magnitude of the telegraphic operations now carried on, and of the enormous task which government will have to undertake when they carry out their scheme of buying out all the companies, and taking all the telegraphs under their own control. All this has grown up within the past thirty years, and called into exercise a prodigious amount of scientific and mechanical ingenuity. The Royal Society did well at their last anniversary to present their most honourable medal to Sir Charles Wheatstone, for to the instruments invented by him the present facility of telegraphic communication is mainly due.

The Turkish government, which it is the fashion to describe as behind the age, have ordered four life-boats from a builder in Limehouse, for use, we may imagine, on the stormy coasts of the Black Sea. On the coasts of Great Britain and Ireland, there are 189 life-boat stations; and it appears that the number of lives saved in eleven months of 1868 was 697: a fact worth recording.

Dr Tyndall has made some very surprising experiments by passing vapours of different chemical substances into an exhausted glass tube, and then sending through them a beam of electric light. The vapour is at first invisible, but after the light has shone through it for a few seconds, it forms clouds of a blue, green, red, or mauve colour, which break up into the most fantastic and beautiful forms, endowed with a rotary motion, which adds greatly to their effect on the eye. In some instances, the cloud takes the shape of funnels overlapping each other, and, curiously enough, the inner ones can be seen through the outer ones. The most surprising of all is the vapour of hydriodic acid. The cloud is seen cone-shaped, supporting vases of exquisite form, and over the edges of these vases fall faint clouds, resembling spectral sheets of liquid. Afterwards, a change takes place—roses, tulips, and sunflowers appear; then come a series of beautifully shaped bottles, one within the other, and on one occasion there was seen the shape of a fish with eyes, gills, and feelers. What, it may be asked, is the use of all this fantastic beauty? The answer is, that Dr Tyndall finds therein illustrations of chemical decomposition, examples of molecular physics, and explanations of the formation of cloud and the blue colour of the sky, whereof we shall hear more by and by, and by which science will be enriched.

Last summer, at the instance of the Royal Society, the Admiralty lent a steamer to Dr Carpenter and Dr Wyville Thomson, for a dredging cruise in the North Atlantic, to the westward of the Faröe Islands. The special object in view was to ascertain whether living animals would be found at great depths, and in what geological conditions. The late Professor Edward Forbes propounded the theory that life ceased at 300 fathoms, and that the shells and animals found at that depth would be quite colourless, through want of light. But the cruise above mentioned, as well as other dredging operations, establish the fact, that brightly coloured shells, and animals with colour in their bodies, are met with at the greatest depths to which the dredge has yet descended—from 500 to 600 fathoms. Moreover, the abundance of minute animal life on the deep sea-bottom is amazing; and from what Dr Carpenter stated at a recent meeting of the Royal Society, naturalists and microscopists may expect large contributions of interesting objects to study for years to come. Another fact important to geologists is, that their cretaceous period is no longer to be regarded as belonging exclusively to the past, for the formation of chalk at the bottom of the sea in the North Atlantic is going on at the present time, and therein are found living animals identical with some hitherto known only as fossils of the chalk.

Great things, as readers know, are effected by water-power, and now we hear that ships are to be steered by pressure of the water in which they float. There will be no wheel, no tiller—such as is now in use—and no tiller-ropes, but an apparatus, simple, yet so powerful, that therewith a boy might steer the *Great Eastern*. In the absence of full descriptive details, we can only say that the invention comprises a hydraulic chamber fixed to the keel, in which the pressure is exerted, and that from this an iron rod passes to the rudder-head. We shall, perhaps, not have to wait long for further information, for Captain Inglefield, F.R.S., the inventor, has been appointed to one of the largest ships in the royal navy, in order to make a thorough trial of his invention.

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An improved method of shoeing horses has been introduced from America, where seven years' experience have fully proved its merits, not the least of which is that it preserves horses from some of the maladies to which they are liable when shod in the ordinary way. The shoe at present in use is too heavy, too cumbrous, compels the horse to keep his leg in a false position, and impairs his usefulness long before the time of natural decay. The weight of a set of the new shoes is five pounds less than that of the shoes worn by omnibus horses: each shoe is made to fit the hoof exactly, and is not allowed to project beyond the heel: the nail-holes are pierced at such an angle as insures the nails entering the hoof in the safe direction for avoiding injury to the foot, and the shoe is always nailed on cold. The frog of the foot, which is now always cut away by farriers, is left to grow, and it is of important use to the horse in securing foothold. The shoe for common use has a toe-calk, and one on each side, but these do not prevent the horse bringing his foot to the ground in a natural position. For frosty weather, a different kind of shoe is used, but with neither of them can there be accumulation of snow or earth under the sole. The inventor and patentee of this new shoe is Mr Goodenough, who was formerly associated with Mr Rarey. It has been tried on a number of horses belonging to the London General Omnibus Company, and with satisfactory results.

From the province of Volterra, in Tuscany, there comes good news for agriculturists, and for all who use mineral fertilisers. There are *lagoni*, or lakes, in that province, the waters of which for some years past have been made to give up the boric acid which they contain in considerable quantities. Professor G. Ville, of the Jardin des Plantes, Paris, has recently demonstrated that, in addition to boric acid, the waters, and the vapours rising from crevices in the earth, contain a large amount of sulphate of ammonia. This mineral is so much in demand for agricultural purposes, that we trust measures will be taken to extract a constant supply, and export it to all parts of Europe.

Sheep multiply so prodigiously in Australia, that the boiling down of the animals merely for the extraction of the tallow, has grown into a business of huge proportions. Four hundred sheep are cut to pieces, and thrown into a big boiler, steam from another boiler is turned on, and soon the carcasses are reduced to a pulp; the tallow rises to the top, and is drawn off through large taps into barrels for export. The gravy and other juices, the remains of the meat, and the bones, which are so softened as to crumble easily in the hands, are given to pigs. Such soup as that would be gladly eaten by hundreds of poor people in England. The quantity must be great, for four thousand sheep are boiled down in a day.

Tallow-chandlers complain that they cannot get enough of good beef-tallow for their purposes. The reason is, that tricky traders buy beef-tallow, and send it to Belgium, whence it is exported as Ostende butter. In the treatment of the tallow to fit it for the market, a kind of flour is mixed with it, and this flour takes up thirty per cent. of water. So, eaters of Ostende butter will do well to remember that in every one hundred pounds they buy, there are thirty pounds of water, to say nothing of the flour. To pay the price of good butter for water, tallow, and flour, is a grievance not easy to put up with.

BLUE AND WHITE.

'Of all the colours, sweet sir, what may your favourite be?'
And the lad I had nurst back to life looked up, and made answer to me:
'Two colours I choose—blue and white.' Then up from my throat did there spread,
Yea, to my very temples, a dye of the happy red;
For a maiden's face will flush at the lightest thing evermore;
And blue was the ribbon that bound my hair, and white was the gown that I wore.

'May I tell you all, lady sweet?' 'Ay, sir, an' it please you so.'
All alone with each other we sat in the firelight's glow:
He, the lad whom our men had found nigh dead close by,
And the mother that bare him could never have nurst him more gently than I.

'Sister—nay, pardon my freedom—but oh, you have been so good,
I well could wish that I owed you the duty of brotherhood;
Crown your sweet favours with this, the greatest of all, and be
As tender to her I love, as you have been tender to me.'

Then over every sense there swept down a terrible, dim
Dusk of oblivion, as there I sat, and listened to him.
Silence a moment, and then, by the helping of God His grace,
I answered: 'Yea, brother, I will,' with a very smile on my face.

'Now, God bless you, sister. Listen. A year ago
She gave herself to me for ever and ever, and so,
One sweet autumn eve, in the time of the falling of dew,
I gemmed her little white hand with a circlet of sapphires blue.

'She, my own lady, taketh ever the most delight
In the calm virginal colours—the delicate blue and white;
And, sister, mine eyes were soothed with a sense of lovesome repose
When I saw you this evening wear the hues that my darling chose.'

Oh! but the bonnie blue ribbon pressed on my head all too tight;
Oh! but my heart beat wild beneath its virginal white;
Oh! but the hours were long as I knelt in the dark alone,
Moaning: 'My Father, teach me to say but "Thy will be done."'

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ZEKEL FLINT.

IN SIX CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

My father-in-law's name was Ezekiel Flint, but I never knew a man before or since who could boast of so many nicknames. Not that he cared: he rather enjoyed them; and he'd pull that long dry walnut-shell face of his into as many puckers as could lie upon so many square inches of surface, even closing his eyes, for fear that any of the fun should escape, and give a tight grin as he would say: 'Let 'em go on, my lad; let those laugh who win. I can shew more wrinkles than any man in the state; and if yew'll shew me the boy who can do me, I'll say thanky.'

It was his boast that he had never yet been done, cheated, taken in; and though it was common enough to hear him called Flinty, or Skinflint, from his closeness; Sam Slick, or Wooden Works, from his resemblance to the celebrated clockmaker, yet he was so constantly boasting that he had never been done, that his popular *sobriquet* was 'Old Raw.'

I don't know how it is, but whenever you meet with an extra ugly, dry, sharp, biting old file, it's ten to one but that he has a pretty daughter. Zekel Flint had, and he knew it, adding many a pound to the contents of his leather bag by letting her serve in his store; her branch being the tobacco, cigars, and 'eye-openers.' Zekel managed the rest, serving over his rough-boarded counter everything that a miner could be expected to need up there in Californy in the early days of the gold-fever. Of course there were not wanting plenty who said that he wetted down the tobacco, and bought everything of the commonest and cheapest; that his heavy boots would never keep the water out for a week; that his pickaxes always broke short off; while his shovels were made of refuse iron. Let that be as it may, I know one thing, and that is that he was always perfectly straightforward in his dealings: he put a pretty good percentage upon all his goods, whether groceries or notions; but, as he said, very fairly, look at the risk! While if a miner wanted to exchange dust or nuggets, Zekel's scales would bear examination. It was a ticklish thing, certainly, to cheat the rough customers who came to the different stores; but dangerous or not, they were greatly cheated by very many of the storekeepers.

Tired out with our long dangerous journey, I reached Zekel's store with some half-dozen companions one evening, and being young, and as the old man afterwards told me, green, I must hang about, in spite of my gold-madness, smoking more common rank tobacco, and drinking a great many more eye-openers than were good for me, so that I might be close by blush-cheeked Ruth. Sharp and ready she was with her tongue, but let any customer make in the slightest degree too free, and if he was not put down upon the instant by Ruth, there was generally some long, broad-shouldered chap ready to hoist the obnoxious personage out, so as to get rewarded by a glance of Ruth's bright eyes.

I don't know how it was, but there was something in Ruth as a lass that seemed to win respect from all who saw her; and though roughs in plenty were up at the diggings, and revolvers and bowies had been drawn in quarrels about Old Raw's daughter, still there was a large proportion of decent hard workers, who meant to make gold to keep, and not to spend in fiery whisky and short carouses. These quiet ones always shewed a certain respect for the old man and his daughter, so much, that he would have been a bold fellow who would have ventured to insult Ruth Flint twice. Besides, up in that region, where law was in those days, along with order, upon the other side of a great desert, many hundreds of miles wide, a man had to depend for protection a good deal upon his own right hand. Zekel knew it, and within reach of his right hand there was always a six-shooter.

'Yew'd better come on at once,' said the men of the party to which I belonged; but somehow or another I could not see it, but made excuses of being done up with the journey—unwell—wanting to rest a few days, and one thing and another,

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trying all the while to believe them myself, till my companions went off and left me, and I was obliged at last to confess that I was making myself a great fool, and mooneying about Old Zekel's store to get a smile or a kind word from Ruth Flint—favours which I was compelled to own she was quite as ready to accord to any other customer.

I knew it was stupid and unreasonable, but there I used to loaf about day after day, scowling with jealous eyes at every young fellow who entered the store, jealous of their pleasant words, of Ruth's smiles, and, above all, of the different presents she received: quaintly shaped nuggets to hang round her neck—necklace or locket fashion—or with the seal and key of her watch. I'd have given anything to have known whether she had any serious inclination towards any of the men who frequented the store. Perhaps at night I would make sure she had such towards some prosperous digger, and make up my mind to play moth round the candle no more; and the next morning I would get up with the determination of just saying good-bye to Ruth, going up to the diggings, prospecting a bit, and then making my fortune right off. But that interview always spoiled my determination, for I used to fancy that when I talked of going, there was some little show of regret in Ruth's tone; and though she was only pleasant and chatty, treating me as she would any other visitor, yet I was disarmed, and the next day I was still hanging about.

'Seems to take yew a 'nation long while to get off,' said Old Zekel. 'Strikes me if yew're as long scraping up your dust when yew've made your fortune, yew won't have much time left to spend it.'

'But I am going directly, Mr Flint,' I said bitterly; for Ruth was laughing coquettishly at something a tall stalwart young fellow had just said to her, as she held him a light for his pipe.

'Fine lass; ain't she?' said the old man drily, as he read my thoughts. 'I'm darn proud o' that gal, I am. But yew air going—air yew? Well, just as yew like. I came here fust meanin' to dig; but I know better. Take my advice, young un: don't yew dig—yew let others dig, and yew take their dust. That's the way to make a pile. They will have their eye-openers, and juleps, and weed; and they must eat and drink. Mine's the rale grit gold-digging, my lad. Yew can't do me.'

The old man's was perhaps very good advice, but I had no money for trading—having come down to my last shilling; and that day, while Ruth seemed to be more merry and light-hearted than usual, giving smart repartees to those who addressed her, and now and then a sidelong merry glance towards where I loafed about in the sulkiest of humours, I cursed my folly again and again. My companions had been gone a fortnight, and rumour said had had very good luck; while, for the sake of a flirt who only thought about my money, I had been wasting time, singeing my wings, and making a fool of myself. I told myself that; but being a strong, six-foot fellow, it might have been rather unlucky for any one to have said the same.

Evening had come, but as this was obliged to be my last day, I was determined to stop till closing-time at the store, and if I had a chance, just say a few words of farewell, and perhaps of reproach to Ruth. I was in no very amiable mood, especially as more fellows were lounging about than usual, and I could not get a word with the pretty little witch. I was ready to quarrel with any one, and no doubt looked very unamiable.

The store business was about over for the day, except at Ruth's end, and Old Zekel was busy dropping a board over a box here, shutting up another there, jamming down lids over canisters, and, after his fashion, shutting up shop. I then saw him turn his back, pull out a biggish leather bag, hold it under the lamp a minute, then tie a string round its neck, and put it in his pocket. He then took down a cigar-box from behind some more upon a shelf, put it back, sprawled over the counter after lighting his cigar, and being on my side of it, stood looking, with his hands far down in his pockets, at Ruth and her admirers, as she mixed for this one, supplied another with cigar or light, and all the while made herself generally agreeable.

'Smart gal—a fortun' in herself,' muttered the old man; and then turning to me as I lolled sulkily against a part of his rough shanty: 'Hang it, man, what a rank cigar!' and he snatched it out of my mouth, and brought down a solid foot of about twenty inches upon its glowing end.

'I gave her twelve cents for it, anyhow,' I growled.

'Ah!' he said, and his eyes half-closed as he grinned, 'some of them do turn out rather queer. Try that un, my lad,' and he handed me a genuine Cabana, whose silvered skin glistened as I lit it by the smoky lamp.

'Don't go till I come back,' said he; 'I shan't be long;' and he slowly sauntered out of the little store, so that I could follow him with my eyes for some little distance, when I just caught sight of the bright end of his cigar as he turned short off to the right.

Here was a chance, I thought: now, if those great hulking boobies lolling about the counter would only go, I might have her for ten minutes to myself, and know my fate. It seemed to be now or never; but as time slipped quietly away, the first seemed to be dissolving fast in the second. I saw Ruth glance more than once towards where I stood at the dark end of the hut, smoking away furiously, for in spite of the goodness of my cigar, my feelings were as ruffled as ever; while every compliment paid, and every light musical laugh I heard, seemed to stab me.

All at once, glass in hand, as pleasant a little Hebe as ever stepped, Ruth came to my end of the store, and passed me the little drink of her own mixing, as she said: 'Don't be unsociable. Why don't you come to the other end?'

'Ain't wanted,' I growled sulkily; but I took the mint julep all the same, and then watched its bearer as she tripped back and began laughing and chatting again as merrily as ever. 'Rum fish, are women,' I said to myself; and then perhaps the cigar did begin to act, for I fell to thinking over my own affairs, how I'd get on, and one thing and another, till I hardly noticed first one and then another of the young fellows say 'Good-night,' and stroll off to bed, till, coming back to the present, I could see at the other end of the store Ruth leaning back from the counter as far away as she could get, and busy over some bit of work, into which she seemed to be sticking the needle viciously, and then snatching it out. Lolling upon the counter, and leaning over so as to stare at her, was a great ugly fellow in a red shirt, sucking away at a black, short pipe, and even at that

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distance wearing upon his face that stupid, contented look of a man who has had more liquor than is good for him.

'I think it's quite time you were gone,' I heard Ruth say snappishly, but without looking in my direction.

'I daresay yew do, my dear,' was the answer; 'but I'm not going yet;' and then the great ugly ruffian leered at her.

'I'd go and kick him out,' I said to myself, 'if she'd only look at me as much as to say: "Do, please!"' But no; Ruth would not glance in my direction, while Red Shirt leaned farther and farther over the counter, so that he had only to reach out a hand to touch her.

'He'd only better,' I said to myself; and at the same moment I caught myself wondering whether his belt was strung. 'Why don't she ask me to put him out?'

'I've made thous'n doll'rs up yon,' I heard him say, 'and I'll make thous'n more, my dear.—Have a hole bored in that, and wear it for my sake.'

As he spoke, he held out a rough piece of gold that would have weighed half an ounce.

'I only wear presents given me by friends, thank you,' said Ruth; 'and it is shutting-up time now; so please go.'

'No, 'tain't, my dear, not till Old Raw comes back; and there's a boy smokin' there, t' other end, and I'm agoin' to stop and take keer of yew till the old man comes back. 'Tain't prudent for yew to be left alone, I guess.'

'You wicked little flirt,' I muttered, 'why don't you ask me to put him out?' But she would not look at me, though I was dying to have a go at the great brute, and I knew she must want me to do so.

'I can take care of myself, thank you,' said Ruth in a quiet firm way, that I had never seen before; but it had no effect upon Red Shirt, who began to grow more unpleasantly familiar.

'Only one look—only one appealing glance, and I'll have him out in a twinkling,' I said to myself.

'I won't look at him'—she told me afterwards—'I won't turn towards him even; I'll die first,' Ruth said to herself; 'and if he is not man enough, and has not sufficient respect for me to interfere, I'll never ask him, I reckon.'

'I never see a nicer nor a whiter little hand than yourn,' said Red Shirt, leering again.

'I think that is my father coming now,' said Ruth hastily, as she turned one of her pretty little pink shelly ears towards the door, so that the light shone full upon it, and made my blood dance as I felt how I should like to put my lips there, and tell her how I loved her.

'No, 'tain't,' said Red Shirt. 'I guess them theer feet of hisn could be heered easy a mile off. He ain't a-comin' yet, my pretty. But don't yew be skeered; I'll take care o' yew.'

'Ah, do, *do*, DO—please, do give me one look,' I said to myself—'only one!'

'I won't ask him—I won't look at him: he's a cruel, cruel, cowardly fellow, lounging about here for nearly a month, and then pretending so much, and now won't come and save me from this wretch. Ah, if father would only come!'

'Wot's the good of hidin' them pretty little hands like that now?' says Red Shirt. 'There now; don't pull; yew'll hurt yerself. It's only my fun, yew know; and I've kissed every pretty gal in the state; and if I don't have one from yew tew, why, it's strange.—Now, don't pull away so, or yew'll be abreakin' some o' the old man's bottles.'—'Oh!'—'What does "Oh!" mean?—Say, stranger, I think yew'd best take them theer hands outer my belt; or, p'raps, I shall fall on tew yer!'

'Oh!' Yes; that 'Oh!' did it, along with one look of reproach that told me more than she could have said in an hour; for just as I was about to give up myself, and making ready to dash at Red Shirt, he leaned a little farther over, dropped his pipe, and caught one of Ruth's pretty little plump hands in his great paws, drawing her to him, without her having a chance of escape. I think we both felt that we had held out long enough; and before Red Shirt had finished his sentence, I had swung him up by his belt, and the next moment he would have been outside the store, when the belt broke, his revolver fell to the right, his knife to the left, and he flat upon his back at my feet.

CHAPTER II.

'Yew've made a mistake, my young fren,' says Red Shirt, as, slowly picking up his great body, he made towards where his bowie lay beneath the lamp; but I stopped that; and the next minute, we were struggling backwards and forwards—now up against one of the poles of the hut, now against the boards or the counter; then he had me bent back over a barrel, but I recovered myself; and though I heard Ruth give one short sharp scream as we closed, directly after, all was still as she stood watching the struggle.

'Yew've made a mistake, my young fren. Yew oughter have gone on with yewer party, I calklate;' and as he spoke, he drove me up against the hut-wall, and I felt his hand at my belt as he drew out my revolver; but with a violent effort I dashed it from his hands, and it flew across the hut, exploding as it struck the thin boards. But before I could stop him, he had hold of my knife, though I had him by the wrist the next moment, and saved myself from a stab.

I could not speak for passion, as I struggled with the great ruffian. But he, in his slow ponderous way, kept on talking the whole while, as we were now here, now there, down and up, doing no end of damage to the goods in the store. But I held tightly to his wrist, as I tried to force him to quit his hold of the knife, feeling that he would have not the slightest compunction in planting it somewhere between my ribs, if I gave him a chance.

'Yew've made a mistake, my young fren,' he says again. 'Yew thought you'd caught 'possum, and it turns out ter be grizzly.—Ah! would yer?—Now, then; now you have it. Gently, gently.—Mind yer ribs.—That's a cracker, ain't it? I'm sorry for yer, sartain; but all I kin dew is ter say as I won't take yer scalp. Take it easy, stranger, I won't raise a har.'

More than once I thought he would have driven the knife into me, for the brute was strong as a bull; but, being pretty active, I escaped more than one thrust, till, in spite of all my efforts, I could feel that I was getting the worst of it, when, in the midst of a fierce struggle, wherein we were swinging to and fro, my foot caught in a piece of matting we had dragged down, and I fell with stunning violence, just as Ruth gave another shrill scream of alarm.

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I was half-stupefied by my fall; but I could feel Red Shirt with one hand at my throat, and by the light of the lamp make out the gleam of the blade as he raised my bowie to strike. It seemed an age, though, before the blade came, when, as I instinctively wrenched myself aside, I felt a sensation as of ice darting through my shoulder. Then there was the thud of a heavy blow, and my adversary rolled on one side, and I heard a voice I seemed to know say: 'That 's the thick end, my boy; I narer like to use the barrel without it 's something very particklar.—Air yew hurt, my lad?'

'Oh, father—oh, father, the blood!' I heard a voice sob, and I tried to look towards the spot from whence it came, but I could only see the lamps—dozens, hundreds of lamps dancing up and down, and whirling round and round.

Then there were voices buzzing about my ears; and it seemed to me that the store was full of people, as one voice more loud than the others said: 'That 's the third man that 's been knifed this week. Time some alteration was made.'

''Tain't my fault, Old Zekel,' seemed to be buzzing in my ears.

'No'—'No'—'No!' chorused the rest; and then all seemed blank.

CHAPTER III.

'I b'lieve they 'd ha' lynched him, my lad, I dew indeed,' said Old Zekel; 'but the sheriff and his party got him away, and I fancy as they let him make tracks in the night. 'T all events, he sloped, and a good thing too. We 've a vast too many rowdies here.'

The old man went on smoking, while I, with my bandaged shoulder, sat, a week afterwards, in the back or private part of the store, where I could see Ruth bustling about, serving customers, and, being weak, I s'pose my eyes filled with tears as I thought of the kind way in which I, a comparative stranger, had been tended during the past week.

'Nonsense, nonsense,' said the old man hastily, as I thanked him. 'Good lad, good lad. We 're in yer debt. Pity yew don't stay here and trade somehow—ain't it, Ruthy?'

'I don't know. I—I think so, father,' said Ruth in a hesitating way as she entered, very different to her habitual self-composed manner.

'Yew don't know—yew think so,' said the old man with a sly twinkle of his eye; and then he went himself to attend to a customer or two; and, at my request, Ruth eased my bandages, and made my head comfortable.

'I 'm afraid your wound does not go on so well as it should,' said Ruth, when we were alone.

'No,' I said; 'I 'm afraid not; and I don't see how it can.'

'Why not?' said Ruth shyly. 'We do all we can, don't we?'

'Not quite,' I said, as I got hold of the little white hand, that was not drawn away. 'It won't heal while I am so anxious, and in such a state of uncertainty.'

'What! about getting up to a claim in the gold part?' said Ruth, turning away her pretty head.

'Please—please, don't be cruel, darling,' I whispered. 'Don't be hard upon me, now I am weak, and have a bad wound.'

The little bright face was turned to me in a moment, and there were tears in both eyes as they looked full in mine—another hand resting upon the one that held its fellow. She did not speak: I did not want her to; but it seemed to me then to be the height of human enjoyment to lie back there, propped up by pillows, with those eyes looking at mine so earnestly, and, I hoped, lovingly.

'But you won't go, then?' she whispered at last.

'Not if you will promise too,' I said, though it was with something of disappointment in my heart as I wondered how I was to live.

'Ruthy!' shouted the old man, and she rose to leave; but I would not loosen the hand I held; and having still some little strength, I used it so that the little head came nearer and nearer to mine, and though I felt the sunny hair brush my cheek, that first kiss was so light a touch that had Ruth in after-times declared it to have been no salute at all, I should hardly dare have contradicted her.

'Change again—five-dollar piece,' growled Zekel, the same afternoon, giving loose silver from his leather purse or bag; and then, dropping in the gold piece, he came and sat down by me. 'I 'm fraid that spot of yourn won't get well in a hurry, youngster, and yew 'll be here some time yet.'

'I won't trouble you for more than another day,' I replied, for he seemed to be tired of me.

'Mother o' yourn partial to red pepper, and takes whisky, my lad?' said the old man drily.

'Not that I know of,' I said, wondering what he meant. 'Why do you ask?'

'Son seems hot and peppery, that 's all,' said Zekel.

'Hot—peppery,' I answered. 'No; I 'm not; only I 'm sorry to be a burden to you any longer.'

'Ain't heered me grumble, have yew?' said Zekel. 'Ah! I see; it 's Ruthy, is it?'

'No,' I said hastily, while the colour came into my pale face. 'God bless her!'

'Hope so,' said Zekel; and then he sat and stared at me—through me—on both sides of my head; and then he picked out one particular button upon my shirt and stared at that. 'No,' he said at last, 'that there spot o' yourn won't be down well for six months; and if I was yew, my lad, I should say as follows on*toe* me: "Zekel Flint," I should say, "I did mean for to go up to the claims, but I 've met with a misfortune, and if yew could find me a little to do in the store till I get quite right again, I should take it as a favour, not being partic'lar," says yew, "to amount of sal-a-*ry*, so long as fixins for the inside comes reg'lar, and I can pay for a bed elsewhere."'

'And what should you say to that?' I exclaimed eagerly.

'Who? me?' said Zekel. 'Ah! I shouldn't say nothing, only that I wouldn't mind, if Ruthy here wouldn't take no notice.—Get out, yew smooth kitten!' he exclaimed, as his child threw her arms round his neck. 'I don't mean anything else. He 's not sharp enough. Yew 're for a man as can see a little further into a millstone than your old father.—Coming!' he shouted, as some one began to hammer the counter; and once more Ruth and I were alone; and I suppose it was from excitement, but that wound at such times used to require a deal of tending from those little white hands—little hands, like many more in this world of ours, that whether they belong to a cottager's daughter, a storekeeper's child in a new town in a gold region, or to the fairest flower of an aristocratic

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family, are always balm-laden, tender, soothing, as they always have been from the days when Eve may have laid some cool moist leaf on Adam's aching brow.

AUDUBON.

JOHN JAMES AUDUBON, the naturalist of America, was the son of a Frenchman, by a lady of Spanish extraction. Hence, perhaps, those who believe in 'blood,' in other respects than that 'it makes excellent black-puddings,' may derive the fact, that he was mentally one of the vainest, as he was physically one of the most beautiful of mankind. However this may be, he inherited from his father a fine estate in Louisiana, where he was born, and where his earliest recollections 'were associated with lying among the flowers of that fertile land, sheltered by the orange-trees, and watching the movements of the mocking-bird.' Very early in life, he was removed to France, and began to receive a thoroughly national education. He was taught to play adroitly upon the violin, flute, flageolet, and guitar, and became a proficient in dancing; while for drawing-master he had the famous David, to whom he owed his earliest lessons in tracing objects of natural history. Even as a child, his chief delight was to make excursions into the country about Nantes, from which he usually returned at eve, laden with the nests and eggs of birds. Indeed, before he had reached manhood, he had completed as an amateur, and when quite another profession was in prospect for him, nearly two hundred sketches of the Birds of France. His father destined him in vain, however, to follow the French Eagles under Napoleon, and at last consented to his embracing commercial pursuits; he was accordingly despatched to America to superintend the family estate there.

At Mill Grove, 'hunting, fishing, and drawing occupied,' he writes, 'my every moment; cares I knew not, and cared nothing for them.' His happy employments were only diversified by falling in love; he offered his hand to the daughter of a neighbour, Mr Bakewell, an Englishman, and in course of time was accepted. Though, without doubt, an attractive wooer, he must have appeared, in that outlandish region, a very strange one, for 'it was one of my fancies,' confesses he, with *naïveté*, 'to be ridiculously fond of dress; to hunt in black satin breeches, to wear pumps when shooting, and to dress in the finest ruffled shirts I could obtain from France.' Yet this apparently effeminate dandy was not only a most excellent shot and true backwoodsman, but had even then proposed to himself that work on American Ornithology, which Cuvier pronounced to be in its completed form 'the most gigantic biblical enterprise ever undertaken by a single individual.' His mode of life at this time resembled that of Shelley. 'I ate no butcher-meat, lived chiefly on fruits, vegetables, and fish, and never drank a glass of spirits or wine until my wedding-day. To this I attribute my continual good health, endurance, and an iron constitution. So strong was the habit, that I disliked going to dinner-parties, where people were expected to indulge in eating and drinking, and where often there was not a single dish to my taste. I cared nothing for sumptuous entertainments. Pies, puddings, eggs, and milk or cream was the food I liked best; and many a time was the dairy of Mrs Thomas, the tenant's wife of Mill Grove, robbed of the cream intended to make butter for the Philadelphia market. All this while I was fair and rosy as a girl, strong as any one of my age and sex could be, and as active and agile as a buck. And why, have I often thought, should I not have kept to this delicious mode of living?'

Of his skill as a marksman, it need only be said that once when he was skating with his future brother-in-law down the Perkiominy Creek, he made a wager with him that he would put a bullet through his companion's cap when thrown into the air by the latter, while he himself was passing at full speed; and won it. The produce of this skill made his house at Mill Grove resemble a museum. 'The chimneypiece of his room was covered with stuffed squirrels, racoons, and opossums, and the shelves around were likewise crowded with specimens, among which were fishes, frogs, snakes, lizards, and other reptiles. Besides these stuffed varieties, many paintings were arranged upon the walls, chiefly of birds. The walls, too, were festooned with all sorts of birds' eggs, carefully blown out, and strung upon a thread.' These palmy days, when work was not only pleasant to him, as it always continued to be, but the enjoyments of wealth were also within his reach, were nearly cut short by a curious incident, which certainly manifested that this young naturalist was not born to be drowned. 'Having engaged in some duck-shooting up the creek with young Bakewell and some young friends, it was found that the ice was full of dangerous air-holes. On our upward journey, it was easy to avoid accident; but the return trip was attended with an accident which had nearly closed my career; indeed, my escape was one of the inconceivable miracles that occasionally rescue a doomed man from his fate. The trip was extended too far, and night and darkness had set in long before we reached home. I led the party through the dusk with a white handkerchief made fast to a stick, and we proceeded like a flock of geese going to their feeding-ground. Watching for air-holes, I generally avoided them; but increasing our speed, I suddenly plunged into one, was carried for some distance by the stream under the ice, and stunned and choking, I was forced up through another air-hole farther down the stream. I clutched hold of the ice, and arrested my downward progress, until my companions arrived to help me.'

It was three months before the hero of this frightful adventure became himself again; but after that time he favours us with the following pen-and-ink sketch of his own personal appearance, which seems to have suffered no blemish: 'I measured five feet ten and a half inches, was of a fair mien, and quite a handsome figure; large, dark, and rather sunken eyes, light-coloured eyebrows, aquiline nose, and a fine set of teeth; hair, fine texture and luxuriant, divided and passing down behind each ear in luxuriant ringlets as far as the shoulders.' We cannot in this world expect everything, and it is scarcely a discredit to the possessor of such great natural advantages that he was not a good man of business, and indeed was so obviously ill adapted for the commercial calling, that we find him posting a letter containing eight thousand dollars without taking the precaution of reading it. When his father died, and matters fell entirely into his own hands, he began to suffer in pocket from this cause; and when his own speculations failed, he took to himself a partner, who completed his ruin. There

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were to be no more satin breeches nor ruffled shirts for Audubon; and unfortunately it was not himself alone who had to suffer; a wife and children now shared his misfortunes. These straits of the great naturalist are the more to be deplored, since in his case he did not need the spur of poverty to urge him on, while, on the other hand, they undoubtedly placed him more than once in a humiliating position. We shall see this man of genius coming, only too often, hat in hand (and with no great independence of manner either), to 'request the patronage' of very inferior folks indeed. A date is a very rare fruit in this biography, but Audubon must have been about forty years of age when poverty first fell upon him. In 1822 (when he was two-and-forty), he writes: 'I entered Louisville with but thirteen dollars in my pocket. I found my friends very cool, and my position very insecure. My son Victor I managed to get into the counting-house of a friend, and I engaged to paint the interior of a steamer.' A poor prospect enough; for already his wife had to live apart from him, since, for economical reasons, she had undertaken to be 'companion to a lady;' while he had himself, for two or three years, subsisted as a portrait-draughtsman, on very low wages indeed, though he possessed some skill, and succeeded so well in portraying the features of the dead, that a clergyman's child was exhumed, in order that he might take a likeness of the corpse. But the simple fact is, that even had his opportunities been greater, Audubon could never have prospered through any ordinary channels. As his biographer, Mr Robert Buchanan,* well remarks, 'he was ever a wanderer at heart, and shewed the weaker side of his nature whenever he shaped himself to civilised society.' He was a born gipsy, and ought never to have married at all; and it is painful to read of the continuous separation from his family—who seem to have dearly loved him—which poverty compelled.

Once in the woods, his natural high spirits assert themselves; and even in the cities, which his necessity causes him to visit, the voice of nature —'a flock of wild ducks overhead in London, a gathering of pigeons on the trees of Paris'—always makes him glad. There was never a more thorough naturalist by nature, if we may so speak, than Audubon. Even the eccentric Rafinesque, whose luggage was but a bundle of plants, and who could scarcely be induced to wash himself, was not his equal as an explorer.

Constant familiarity with the wilder aspects of nature seems, in some cases, to have somewhat blunted Audubon's perceptions of them, or at least in describing them he relates what is humorous rather than what is sublime. He was staying with a physician in a log-hut on the banks of the Mississippi, when he experienced his first earthquake. 'The earth waved like a field of corn before the breeze; the birds left their perches, and flew about not knowing whither; and the doctor, recollecting the danger of his gallipots, ran to his office, to prevent their dancing off the shelves to the floor. Never for a moment did he think of closing the doors, but, spreading his arms, jumped about the front of the cases, pushing back here and there the falling jars, but with so little success, that before the shock was over he had lost nearly all he possessed.'

In his description of a hurricane, he is more successful. He had been fishing for 'dew-fish'—creatures that weigh a hundred pounds apiece—off the coast of Florida, and was returning to land, when signs of the storm began to appear. The sun grew obscure with clouds, along which rolled vivid flashes of lightning, and a low murmuring noise possessed the air. 'We were not more than a cable's length from the shore, when with imperative voice the pilot calmly said to us: "Sit quite still, gentlemen, for I should not like to lose you overboard just now; the boat can't upset, my word for that, if you will but sit still: here we have it!" Reader, persons who have never witnessed a hurricane, such as not unfrequently desolates the sultry climates of the south, can scarcely form an idea of their terrific grandeur. One would think that, not content with laying waste all on land, it must needs sweep the waters of the shallows quite dry to quench its thirst. No respite for a moment does it afford to the objects within the reach of its furious current. Like the scythe of the destroying angel, it cuts everything by the roots, as it were, with the careless ease of the experienced mower. Each of its revolving sweeps collects a heap that might be likened to the full sheaf which the husbandman flings by his side. On it goes, with a wildness and fury that are indescribable; and when at last its frightful blasts have ceased, nature, weeping and disconsolate, is left bereaved of her beautiful offspring. In instances, even a full century is required before, with all her powerful energies, she can repair her loss. The planter has not only lost his mansion, his crops, and his flocks, but he has to clear his lands anew, covered and entangled as they are with the trunks and branches of trees, that are everywhere strewn. The bark overtaken by the storm is cast on the lee-shore, and if any are left to witness the fatal results, they are the "wreckers" alone, who, with inward delight, gaze upon the melancholy spectacle. Our light bark shivered like a leaf the instant the blast reached her sides. We thought she had gone over; but the next instant she was on the shore, and now, in contemplation of the sublime and awful storm, I gazed around me. The waters drifted like snow; the tough mangroves hid their tops amid their roots, and the loud roaring of the waves driven among them blended with the howl of the tempest. It was not rain that fell; the masses of water flew in a horizontal direction, and where a part of my body was exposed, I felt as if a smart blow had been given me on it.'

His account of the Great Pine Swamp, in Pennsylvania, is very picturesque, but too lengthy for extract. He dwelt in the heart of it for some time, accumulating specimens of birds, and was apparently never happier than beneath its solemn shade. Florida, too, was one of his most favourite hunting-grounds, with its long 'barrens,' diversified by 'hummocks' of live-oak. As the traveller approaches these dark oases, 'the air feels cooler and more salubrious, the song of numerous birds delights his ear, the herbage assumes a more luxurious appearance, the flowers become larger and brighter, and a grateful fragrance is diffused around. . . . . Overhead, festoons of innumerable vines, jessamines, and bignonias link each tree with those around it, their slender stems being

* *The Life and Adventures of John James Audubon, the Naturalist.* Edited, from Materials supplied by his Widow, by Robert Buchanan. Sampson Low, Son, and Marston.

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interlaced as if in mutual affection.' The existence of these 'hummocks'—often of vast extent—has evoked quite a peculiar race of beings—the woodcutters of Florida. They go to work without knowing whether the immediate object of their exertions will repay them or not. Even when the mighty trunk is prostrate, their labours may have been in vain. 'They cut at both extremities, and sound the whole of the bark, to enable them to judge if the tree has been attacked by white rot. If such has unfortunately been the case, there, for a century or more, this huge log will remain, till it gradually crumbles; but if not, and if it is free of injury or "wind-shakes," while there is no appearance of the sap having already ascended, and its pores are altogether sound, they proceed to take its measurement.' Many of these woodcutters inhabit lonely cabins, with their wives and children, and do not work in company. In this case, it is not uncommon for them to be Lost in the Woods; every tree in these vast hummocks is the counterpart of its fellow; the grass, where it has not been burned, is so tall that a man of ordinary stature cannot see over it, so that one must move with caution, lest the ill-defined trail should be deviated from. Moreover, at the season which best suits this sort of labour, heavy fogs come on, so as to limit the view to a few yards. One of the 'live-oakers' detailed to Audubon a terrible personal experience of this sort. He describes his horror when, upon the rising of the fog, he did not recognise a single object about him; how the gray trees spread their giant boughs over him, and the rank grass extended on all sides, and not a living creature crossed his path. 'The sun was now setting with a fiery aspect, and by degrees it sunk in its full circular form, as if giving warning of a sultry to-morrow. Myriads of insects, delighted at its departure, now filled the air on buzzing wings. Each piping frog arose from the muddy pool in which it had concealed itself, the squirrel retired to its hole, the crow to its roost, and, far above, the harsh croaking voice of the heron announced that, full of anxiety, it was wending its way to the miry interior of some distant swamp. Now the woods began to resound to the shrill cries of the owl and the breeze, as it swept among the columnar stems of the forest trees, laden with heavy and chilling dew. Alas! no moon, with her silvery light, shone on the dreary scene, and the *lost one*, wearied and vexed, laid himself down on the damp ground.' He wandered aimlessly about throughout the next day, and when night again approached, fatigue, anxiety, and hunger had almost driven him frantic. He knew that he must have walked more than fifty miles, and yet he had met with no drop of water to allay his burning thirst; yet, such was his hunger, that when, by God's special grace, as it seemed, he met a tortoise, which he knew if followed undisturbed, would lead him to water, he had not patience, but killed the creature with his axe, and satisfied both hunger and thirst at once—for a few hours. He also met with a racoon; but except for these, he had no food save cabbage-trees, frogs, and snakes. At last, after seven weeks of wandering, his clothes in tatters, his bright axe dimmed with rust, and his feeble frame but a skeleton covered with parchment, he laid himself down to die: in which miserable condition he was providentially discovered, eight-and-thirty miles from his own cabin.

Another interesting class of people among whom Audubon was thrown, in pursuit of science, was the lumberers of Maine, who at the approach of winter leave their homes, and march into the pine-forests with their oxen, to work and dwell for months. Their bodies swathed in flannel, their heads and brows covered by the skin of the racoon, their legs encased in moose-skin, and their feet thrust in broad moccasins, they stand hacking from dawn to eve at the majestic pines. These the oxen haul to the nearest frozen stream, till the ice becomes covered with the accumulating mass, when, their task thus completed, they wait for the breaking up of winter. The logs then swiftly reach the dams on the swollen streams, and throughout the summer continues the task of cutting them into boards. But sometimes the course of the stream is interrupted by narrow gorges. 'One of the latter is situated about half a mile above the mill-dam, and is so rocky and rugged in the bottom and sides as to preclude the possibility of the trees passing along it at low water, while, as I conceived, it would have given no slight labour to an army of woodsmen or millers to move the thousands of large logs that had accumulated in it. They lay piled in confused heaps to a great height along an extent of several hundred yards, and were in some places so close as to have formed a kind of dam. Above the gorge there is a large natural reservoir, in which the head waters of the creek settle, while only a small portion of these ripple through the gorge below, during the latter weeks of summer and in early autumn, when their streams are at the lowest. At the neck of this basin the lumberers raised a temporary barrier with the refuse of their sawn logs. The boards were planted nearly upright, and supported at their tops by a strong tree, extended from side to side of the creek, which might there be about forty feet in breadth. It was prevented from giving way under the pressure of the rising waters by having strong abutments of wood laid against its centre, while the ends of these abutments were secured by wedges, which could be knocked off when necessary. The temporary dam was now finished. Little or no water escaped through the barrier, and that in the creek above it rose in the course of three weeks to its top, which was about ten feet high, forming a sheet that extended upwards fully a mile from the dam. My family were invited early one morning to go and witness the extraordinary effect which would be produced by the breaking down of the barrier, and we all accompanied the lumberers to the place. Two of the men, on reaching it, threw off their jackets, tied handkerchiefs round their heads, and fastened to their bodies a long rope, the end of which was held by three or four others, who stood ready to drag their companions ashore, in case of dangers or accident. The two operators, each bearing an axe, walked along the abutments, and, at a given signal, knocked out the wedges. A second blow from each sent off the abutments themselves, and the men, leaping with extreme dexterity from one cross log to another, sprung to the shore with almost the quickness of thought. Scarcely had they effected their escape from the frightful peril that threatened them, when the mass of waters burst forth with a horrible uproar. All eyes were bent towards the huge heaps of logs in the gorge below. The tumultuous burst of the waters instantly swept away every object that

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opposed their progress, and rushed in foaming waves among the timber that everywhere blocked up the passage. Presently a slow heavy motion was perceived in the mass of logs; one might have imagined that some mighty monster lay convulsively writhing beneath them, struggling, with a fearful energy, to extricate himself from the crushing weight. As the waters rose, this movement increased; the mass of timber extended in all directions, appearing to become more and more entangled each moment; the logs bounced against each other, thrusting aside, submerging or raising into the air, those with which they came in contact. It seemed as if they were waging a war of destruction, such as the ancient authors describe the efforts of the Titans, the foaming of whose wrath might, to the eye of the painter, have been represented by the angry curlings of the waters; while the tremulous and rapid motions of the logs, which at times reared themselves almost perpendicularly, might by the poet have been taken for the shakings of the confounded and discomfited giants. Now the rushing element filled up the gorge to the brim. The logs, once under way, rolled, reared, tossed, and tumbled amid the foam, as they were carried along. Many of the smaller trees broke across; from others, great splinters were sent up, and all were in some degree seamed and scarred. Then, in tumultuous majesty, swept along the mangled wreck: the current being now increased to such a pitch, that the logs, as they were dashed against the rocky shores, resounded like the report of distant artillery, or the angry rumblings of the thunder.'

There is much temptation to give more such extracts: to select other vignettes from this collection of Pictures of Labour; to tell of Swan-lake, with its 'thousands of large and heavy swans,' whose skins go to the ladies of Europe, and where, 'though wild geese and ducks are so numerous, no one condescends to give them a shot;' of the rock off Labrador, apparently covered with snow two or three feet deep, which turns out to be white gannets—'birds in such a mass and of such a size as I never saw before, all calmly seated on their eggs with their heads to windward,' but who, when on the wing, cause a thick foggy atmosphere, like snow-flakes, all about the rock; and lastly, of the brutal 'eggers' of Labrador, who recklessly crush the chick within its shell as they trample over the nests of the unhappy birds, so that they spoil as much as they rob: but want of space forbids us to quote more. Let us briefly summarise the history of the publication of that colossal work, in the compilation of which Audubon spent his life. When not shooting birds, or drawing them, he is always like them upon the wing, crossing to England, to France, and back again in search of that very rare bird indeed—the Subscriber. The cost of his projected volume, which, however, was to appear in numbers, was not less than One Hundred Pounds. The size of the work was double-elephant folio, and the engravings represented the birds of America, as well as the objects by which they were surrounded, of *their natural size*. They were portrayed at their ordinary avocations, and placed on branches of trees decorated with foliage, blossoms, fruits, &c., while even the insects, reptiles, and fishes that constitute their food were accurately introduced. The plates were coloured in the most careful manner from Audubon's originals.

'Probably no other undertaking of Audubon's life illustrates the indomitable character of the man more fully than this. He was in a strange country, with no friends but those he had made within a few months, and not ready money enough in hand to bring out the first number proposed, and yet he entered confidently on this undertaking, which was to cost over a hundred thousand dollars, and with no pledge of help, but on the other hand discouragements on all sides, and from his best friends, of the hopelessness of such an undertaking.'

Audubon found himself at the verge of this great undertaking in London, with but one sovereign left in his pocket, and without a single friend to whom he could apply for more; yet he extricated himself from his difficulties by rising at four in the morning, working hard all day (with his pencil), and disposing of his works at a price which would scarcely have been thought remuneration by a common labourer. 'To give an idea of his actual difficulties during the publication of his first volume, it may be sufficient to say, that in the four years required to bring it out, no less than fifty of his subscribers, representing the sum of fifty-six thousand dollars, abandoned him.' But he was as 'pushing' as any bagman, and it must be owned did not lose a chance through any excess of diffidence. His vanity was something ludicrous. At Edinburgh, at that time not ill termed the modern Athens, he was exceedingly well received, which he attributes to two causes: first, to his personal beauty; secondly, to his acknowledged genius. 'I have taken to dressing again,' says he, 'and now dress twice a day, and wear silk stockings and pumps. I wear my hair as long as usual. *I believe it does as much for me as my paintings.*' Some judicious friends, however, persuaded him at last to appear a little more like other people, and his giving way to their request is thus narrated in his diary, with a great rim of black around the words, as though it were an Obituary: '*Edinburgh, March* 19, 1827.—This day my hair was sacrificed, and the will of God usurped by the wishes of Man. As the barber rapidly clipped my locks, it reminded me of the horrible times of the French revolution, when the same operation was performed upon all the victims murdered by the guillotine. My heart sank low. JOHN J. AUDUBON.'

It is impossible to deny that the great Naturalist was a sad tuft-hunter, even when his necessities did not require any social humiliation, and the most humorous thing in the book occurs in his wanderings about Labrador, where, at whatever out-of-the-way English settlement he is hospitably received, he leaves the inmates a copy of a letter about nothing particular which he once received from the Duke of Sussex. When George IV. sent to say he would take a copy of his work—'on the usual terms, not as kings generally do, but as a gentleman'—it is no such wonder, therefore, that he went into an ecstasy; but there was solid pudding in that act of patronage. In France, our author fared very ill. The price of his projected volumes terrified the Parisians, and he got only two subscribers, the Prince d'Essling and the Duke of Orleans, after weeks of importunity: whereas, in Manchester alone he had secured thirty names. [In London, by-the-bye, he had a curious interview with Rothschild, which, let us hope, for the credit of commerce, he has not drawn quite so faithfully as he drew his birds.] But, finally, the mammoth

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undertaking was introduced to the world, and made a profound sensation. Audubon had his reward at last, not only in material dollars, but in what he valued more, the admiration of his fellow-creatures. All that could perish of him expired January 7, 1851. His faults, which were on the surface of his character, will soon be forgotten; what he has done of good will long remain. His own great work is his monument, and renders epitaphs unnecessary. Still, we may well say, in farewell, with his biographer, 'Audubon was a man of genius, with the courage of a lion and the simplicity of a child.'

THE LAW OF INNS.

'SHALL I not take mine ease in mine inn?' Undoubtedly you may, under certain conditions, which, it must be confessed, are very much in your favour. Whether, as in Falstaff's case, you 'shall have your pocket picked' in consequence, depends very much on the sort of inn you enter, and the sort of company you keep. The regulations respecting inns, taverns, and alehouses are, some of them, very ancient, and it is obvious why they should be so. By the very nature of them, they must early have required the supervision of the magistrate. Wayfarers, men of passage, who were here to-day and gone to-morrow, were not unlikely, in rough days, to amuse or enrich themselves at the expense of those who were settled, or, as was done in many cases, at the expense of those who were in like condition with themselves, travellers. But besides this, there were other considerations which tended to bring houses of entertainment under rule. Before railways existed, and by their power of annihilating distance, brought all places within comparatively easy reach of each other, and so rendered people almost independent of lodgings during the continuance of their journey, every one who travelled, whether on public or private business, was necessarily dependent for the prosecution of his journey on the houses of entertainment which might happen to be on his road. Without some public regulation on the subject, the innkeeper might, as the saying is, 'cut his coat according to his cloth,' and raise his prices when a rich man came to him for lodging, and refuse a poor man entertainment, in hope that some better customer would come by that way. Indeed, he might have turned out the inferior guest, to make room for a superior; and might have acted towards his public guests precisely as a private man might, if he chose, behave towards his private ones, receive them or not, just as he pleased. Again—and there was ample opportunity—he might act in collusion with professional robbers and bandits to rob his guests, and under the cloak of privacy hide his iniquities, until some glaring deed revealed him. Under magisterial inspection, the risk of this was considerably lessened; and there were reasons of state policy, some of which will be set forth presently, why the innkeeper, taverner, and victualler should be treated as a public servant, responsible to certain laws, which the legislature decided should be rather in the interests of the public than of himself.

Distinction was formerly made between those who lodged as well as fed their guests, and those who only fed them; and there was even a further distinction between those who fed the servants and horses of their guests as well as the guests themselves, and those who simply provided food and lodging for the guests. The former of the last two named were called *hostelers*, and the latter *herbergeours*—at least in London, where the regulations respecting them were many and curious. The privilege of keeping such establishments seems mostly to have been restricted to freemen of the city; and even when foreigners were sometimes admitted to this favour, they were commanded to keep 'in the heart of the city,' and not to have houses on the banks of the Thames, which was a favourite place for inns and taverns. Down to the time of Edward III., there was a regulation that no hosteler or herbergeour in London should lodge a man for more than a day and a night, unless he would be responsible to the city for any offences the guest might commit. It was also the rule, at times when arms were not allowed to be worn in the city, as in the thirty-seventh year of Edward III., for the hostelers to take possession of the weapons of their guests until their departure. At other times, when the regulations were not so rigid, it was the duty of hostelers to warn their guests not to carry arms after curfew, nor to go wandering about the streets of the city. They were forbidden to retail food or drink to any but their customers, and to them they were allowed to charge twopence a gallon for ale, which cost them a penny or a penny and a half. They were also enjoined, by an order made in the time of Edward III., to sell oats and hay at reasonable rates; but as they disregarded this general order, a few years afterwards a city ordinance was passed forbidding a hosteler to take more than eightpence a bushel for oats, and twopence-halfpenny for a horse's hay for a day and a night. In the time of Henry IV., a night's lodging for a man cost a penny.

Taverners and alehouse-keepers, that is to say, sellers of wine and retailers of ale, were under other restrictions too numerous to be all set out here, but it may be mentioned that neither of them might keep their houses open after curfew, and they were bound to sell liquor in approved measures, and at a certain price, which was fixed from time to time by the city authorities. From the gable of wine-taverns projected poles supporting signs, or a bunch of leaves (hence the proverb, 'Good wine needs no bush'), which were frequently the subject of magisterial orders.

Complaints against the evils arising from the great number of alehouses, and from the acts of the men who frequented them, were repeatedly made in all sorts of forms; but little general notice was taken of them till the time of James I., though Edward VI. had passed an act—the first of the licensing acts—forbidding any one to keep an alehouse or wineshop without a licence.

It was probably due to the Puritan element in the first parliament of James I., an element which was just then beginning to make itself felt, in many things for good—that An Acte to restraine the inordinate Hauntinge and Tiplinge in Innes, Alehouses, and other Victualling Houses, was passed. The parliament being virtuous, resolved that if there were to be any 'more cakes and ale,' they should be enjoyed under certain restrictions. By the above-mentioned act, therefore, the good and the wrong use of inns was declared, and order was taken for securing the one and punishing the other. 'The ancient, true, and principal use of inns, alehouses, and victualling houses, was for the receipt,

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relief, and lodging of wayfaring people travelling from place to place, and for such supply of the wants of such people as are not able by greater quantities to make their provision of victuals, and not meant for entertainment and harbouring of lewd and idle people to spend and consume their money, and their time in lewd and drunken manner.' So much by way of declaration. The act then went on to forbid, under a penalty of ten shillings, to be forfeited by the innkeeper to the poor of the parish, any one, not a traveller, to 'remain and continue drinking or tippling' in the inn or alehouse, unless he were invited to do so by a traveller staying in the inn; or unless he were a day-labourer, when he might drink 'for one houre at dynner tyme;' or unless he were a labourer lodging in the house. It seems, however, that on 'urgent and necessary occasions,' to be approved by two justices of the peace, the law might be suspended, as it would be in case of public festivities, dinners, &c. This same act forbade an innkeeper or alehouse-keeper to sell 'lesse than one full quart of the best beere or ale for a penie.'

No punishment was provided by this statute for the tipplers themselves, the alehouse-keeper alone had to pay the forfeit; but three years later, it appearing that 'the loathsome and odious sin of drunkenness is of late grown into common use within this realm, being the root and foundation of many other enormous sins, as bloodshed, stabbing, murder, swearing, fornication, adultery, and such like, to the great dishonour of God and our nation, the overthrow of many good arts and manual trades, the disabling of divers workmen, and the general impoverishing of many good subjects, abusively wasting the good creatures of God'—the parliament imposed a fine of three shillings and fourpence, with an alternative of four hours in the stocks, upon all persons found tippling and boosing in alehouses. Upon persons convicted of drunkenness, a fine of five shillings was ordered to be inflicted, with an alternative of six hours in the stocks. This order is in force to this day. Further provisions for 'repressing of drunckennesse' were made by James I., including an order that innkeepers and taverners who permitted 'tippling' should, on conviction, not only be fined ten shillings, but be incapacitated from keeping an alehouse for three years.

Various laws in connection with licences have been passed under different reigns, the principal one in force now being one of George the Fourth's. Under this law, a publican, innkeeper, or victualling-house keeper must get a licence to sell excisable liquors from the commissioners of excise, and from the local magistrates; the licences are good for a year, and must be annually applied for at the General Annual Licensing Meetings of the magistrates, which are held throughout England by order of the act of parliament. Any complaints are heard at these sessions, and the magistrates have power to withhold or grant the licence, as they see fit. For the sale of beer, cider, and perry, in certain cases, a licence from the excise commissioners is all that is required, but the persons so licensed are under heavy penalties in case of misbehaviour, and are subject also to the supervision of the police. By an act of the present queen, it is forbidden to all vendors of beer, fermented or distilled liquors, to sell to any one, unless it be to travellers or to lodgers in the house, any liquors before 1 P.M., or between 3 and 5 P.M. on Sunday, Christmas Day, Good Friday, or any fast or thanksgiving day. The hour for closing on such days is 11 P.M. Public-houses must also be shut every day in the week between the hours of 1 and 4 A.M.; certain houses, however, are allowed to be open later, and some even all night, by special licence, for the accommodation of printers, marketers, and other persons whose business requires them to be working during 'the small hours.'

As a check upon 'tippling,' the older acts on the subject having gone into desuetude, it was provided by an act of George II., commonly called the 'Tippling Act,' that no action should be maintained for any *debt* on account of spirituous liquors, unless the debt were *bonâ fide* contracted at one time, to the amount of one pound and upwards. The intention of the legislature was to prevent scores being run up, and it was assumed to be impossible for any one at a sitting to drink a pound's worth of spirit. So much for public-houses and wineshops.

To return to the subject of inns, with which this article set out: it may be said that besides being under the necessity of procuring licences, if they sell liquors, innkeepers, whether teetotallers or not, are under the following obligations. They *must* receive, and lodge, and entertain a guest who applies for admission, if there be available accommodation for him in the hotel, unless there be some reason, good enough to convince a magistrate, that he ought not to be admitted. Formerly, they were forbidden to use plate, but the prohibitory act—one of William the Third's—was repealed by George III. Innkeepers are responsible for the property brought to their house by guests, and if it be lost or stolen, or destroyed, even by other guests, the landlord is responsible, and must make good the loss. Until quite lately, the liability of an innkeeper was unlimited in this respect, and he would be liable to replace money, jewels, or other things, however valuable, and of whatever amount. Now, the landlord is not bound to replace anything exceeding the value of thirty pounds, unless his guest have told him that his effects are worth more. This applies only to personal effects; and the landlord is bound, in order to get rid of his common-law liability, to have a printed copy of the clauses of the Relieving Act hung up in his hall. The landlord may also require his guest to deposit with him for safe keeping any valuable effects for which he is to be held liable. If a horse were stolen from the hotel stable, or injured in it, its owner, lodging in the hotel, would be able to sue the landlord. The object of the old law was to prevent complicity on the part of the landlord with thieves and robbers, to induce him to get honest servants, and to take the utmost care of the guests who, through force of circumstances, were obliged to intrust themselves and their property to him.

The protection which the law affords to innkeepers consists in a lien upon the goods of their guests. All the goods belonging to a traveller staying in the hotel can be seized in default of payment of the bill; and the only way in which the items and charges in the bill can be disputed is by allowing the goods to be seized, and then having the question raised in an action of debt by the landlord, or of trover by the guest whose goods are detained. It is not competent to a landlord,

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under any circumstances, to detain the person of his guest. An action of debt is the only means by which his claims can be satisfied, in the event of the property belonging to the guest in the hotel being insufficient to cover the expenses.

A PERFECT TREASURE.

CHAPTER XI.—THE BIRTH OF BRIGADOON.

THE appointed year passed by, and my novel was completed, revised, and corrected. The title of this work (more than which of it I do not intend to inflict upon the present public) was *Brigadoon*, a name which I flattered myself was original, and (it will be at least conceded) did not reveal too much of the nature of its contents. It was affectionately dedicated to Mrs Eleanor Blunt, but beyond that I was determined that she should have no connection with it; it was not to profit in any way by her influence, but stand or fall entirely on its own merits. I even declined to make use of her introduction to an eminent publisher, but sent him the precious manuscript myself, with a modest note. By return of post I received a civil reply, to say that *Brigadoon* had been received in safety, and would have the 'best attention' of the gentleman employed by Messrs Putforth in such cases; as though that great work were out of health, and needed medical advice. In about a fortnight I got the notes of its diagnosis—the 'Reader's' verdict. 'I have perused with great care, and very considerable interest, the manuscript entitled *Brigadoon*. It exhibits talent of no common order. Some scenes, especially that in which young Tarbarrel defies his grandmother, exhibit remarkable power; the humour is original and genuine; the pathos simple but touching.'

There were, in short, three pages of letter-paper, in a beautiful hand, eulogising my novel in this agreeable style; but the fourth page, like a lady's postscript, contained the pith of the matter. This complimentary gentleman therein expressed much regret that 'the present state of the book-trade, especially as respected novels,' prevented his being able to recommend Messrs Putforth to undertake the publication of the manuscript entitled *Brigadoon*.

I have no doubt the 'Reader' understood his business, and that this formula was the established one for rejection with the great house of Putforth. Perhaps it is even imagined that it 'lets down' an author easily, and makes him as content with a denial as the nature of things permits. But for my part, I would just as soon have been without this elaborate and ornate criticism, out of which came nothing at all.

Mrs Eleanor Blunt 'wobbled' not a little when she read it. 'Somewhere or other, I've got Messrs Putforth's verdict upon my own book—that which made my reputation, and Messrs Bindem's fortune. It is years ago now, but they build upon the same lines still.' She opened her great desk, and from one of its numberless pigeon-holes took out a bundle of faded letters. 'Ah, Marmy,' sighed she, 'what a history of a literary life might be compiled from what I shall leave behind me.—Here it is. No; that is one from the same firm soliciting the honour of "bringing out your next production;" a very different affair, indeed, of which I hope you will soon have an experience. Yes; this is it, with a frank in the corner: some connection of the house was an M.P. Old Putforth was himself alive at that time, and I have a very strong suspicion was his own Reader. Every publisher who is his own Reader, Marmy, has a fool to decide for him. Let us hear what he says: "I have perused with great care, and very considerable interest"'——

Here we both roared with laughter—indeed, we could scarcely get on with this remarkable document at all. It was almost a fac-simile of the letter I had myself received that morning, except that 'the scene in which young Tarbarrel defies his grandmother' was the scene between two other folks. In the fourth page, 'the present state of the book-trade, especially as regarded novels,' alone prevented the Messrs Putforth's undertaking the publication of the accompanying manuscript.

In spite of my disappointment, we had quite a merry afternoon over that letter. 'You see, my dear Marmy, you only suffer the common lot.'

'Or, rather, only like my betters,' said I smiling.

'Well, yes; my book was a better book by a long way than *Brigadoon*,' returned the old lady composedly. 'Still, yours has great promise, and they are wrong not to undertake it. We must strive to find wiser folks, Marmy—that's all. Perhaps we were wrong not to try one of the younger firms, which are always the more enterprising. You must not be cast down, even if you have many such denials. Remember Bruce and the spider; to which last genus it is said the publishers belong. Not, however, that I altogether endorse that statement. They do not always suck the blood of authors with impunity. I don't mean only because we generally disagree with them; they even lose money by us occasionally—they do indeed;' and the recollection, doubtless, of some transaction in which Mrs Eleanor Blunt had gotten the better of a publisher shook her plump frame.

Acting upon this experienced lady's advice, I sent *Brigadoon* to seek his fortunes elsewhere, and this not twice nor three times only. Never was the proverb, 'Better luck next time,' pushed to more extreme limits than in his case. 'The present state of the book-trade, especially as regarded novels,' was always the insuperable obstacle, like the black bar in Bradshaw, that prevented his arriving at publication. Once, indeed, in the case of Messrs Tyro and Tupkins, a firm justly celebrated for introducing young authors to the public, *Brigadoon* met with the most promising reception. Tyro liked him, and Tupkins was charmed with him. They even expressed their opinion that he would make a considerable sensation, and warmly undertook to bring him out. I was so delighted with their courteous epistle, that I honestly told them that money would be a secondary object with me, if the book should only appear in their

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forthcoming list of 'new works;' but at the same time, as I had expended more than a year's labour upon it, I should expect a small pecuniary compensation, the amount of which I left to themselves. In reply to this 'gushing' offer, Messrs Tyro and Tupkins presented me with their best compliments, and the information that they never published anything at their own expense, but would make their terms, in my particular case, a hundred guineas down, and a written guarantee for the disposal of a hundred copies.

So *Brigadoon* returned to me for the fifth time or so, still in manuscript, although by no means in the same state of virgin purity in which he had originally left Hershell Point—its blots picked out with a penknife, its stains cleaned by india-rubber, and stitched together with the ribbon by the fair hands of Rosa herself. *Brigadoon* was now dog's-eared and dirty, and presented to the experienced eye most undoubted evidence of his having been a rejected manuscript. Yet, strange to say, with appearances thus against him, and when his parent himself had almost given up the hope of witnessing his début, a publisher was at last discovered. I have beheld many gentlemen of that profession since (some of whom I am proud to call my friends) —wise-eyed, benevolent-mouthed, and altogether prepossessing—but I never met with one who looked so like an angel as *at that time* Mr Percival Swete appeared in my eyes. Perhaps I should scarcely have believed in his existence had I not seen him in the flesh, which came about in the following fashion.

He had received poor *Brigadoon* in the usual course, and written to say that he approved of him; and with regard to business arrangements, as nothing was like a personal interview, and as he happened to have business down at Daisyport, which it seemed was my post-town, perhaps I would have the goodness to do him the favour of coming over on a certain day, and taking a chop with him at the *Bear and Pineapple*, when we could talk the affair over. The tone of his communication —so frank, so friendly, so different from anything I had hitherto experienced—took my heart by storm, and I accepted his invitation with rapture. My uncle gave me leave to try and persuade Mr Swete to visit 'the Point,' 'for,' said he, 'a man who writes like that must be a genial fellow.' I felt quite indignant with Mrs Eleanor Blunt for not coinciding in this rose-coloured view of my new correspondent. Mr Swete, said she drily, had not the best of reputations in the Row, and for her part she did not admire his plan of 'talking the affair over' with a young gentleman of eighteen. She hinted, in fact, that this was synonymous with talking *me* over, and exacted a promise that whatever agreement he should come to, should be expressed in writing. Whatever suspicion she contrived to arouse in my confiding bosom was, however, at once set at rest when I beheld Mr Swete himself. Instead of the bald-headed, benevolent man of substance I had pictured to myself, fifty years of age at least, and of ample girth, I found a young fellow, only ten years my senior, tall and slim, with a tawny moustache, and an impulsive, not to say off-hand manner.

'I like *Brigadoon*,' said he, after we had dined together; 'and I like you, Mr Drake. This interview is more satisfactory to me, and I hope to us both, than any amount of correspondence. We know one another now, and can trust one another. I will put your book at once in the hands of my printers, and you shall correct the proof-sheets; there will doubtless be a few amendments, but you will find my people very accurate in their work.'

Mr Percival Swete had made such constant reference to his 'people' during our brief interview, that I felt convinced he employed quite an army of subordinates, that his establishment was on a vast scale, and his publishing business—which he called his 'operations'—gigantic. A hundred pounds more or less would certainly be nothing to a person of his wealth; but still he had not even hinted at the price which he was willing to pay for *Brigadoon;* and I felt a delicacy in alluding to money-matters. On the other hand, I was bound to perform my promise to Mrs Blunt. 'With regard to the—the pecuniary remuneration,' said I hesitatingly. I had hoped Mr Swete would help me out here, but he only puffed vigorously at his cigar, so that I could scarcely see him through the clouds of tobacco-smoke. 'I should be content,' continued I, 'with a very modest sum. Still, I have worked hard at the novel; and'——

'Just so, Mr Drake,' interrupted my companion with a pleasant smile: 'the labourer is worthy of his hire. But in the case of an unknown author like yourself, the profits of a novel are so ridiculously small. In point of fact, I only undertake *Brigadoon* in the hope of securing your second attempt to achieve a reputation: I look to the promise rather than to the performance. I do not myself expect any immediate pecuniary return whatever.—You cannot be induced to take a cigar? Well, that taste will come in time; at all events, take a little more claret.'

'If it were only ten pounds,' observed I in desperation, for I felt that the subject was growing more delicate every moment, 'I should be quite content even with that.'

'My dear Mr Drake, you shall have your ten pounds with all my heart.'

I really felt quite ashamed at having begun to entertain a suspicion of Mr Percival Swete—ashamed, too, at having demanded a sum of money so extremely small that this millionaire had been unable, in mentioning it, to repress a contemptuous smile. I felt like a beggar to whom some great man was about to carelessly chuck a copper.

Mr Swete made no objection, although he looked rather astonished when I pulled out of my pocket a stamped document, with which Mrs Eleanor Blunt had furnished me, and requested (after filling in the space left blank for the amount with the words *Ten Pounds*) that he would subscribe his name to it. It was my assignment of the copyright of *Brigadoon* (to which, at Mr Swete's instigation, I added a statement that the work was original) for that very insignificant sum; though future events compel me in justice to add that I honestly believe he would have consented to have made that ten pounds fifty. However, I must not anticipate. We parted upon the present occasion with many avowals of mutual esteem; and although I could not persuade my new acquaintance to visit Hershell Point, he promised faithfully that he should keep that invitation in mind. It was not often, he assured me, that he commenced a professional connection with so strong a sense of personal interest as in my case. And under these happy auspices, and the superintendence of Mr Percival Swete's 'people,' *Brigadoon* was born.

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CHAPTER XII.—BRIGADOON'S TROUBLES.

There is nothing, perhaps, more agreeable to a man's vanity than the revision of the proof-sheets of his first book. Print, like colour, flatters. Every idea, every description, every phrase appears in type to better advantage than in mere manuscript, though one's handwriting be ever so good and distinct. The reflection, too, that now, at last, these pregnant thoughts of ours are about to wing their way more or less throughout our favoured country, lighting the face of beauty with smiles, and drawing tears down the parchment cheeks of hardened attorneys, is a pleasant notion to entertain; and even if a little exaggerated, it hurts nobody. In sober seriousness, it is a very important matter; for the man who has once obtained publication for what he has to say, has got all that any man has a right to expect, namely, a fair hearing. He has voluntarily put himself upon his trial, and the public are his judges. Those advocates for or against him, the reviewers, may say what they please (and some of them make themselves dreadfully unpleasant); but even though they may obtain a verdict from their readers, the jury, it is sure, sooner or later, to be set aside by the bench, if it has been given against evidence. As a general rule, however, the judges and the jury are agreed. We may have retained (although that, by the by, is not very easy) the most eminent counsel for our defence, but the truth will come out in spite of him, and if we deserve it, we shall be condemned. Whether we are so or not, it is a most frightful thing for the gentleman in the dock to listen to the speeches for the prosecution. Never shall I forget the reading of those respectable periodicals which took unfavourable views of *Brigadoon!* If a disagreeable critique should befall me now, I should be able, to my own satisfaction at least, to lay my finger on the individual scoundrel who wrote it—actuated by the meanest of feelings, retaliation; but at that time, as I had certainly not a personal enemy in the world, with the exception of Sangaree Tannajee (whom I did not suspect of being a reviewer), I was debarred from ascribing these attacks to private malice. The effect of this course of study was something similar to lying in an ant's nest without one's clothes, nay, without one's skin. The only mitigation of my sufferings was procured from the application of the favourable notices, which were unhappily not so numerous. It was also a charm to place the three volumes of *Brigadoon* before me, and contemplate them in silence. While engaged in this agreeable occupation one day, it suddenly struck me that that ten pounds owed to me by Mr Percival Swete would be also a balm if I could get it. That enterprising publisher was perhaps of so delicate a disposition that he disliked to mention money-matters, but still it had been understood between us that that little sum was to be paid upon the birthday of *Brigadoon*.

I had a particular need for it—namely, to purchase a comfortable arm-chair for my uncle's bedroom; for, notwithstanding his feeble health, he would not allow himself any luxury of this kind; and I had looked forward in vain for some months to the pleasure of presenting it to him. So I wrote a few friendly lines to Mr Swete, to remind him, in a graceful way, that doubtless amid the pressure of his various gigantic operations, this little matter of the ten pounds had been overlooked.

In course of post, I received a well-filled envelope, which I concluded without doubt contained the cheque for the money, or perhaps two five-pound notes; instead of this, it contained two letters, one on perfumed note-paper, from Mr Percival Swete, and one on foolscap, and presenting a menacing aspect, from a stranger.

'MY DEAR MR DRAKE,' ran the former—'a very distressing affair to me (because I am sure it will distress *you*) has just occurred: you have, it seems (no doubt undesignedly) appropriated what the law considers to be as much another man's own property as his horse and gig—that is, the registered title of a literary work. Mr Snow Skinner (a most worthy person, I am bound to say) has, it seems, already published a novel entitled *Brigadoon*, and he considers, with some justice, that you have been guilty of a piratical act. With less reason, he is obstinately convinced that you have *intentionally* traded upon the success of his production (of the existence of which, by the by, I, like yourself, was profoundly ignorant), and he breathes slaughter and vengeance against you. What he threatens, as you observe, is an injunction in Chancery; a process which, if obtained, will not only prevent my selling another copy of your work, but will compel me to account to him for every copy sold. This, of course, is not my affair at all, since I hold a statement in your own hand that your work is *in all respects* original; but it annoys me upon your account exceedingly—not to mention that it is most disagreeable for a person of my position to be mixed up with the least suspicion of anything discreditable. My advice to you is, to compound the matter with all speed, since one never knows where law-expenses will end. I am bound to say that the sum which Mr Snow Skinner names as a discharge of the whole matter, and which will reinstate *Brigadoon* in the position of an original work as much as if this had never occurred, seems to me by no means unreasonable.—The weather is abominable in London, and I envy you the sea-breezes and clear air of Hershell Point above all things; but, alas, I am tied here by a variety of Immense Transactions, and cannot promise myself a holiday for months to come.—Always yours most faithfully, my dear Mr Drake, PERCIVAL SWETE.'

I felt like one in a nightmare as I took up the second letter, and I had to read its contents twice over before I could bring my mind to bear upon it. It set forth in legal language the charge of literary piracy which Mr Swete had described, and announced that the application for an injunction would at once be made to Chancery, unless a compensation should be offered by the offender of not less than two hundred and fifty pounds.

In my ignorance of all legal affairs, it seemed to me as if a criminal prosecution was impending, and that shame as well as something like ruin awaited me; for as to this 'by no means unreasonable' demand of two hundred and fifty pounds, how was it possible for me to get it paid, unless I should persuade this Mr Snow Skinner to accept my literary services for life as a discharge of the obligation, which was far from likely, judging from the assets which my talents had hitherto realised. Mr Percival Swete, by the by, had made no mention of that miserable ten pounds upon the *per contra* side of the account; but this was scarcely to be wondered at. Doubtless, Mr Snow Skinner would impound that little sum, to begin with,

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before consigning me to a debtors' jail; for I would certainly go to jail, rather than permit my uncle to pay this money out of his already crippled resources. I did not dare, freighted with this evil news, to meet his kind worn face, but snatched up my hat, and set off at a sharp run towards Sandiford, with the intention of consulting Mrs Blunt, who, I now remembered, had always been opposed to my having any business connection with Mr Percival Swete. A suspicion of that agreeable gentleman's probity had now awakened in my own trustful bosom.

As I flew up the second zigzag, I met Rosa Glendell descending it. There was no possibility of my avoiding her, or I would have done so. She had never seen me otherwise than radiant with the hope which she herself inspired, and I was afraid that I should not now be able to hide my misery. 'My dear Marmy,' cried she with agitation, 'what *has* happened?'

'Nothing at all,' said I; 'I was only starting for Seaview Cottage. I have had a letter about *Brigadoon;* it is no great matter, but I wanted Mrs Blunt to advise me.'

'How thankful I am, Marmy! I thought, from your running out of the house at that speed—for I have watched you all the way—that something my father once told me about your dear uncle—— But there, it's not so; and yet you look so wild, Marmy, yes, and under that forced smile so sad. Is that letter really of no consequence?—only one of those detestable reviews which you persist in reading, although you know the bad effect they have upon you?'

'It's not a review, Rosa—it's something on business, which you would not understand;' and I strove to pass by her on my way.

But her light touch was on my arm, and her low sweet voice—a charm that I could not resist—whispered reproachfully: 'Marmy!'

'Well, dear?' said I.

'It is not well, Marmy, to evade me thus, when trouble is on your mind. If I cannot understand the nature of this misfortune, I at least can sympathise with it. When you have had good news, you have always shared it with me; and now that you have a sorrow, am I not worthy to bear half the burden? If not, truly you did right to absolve me from my promise to marry you, for you must have judged I would make but a fair-weather wife indeed.'

'Dearest Rosa,' said I, 'I desired to save you from the knowledge of this trouble as long as I could; but you shall read these letters, since you wish it;' and I gave them into her hand.

It did not tremble as mine had done when she had read them; and in place of being cast down, a bright light shone in her eyes, an assuring smile sat on her lips. 'It is only two hundred and fifty pounds at most, then, that we have to pay.'

'Only two hundred and fifty pounds!' rejoined I bitterly. 'You might as well say only two thousand five hundred, Rosa; my uncle could almost as easily pay one sum as the other; and when I come to tell him'——

'Which you must never do,' interrupted Rosa earnestly. 'Bad news, my father says, might kill him on the spot, Marmy; or at least,' added she, perceiving the agitation into which her words had thrown me, 'would do him grievous harm. There is, it seems, some complication in his malady—the heart is affected as well as the lungs; though, if nothing sudden or disastrous should occur, he may yet be spared to us for many years.'

'O Rosa, Rosa,' cried I reproachfully, 'why have you, you who talk of sharing sorrows, kept this from *me?*'

'Because it was my father's secret, Marmy, and not my own. If it had been better you should know it, he would have told you himself. It was a doctor's matter, with which I dared not meddle. But how glad and thankful I am that in your ignorance you did not inform your uncle of this claim, but resolved to consult Mrs Blunt first—although, you naughty boy, you ought to have thought first of me.'

'Alas, dear,' said I, 'it is but of little consequence; my uncle must needs know it sooner or later, for he will have to find the money.'

'He will have to do nothing of the kind, Marmy,' answered Rosa decisively, 'for I'll lend it you myself.—What! you think I have not got it? But I beg to say I have, sir. If you have fallen in love with a young person without due inquiry into her circumstances, that shews how imprudent you are, although it is true it acquits you of having mercenary views. You have chanced unaware, sir, upon an heiress' (and I am sure if she had been a real one she could not have looked more pleased). 'I have three hundred pounds or so, all my own, which I became possessed of on my eighteenth birthday. An admirable godmother, of whom, however, I have not the slightest recollection, left me one hundred and fifty pounds when I was an infant in arms, to accumulate. And it has accumulated, dear Marmy, and oh! I am so glad to—to—have the opportunity of becoming your creditor. I am quite sure papa will consent, and then your dear good uncle need never know anything about the matter. You see it will be quite a business transaction,' continued she with gravity, 'and I shall only invest the money in you, as it were, and exact interest at quarter-days, or whatever they are called.'

I daresay it was wrong, but I was a child of impulse, and I could not prevent myself from clasping this charming creditor to my heart, and giving her a kiss, by way of interest in advance.

'That will do, Marmy,' said Rosa, disengaging herself demurely; 'and I only forgive you, sir, because I conclude that such is your way of sealing a bargain, although I doubt whether it's usual in the city.'

'No, my dearest Rosa,' said I gravely; 'it is *not* a bargain; I could not possibly take your money, although I love you more than ever.' She looked so pained and grieved, that instead of thanking her, as she seemed afraid I was about to do, I added smiling: 'O yes, a great deal more, now that I know you are an heiress. But what would Mrs Blunt say, when she came to hear that I begin to be independent, and to shew myself capable of maintaining a wife, as well as myself, by borrowing money of *you?*'

'That is so like an Englishman,' said Rosa scornfully; and it was the first time and the last that I ever knew her voice to have a bitter tone. 'You are so proud, that you would die sooner than incur an obligation (as you call it, I suppose) which involves pounds, shillings, and pence, from a woman. I tell you that I see neither nobility nor spirit in such conduct, Marmy, but only a cowardly fear of your Mrs Grundy.'

'That is not spoken like yourself, dear Rosa,'

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said I tenderly; 'though it's true I do fear Mrs Grundy in a matter like this, wherein you are concerned as well as I.'

'And do you not fear to risk the life of your uncle? If you have no love for me, you will have some consideration for him, I conclude.—There, you see I am right, Marmy. I was only angry because I could not persuade you: you forgive me, don't you?'

'Yes, I forgive you, dearest; but I must take time to think about this, and must ask advice from those who are wiser, who are not all mere goodness, where money is concerned, as you are;' and so, having kissed away my Rosa's tears, and comforted her all I could, I went upon my way to Sandiford.

Mrs Blunt received the terrible intelligence I had to give her with astonishment, tempered by philosophy.

'I thought I had lived too long in the world, my dear, to be surprised at anything; but really your friend, Mr Percival Swete, is a scoundrel without a parallel.'

'You think, then, the claim which he recommends me to satisfy is not altogether a *bonâ-fide* one?'

'I am perfectly certain, Marmy, that it is a gigantic swindle; but the question is, how far the law encourages it. I have no doubt there is some trashy book in existence of the same name as your novel, and I have a shrewd suspicion that that very circumstance was what made Mr Swete so anxious to publish *Brigadoon* for *you*. He had this scheme of extortion in his mind from the first moment you offered him your novel. He came down to Daisyport, and gave you that nice little dinner with the object of finding out certain matters which he could not discover by letter: whether you were as young and inexperienced as you represented yourself to be, and particularly whether you, or rather your friends, had any money. He satisfied himself on the first point easily enough, and your uncle's invitation perhaps made him believe that he was a person of substance. Doubtless, too, you did not give him to understand that the ex-maharajah was otherwise than a country gentleman living on his own estate.'

I coloured to the roots of my hair, for I certainly remembered to have made the best of Hershell Point (as some set-off against his 'people' and the gigantic character of his 'operations'), when speaking of that residence to Mr Percival Swete.

'Yes,' continued the old lady thoughtfully, 'the whole affair is what these thieves would call in their own dialect "a plant." Of course there are numberless rogueries in literature, as in everything else, Marmy, but to Mr Swete belongs the credit of having invented a new one. It did puzzle me a good deal to hear of his readiness to sign that agreement, but now it's all explained. He might have promised to pay you a hundred pounds quite safely, since he had only to add it to this present claim to recoup himself.'

'Such dishonesty cannot surely prosper,' said I, driven by the thought of this perfidy to platitude and proverb. 'I should not be the least surprised to hear some day of his being bankrupt.'

'*No more* should I,' observed Mrs Blunt drily: 'it would not be the first time nor the second that Mr Swete has experienced that calamity. But, upon my life, it is infamous,' cried the old lady indignantly, 'to trade upon the innocence of a lad like this; and if my Mr Moulden can give him a rap over the knuckles, he shall have it.'

'My Mr Moulden' was one of those pet lawyers which (as well as a pet doctor) every literary person of eminence always possesses, and Mrs Eleanor Blunt had the utmost confidence in his sagacity and discretion. She wrote to him, accordingly, by that day's post; and bade me take no steps at present (which was easy enough), and not to trouble myself in the meantime about the matter—which was very difficult. Under these circumstances, and partly, perhaps, because of that pride of which Rosa had accused me, I made no mention of my darling's offer to give up her little all to feed the maw of that worthy man, Mr Snow Skinner.

A MODERN ALPHABET INVENTOR.

A FEW months back a paragraph in the *New York Tribune* stated that a literary relic had been sold in that city for the sum of eleven hundred and thirty dollars—the highest price any book has fetched in that country. It was a copy of Eliot's *Indian Bible*, a book that no man living can read. Eliot was a Puritan Englishman, who emigrated to New England on account of his religious opinions, and died at Roxbury, where a handsome memorial was erected to his memory by his admirers.

This brought to my recollection the labours of another ingenious mind, known by the name of George Guess among the people of the United States. He was an Indian, and his name See-quo-lah. If ever a record of patient industry, untiring perseverance, and natural ingenuity deserves record, it is this. Eliot's Bible was in Mohegan, with the usual Roman letters, with different signs to denote the different inflections of sounds. But See-quo-lah invented an alphabet for the use of his tribe. His idea originated in the early French and Indian wars. The Cherokees had a white prisoner on whose person they found a letter; to satisfy his capturers, the prisoner had to read it for their edification. But of course the tenor of his reading differed greatly from what he pretended to read from. The 'talking leaf' had ever been a mystery to these untutored minds of the prairie. They had long considered it a gift of the Great Spirit, and held it in great veneration. But See-quo-lah, then a youth, knew better; he maintained that it was purely man's invention, and the desire to have a written alphabet for his tribe possessed him. For a long time the idea lay dormant, the migrations of the tribe or their predatory excursions left him no leisure. But lamed, and as it proved, for life, the long hours of his forced imprisonment brought forth the old idea. His first attempt was to gather all the sounds of the Cherokee tongue; but the result was far from encouraging. He collected above two hundred. His next difficulty was to place a sign as equivalent to a sound. Like the old Egyptians, and probably like the first alphabet inventors, whoever they may be, he made use of hieroglyphics. He embodied pictures of birds, beasts, &c. which approximated with the sounds, and served best as a representation. But the mind, before it could realise such a category, would require an immense amount of training. He looked over the extensive

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list with some dismay, and endeavoured to modify it. He was successful enough to abbreviate it to eighty-six. He was able to accomplish this, because in Cherokee all syllables have a vowel ending. An enumeration and classification of these syllables made, and a sign for each would complete it. Thus there needed no distinction between vowels and consonants. A rather unwieldy affair, no doubt; but when the system was learned, easier to spell by, than by using Eliot's method. The longest word of this system contains but fourteen signs or syllables, while the longest words of Eliot's have often over thirty.

It took the ancient world ages before it could entirely discard the picture-signs for letters. The idea of simple letters stole on imperceptibly, and is enveloped in inexplicable mystery. But this poor Indian at one stroke discarded his picture-signs, and invented an alphabet almost as commodious as those of European nations. His next difficulty was to make so many signs dissimilar to each other. Perhaps he might have seen some English printed matter, for some of his signs greatly resemble our letters. The figure 4 is prominently used. Some signs are like Greek or Asiatic letters, others like Slavonian. But they have a far different sound from their prototypes, if such they were. The sign S sounds like *thu*, M like *lu*, and the rest are equally different. But most of them are pure inventions. All are used over again in different postures, so to speak—distorted, inverted, or abbreviated.

His pen was a nail; he wrote on bark. Eventually (about 1825) he obtained a pen and some paper from one of those frontier traders, but the pen was carefully preserved as a guide to manufacture others by. His ink he made himself from barks. His first pupil was his daughter.

But, like Roger Bacon, Gutenberg, Galileo, and others, his neighbours suspected him of practising the black art. Doubtless he seldom left his hut; his mind being in his work, his time would be taken up with it. His tribe shunned him; but his inoffensive, as well as his pitiable condition preserved him from any dire consequences. He was told that they would see the fruits of his labours before they judged too harshly. The following year he brought his invention before the sachems of the tribe, causing his daughter to write from his dictation in an adjoining apartment, and *vice versâ*. The tribe were astonished; and after a little wavering, and his assurance of using no supernatural powers, they allowed him to instruct some of the youths of the tribe. After several months' interval, the youths were brought forward, and, amid great popular excitement, were tested and examined in as many ingenious ways as the cunning Indians could suggest; but the youths proved themselves masters of the new art.

His discovery led to the printing of the New Testament in the Cherokee language: in 1825, the United States cast a fount of type from his invention, and even printed a newspaper from it (*The Phœnix*). The capitals differ from the small letters only in being made a little larger. The missionaries brought in the use of Arabic numerals, although See-quo-lah had invented numerals to correspond.

He afterwards expressed his regret that his invention should have been promoted to undermine the principles of his Indian religion. He never became a Christian. When his tribe were obliged to move out of Georgia, he accompanied them to their new home in Arkansas. We next hear of him in Northern Mexico, and then at San Francisco, where he died at the age of seventy-eight, in August 1843.

THE SECRET IN THE AIR.

Not a leaf is on the beech, not a blossom on the elm;
And all the green is in the grass and in the velvet moss;
For the hues of livid purple e'en the ivies overwhelm,
And the willows that are first brown and barren branches toss.

But a secret in the smiling air, whose breezes come and go,
Doing service unproclaimed upon the hill and in the vale,
And the gaiety and force that are beating to and fro
In the swarms of little winglets, seem to hint a pleasant tale.

Yes, the flowers under earth, and the leaves within the bud,
Must be waiting for the promised change of sunny life to come;
Must be waiting like the children that with spirits on the flood
Are all eager for the mystery that gathers them at home.

The clouds have covered heaven, but they cannot shed a gloom,
Though not a ray of shining gold doth slant upon the earth;
And the air is more transparent, and they wear a whiter bloom,
And everywhere, but half-suppressed, there lurks a well of mirth.

The branch hath ta'en a softer brown, the bud a richer black,
The note of birds is rounding into sweeter swell and power,
Earth and Heaven both are listening to far steps upon the track
That leadeth toward their winter-withered, leaf-abandoned bower.

And lo! a joyous leaping in the rosy springs of life,
And the South's caressing kisses on the cheek, and eye, and brow,
And the ankle as if winged, and the limb with vigour rife,
Make the bosom light with pleasure that the Spring is coming now!

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CO-OPERATIVE AGRICULTURAL SOCIETIES.

IT is a common belief that the successful enterprise of the 'Rochdale Pioneers' was the first practical embodiment of the co-operative principle in England. It seems, however, from the Report of the Rev. James Fraser, one of the assistant-commissioners in the inquiry now being made into the employment of women and children in agriculture, that this is not really the case. So far back, it would appear, as the year 1830—that is, fourteen years before the commencement of the Rochdale scheme—the idea occurred to a Suffolk gentleman, Mr Gurdon, of Assington Hall, to try whether the principle of copartnership could not be successfully applied in the cultivation of a farm. He therefore selected a piece of his own land, of about sixty acres in extent, of average quality, and at once formed his small band of co-operators. He selected the first members of his Assington Co-operative Agricultural Society—fifteen in number—exclusively from the class of agricultural labourers. Each of them put L.3 into the undertaking by way of 'subscribed capital;' and in order to enable the company to stock their farm, Mr Gurdon lent them the sum of L.400 without interest. The undertaking has prospered greatly ever since its commencement. The shares are now of the value of L.50. The loan of L.400 has been repaid. The number of acres in occupation by the Society has been increased from sixty to one hundred and thirty, and the shareholders from fifteen to twenty-one.

The dividends of the Society—like those of more pretentious companies—have fluctuated since its establishment, but every year there has been some profit to divide. In addition to the repayment of the loan of L.400, the company have stocked their farm with six horses, four cows, one hundred and ten sheep, and from thirty to forty pigs—all which are their own property. The land is farmed by five men, and two or three boys. When a member works upon the farm, he is paid wages at the same rate as those which would be paid to an ordinary labourer. A committee of four are charged with the management of the farm—two of whom retire each year. The practical direction of the farm, however, is in the hands of the farm-bailiff, who is himself a co-operator, but he receives wages from the company in the same way as any other labourer would do. No member is allowed more than one share in the Society, and only labourers of the parish are allowed to hold shares. If a man, therefore, goes to reside more than three miles from Assington, he is obliged to dispose of his share. When a new member is admitted into the Society, he pays down L.5 as a deposit for his share, and the remainder of the current value by instalments. The premises are kept in repair by the tenants, are insured for L.500, and every twelve years are revalued. A member who may need it, can have a loan advanced to him up to one half of the current value of his share—a privilege which has, however, been rarely used. All the voting in this Society, it is interesting to notice, is by ballot.

After twenty-four years of trial, Mr Gurdon's first experiment had succeeded so well that he was encouraged to try a second one. In 1854, he therefore commenced the 'Assington Co-operative Agricultural *Association*.' This enterprise began with seventy acres of land, and thirty-six members—each subscribing L.3, 10s. by way of 'paid-up capital.' Mr Gurdon again shewed his liberality by lending to the new Association the sum of L.400 without interest. During the fourteen years which have now elapsed since the establishment of this second Co-operative Society, it has prospered so much that its members have been enabled to repay the loan of L.400 to Mr Gurdon, and have also taken in additional land, and stocked it. They now occupy two hundred and twelve acres, at a yearly rent of L.325. They are quite out of debt, and the stock of the farm (which is entirely their own property) is valued at L.1200. The original shares of L.3, 10s. now sell freely for L.30. In consequence of the profits of the Society having been

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devoted to the repayment of the loan of L.400, and to the taking in and stocking of so much additional land, the surplus which has actually been divided amongst the members has not been large, but it will readily be seen that the prospects of this Association give promise of a very successful future. These two societies are not yet incorporated, but they intend to become so. It will be observed that the only exceptional privilege which these Assington societies have enjoyed has been that of the loan, *without interest*, of the money wherewith they were enabled to stock their farms, and in both cases this loan has been paid back. In the case of the second Society, the members are not restricted to the class of agricultural labourers. As a matter of fact, however, all but six are taken from that class—the employments of the six excepted ones being one miller, one blacksmith, one shoemaker, one wheelwright, and two joiners. The advantages of societies like these at Assington in inducing provident habits amongst agricultural labourers, in decreasing pauperism, and in giving their members an interest in the soil, and through it, an interest in their common country, are obvious. The only valid objection to them is that, if they were established generally throughout the country, they might tend to the extinction of the small tenant-farmers. The same objection is, of course, urged against co-operative stores in towns—namely, that *they* tend to sweep the small shopkeeper from off the face of the earth. It is very doubtful, however, whether the co-operative principle will ever be so widely acted upon as to lead to these results.

The successful results of the co-operative principle, as applied to farming in Assington, led to the establishment there in the year 1863 of a rural co-operative store. It is called the 'Assington Industrial and Provident Society,' and originally started with thirty-six members, but it now numbers eighty-eight. The shares are of the value of L.1, and each member is expected to hold five. Interest at the rate of five per cent. is allowed to each shareholder on his capital, and the balance of profit is divided amongst the members who are purchasers, in proportion to the amount of their purchases. The amount of members' purchases in the September quarter, 1867, was L.660, and of non-members, L.45. Credit is not given to non-members, nor to members beyond the value of their shares. If, at a division of profits, a member does not choose to take his share in money, he can have it added to the amount of his capital. The average dividend last year on the amount of purchases was at the rate of about 5½ per cent. per annum. The establishment consists of a manager, his wife, and a shopman, who receive weekly salaries of 14s., 3s., and 8s. respectively. The store is managed by a committee of shareholders, is registered, and is conducted under a code of rules which has the sanction of the Registrar of Friendly Societies in England.

Upwards of sixty of the shareholders are agricultural labourers, and they have—the manager of the store testifies—'been very much bettered in their condition thereby.' Many of them say that they 'have no call to look after their rent now,' as its amount is almost made up out of their dividend on capital and purchases.

Another rural co-operative store flourishes in the village of Tortworth, in Gloucestershire, under the auspices of Lord Ducie. That nobleman has himself described the success which the Tortworth experiment has met with in a very able letter which appeared in the *Times* of April 9, 1868. It appears, from that communication, that in March 1867, about twenty of the most intelligent men in Lord Ducie's employment met and agreed to attempt a co-operative store for groceries. Nearly L.50 was subscribed by them on the spot as share capital, and a committee was elected. Suitable accommodation was easily provided, rough shop-fittings were extemporised, stores were purchased, and in a few days sales were begun. Ready-money payment was enforced from the first commencement of the store. The committee was composed of persons of various grades, including day-labourers. A carpenter, working half-time at his trade, and giving his afternoons and Saturdays to the store, with the occasional assistance of a school-boy as clerk, was found sufficient to carry on the business. The weekly supervision of the committee, which meets in the store itself, has kept the supplies well up to the demand. The goods are sold at the ordinary shop prices, and at the end of every quarter a division of profits is made among the purchasers. Shareholders take double the profit of non-shareholding customers, and receive in addition five per cent. per annum on their paid-up share capital.

The London co-operative stores which sell articles at a low price, and retain only a sufficient profit to meet the ordinary expenses of management, are no doubt well suited to the needs of the class by whom they were instituted; but the store at Tortworth seems no less adapted for the circumstances of an agricultural district. The system of quarterly dividends, it will be seen, insures at least a quarter's savings. Lord Ducie's account of the astonishment of the Tortworth labourers at finding themselves 'in the novel position of capitalists' is most amusing. 'Labourers,' writes he, 'are astonished to find that whilst they have been receiving their goods at the usual prices, and of a better quality than formerly, a fund has been mysteriously accumulating, which is their own, and which is large or small in proportion to the extent of their purchases. A man with a large family,' adds his Lordship, 'and whose expenditure on the necessaries of life is consequently large, thus finds a new light thrown upon the text which assures him that happiness is among the possessions of the man whose quiver is full of young children.'

The total sales for the year ending March 23, 1868, have amounted at this Tortworth store to the sum of L.1648—a sum far beyond anything which the wildest dreams of its original promoters ever led them to anticipate. The occupations of the shareholders at the end of the first year were as follows: labourers, 25; carpenters and masons, 11; tradesmen, 9; farmers, 6; gardeners, 6; clergy, gentlemen, domestic servants, and various occupations, 16. Large purchases have also been made by non-shareholders receiving only half-profits. The sales at the store were, for the first quarter, L.320; second, L.349; third, L.468; fourth, L.511. The dividends to the shareholders were, in the pound expended, for the first quarter, 3s. 4d.; second, 2s. 9d.; third, 3s. 2d.; fourth, 3s. 6d. Lord Ducie cites, in his letter, the following 'typical cases' of the accounts at the end of the

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year of three labourers who all joined the store at its commencement:

	Paid-up Capital.	Dividend on Money Expended.
A	£1 0 0	£5 0 7
B	1 14 10	2 10 0
C	0 19 3	3 17 0

All these men earn 12s. each per week. The difference in the amount of their dividends arises from the different amounts expended by each. A, for instance, has a large family, some of whom add to the common purse; his purchases have thus been large, and the result is that he receives a dividend which much more than pays the rent of his house and garden. These men have also received five per cent. upon their paid-up capital.

So successful has this Tortworth store been during the first year of its existence, that the committee have now added to it a drapery branch, and have expended L.230 in stocking it. They have also determined, it seems, to pay their salesman two and a half per cent. upon his sales, in lieu of a fixed salary, and have secured the whole of his time. They have, moreover, resolved to pay their committee-men sixpence each for every attendance, 'a humble extravagance which,' remarks Lord Ducie, 'will contrast favourably with the practice of more ambitious institutions.' The concluding sentences of his Lordship's letter to the *Times* are so sensible, and state so admirably the advantages to be derived from the establishment of rural co-operative stores, that we shall take the liberty of transcribing them in full. 'I trust,' says his Lordship, 'that I am not over-sanguine in attaching much importance to this movement. I do not expect the renovation of society by means of cheap groceries; but when country co-operative stores can be established, I do look for a more thrifty population, better supplied with better necessaries of life, and deriving a certain advantage mentally from the interest which they learn to take in the small commercial experiences which are thrust upon them. I believe, also, that a landed proprietor will benefit both himself and his dependents by encouraging the movement, and that a clergyman who will assist and give his parishioners the advantage of his superior intelligence in their attempts at self-help, will not transgress the bounds or the duties of his office.'

One feature of difference, it will be observed, between the Tortworth and the Assington stores is, that at Tortworth non-members are allowed a share of the profits. Mr Fraser, in his Report, to which we have already referred, suggests that if rural co-operative stores would everywhere follow the practice of the Assington store in selling wholesome beer at a moderate price, 'to be consumed off the premises,' their doing so would tend greatly towards the extinction of drunkenness, because men would then buy no more beer than they actually wanted, and would, moreover, drink it at home with their supper, instead of sitting boosing in the village public-house.

These experiments at Assington and Tortworth conclusively shew that, without any assistance from government or any extraneous aid whatever, co-operative stores can be successfully carried on even in purely agricultural districts. All that is needed is for some intelligent and public-spirited person—the clergyman or squire of the parish, for example—to take an interest in the matter, and the thing is done. The advantages of these co-operative stores in enabling agricultural labourers to procure cheaper and better articles of food; in encouraging in them thrifty habits; in uniting them together by the bonds of a common interest in a common cause; in increasing their business habits; and in teaching many of them, absolutely for the first time in their lives, to *think*, cannot be too strongly insisted upon. It is therefore to be hoped that the day is not far distant when every village throughout Great Britain will have its co-operative store—possibly also its co-operative farm. If the same wisdom be shewn in the management of these new enterprises which has been so conspicuously displayed at Tortworth and Assington, there can be no reason why they should not meet with the same measure of success.

A PERFECT TREASURE.

CHAPTER XIII.—THE RETREAT IS SOUNDED.

After an interval of ten days, which seemed to me as many weeks, the admirable Mr Moulden exhibited another proof of his infallibility by the following letter:

My dear Mrs Blunt—I have got to the root of the matter of the two *Brigadoons* at last, although in no case should I have advised your protégé to give one sixpence in compensation for imaginary damage. It is quite true that Mr Snow Skinner did once favour the world with a work of fiction bearing the title in question. But if Mr Percival Swete was not aware of the fact previous to his little business transaction with Mr Drake, it shewed (in so genial and warm-hearted a gentleman) a very remarkable want of interest in the affairs of his relatives—*for Mr. Snow Skinner is Mr Swete's half-brother*. As the latter and I happened to be alone when I had the pleasure of reminding him of this circumstance (the knowledge of which it caused me infinite trouble to attain), I treated myself to a very free expression of opinion upon the whole affair. Of course he saw that the game was up at once; but I am bound to say that a more imperturbable and philosophic vagabond was never beheld. The only thing that moved him was my imperative demand for that ten pounds (which I have the pleasure of enclosing) that he promised to pay for the copyright. It was like drawing a badger. I doubt whether he ever paid anybody any money before. He excused himself upon a variety of grounds, one of which was, that Mr Drake had solicited him most urgently to become his publisher. 'He *courted* me, Mr Moulden, I do assure you.'—'Well, sir, and if you don't pay,' replied I, 'he will now County Court you;' which I think was rather a neat reply. By means of that retort, to speak chemically, I distilled the gold.—Yours always, dear Mrs Blunt, with affectionate admiration, Geoffrey Moulden.

The receipt of this letter put us all in the highest spirits, and its contents enabled me to purchase the long-wished-for arm-chair for my dear uncle. Indeed, it was but too plain that he needed every comfort, although he would not admit that there was much the matter with him. The ex-maharajah still looked the grand old soldier; but it was only to outward seeming: he was like a stately castle, the walls of which are undermined, and might topple to the ground at the least shock. From being always with him, we did not, however,

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perceive any particular cause for alarm; and he did his best to prevent our doing so. He disliked to see the least evidence of trouble on his own account, and, indeed, resented it, except in Rosa's case. It was astonishing how cheerful and animated he became under her influence, and how he lost his old habit of taciturnity. Many a vivid scene of Eastern adventure, which would else have lain for ever locked up in his memory, did the young girl evoke; only, as before, he never spoke of Tannajee, and but very rarely and incidentally of the Begum of Bundelbad. I think, since Rosa's advent, he became embarrassed when alluding to his relations with that august princess, although we were very curious to hear of them. Mr Glendell, however, on one occasion—and I shall never forget that evening, for it was the very last our little company ever passed together—ventured to inquire respecting the Begum's views upon religious matters.

'The religion of the state,' replied the ex-maharajah, avoiding this home-question, 'was unhappily idolatry; but the Bundelbadians did not grow their own gods—they imported them from China. I have got an invoice somewhere of a consignment of deities from Canton;' and my uncle, who coloured a little, as if ashamed of this transaction, began fumbling some papers in a drawer. 'You see, Glendell, I was a stranger in the country, and had no public influence whatever; it was my duty, when treasurer to Her Majesty's household, to docket all the bills, and this invoice passed through my hands as a matter of business. I thought I had it somewhere here; but I daresay it has been used for lighting cheroots.'

'But what is that printed document I see, like what is stuck on tea-chests?' urged Mr Glendell.

'Oh, that is merely the advertisement of our Canton idol-maker. I cut it out of the Chinese newspaper, at Her Highness's request, in case we should forget his address;' and my uncle carelessly closed the drawer, and sat down.

'Could you read Chinese, then, dear Mr Braydon?' inquired Rosa.

'No, my dear young lady.'

'Then what was the use of your keeping the advertisement?'

'Well, the fact is, there is a translation appended in English.'

'I should very much like to hear it,' said Rosa hesitatingly.

'There is no harm in your doing so,' said my uncle: 'it is a curious trade-document, that is all.—Read it, Marmy.'

And I read it accordingly.

'I, Achen Tea Chinchen, a lineal descendant of Coupe Boi Roche Chinchen, the celebrated sculptor and carver in wood, who, through his unremitting studies to promote rational religious worship, has been honoured with the commands of emperors, kings, and rajahs of the East, and supplied them with superior idols for public and domestic worship, now humbly offer my services in the same theological line; having travelled at a vast expense, and perfected myself in anatomy, and in copying the most graceful attitudes of the human figure under Nollekens and Bacon. A. T. C. is ready to execute to order idols from twelve feet high, well proportioned, down to the size of a marmoset monkey, or the most hideous monster that can be supposed to inspire awe and reverence for religion. My charges are moderate: For an Orang-outang, three feet high, 700 dollars; ditto, rampant, 800; a Sphinx, 400; a Bull with hump and horns, 650; and an Ass in a braying attitude, 850. The most durable materials—granite, brass, and copper—will be used. Perishable wood shall never disgrace a deity made by my hands. Posterity may see the objects of their fathers' devotion unsullied by the inclemencies of the seasons, the embraces of the pious, or their tears. Small idols for domestic worship, or made into portable compass for pilgrims. Any order post-paid, and accompanied by a drawing or description of the idol, will be promptly attended to; provided that one-half of the expense shall be first paid, and the remainder secured by any respectable House in Canton.'

What merry laughs we had over Mr Chinchen's circular! How reluctantly was the ex-maharajah induced, by the doctor's wiles and Rosa's smiles, to narrate the wonders of Bundelbad; and how charmed we were with them. Our guests did not take their departure till hours which, considering what 'the Point' hours usually were, might be called 'small:' they left us about half-past ten o'clock.

I was gaily congratulating my uncle upon his talents as a *raconteur*, and on his improved looks, when I saw him, upon a sudden, turn quite white—whiter than I should have thought it possible for his bronzed cheeks to look—and put his hand to his side, as if in pain. 'It is nothing,' said he, with a smile that was meant to reassure me; 'a mere passing faintness, that is all.' He would not hear of my running out to fetch back Mr Glendell; nor would he retire to bed. 'Make up the fire a little, and let us talk, Marmy.'

'My dear uncle,' urged I, 'this is not right; you have had talking enough and to spare for to-night. Why, in all my life, I have scarcely heard so much from you of your Indian experiences as within the last few hours.'

'Nevertheless, Marmy, I must say a few words more.—Is Tannajee gone to bed?'

I went softly to the Hindu's chamber, and found him snoring heavily. Perhaps he was *dreaming* of sitting up for his master beyond the usual hour, but he certainly never *did* it. He was as useless in the house as any log; but ever since that interview between us in the study, he had ceased to be insolent in his manner. It was indeed observed on all sides what an improvement had taken place in him; and on that slight ground—such is the advantage of habitual ill-humour and misconduct—he was even quite in favour with the cook.

'My dear lad,' began my uncle gravely, 'if I were to die this night, the only regret I should have would be in leaving you so ill provided for.'

'That would be *my* least cause of regret, uncle.'

'I do believe you, Marmy. And I, on my part, love you so that I do not repent of my selfishness in having kept you near me, though you might have done much better for yourself away from home.'

'Your selfishness, uncle?' I took up his large brown hand, which was far thinner than it used to be, and reverently kissed it. Young as I was, and in love with life, I would have sacrificed my own existence to have eked out his, and, thank Heaven, he knew it.

'I have had a happy time here at the Point,

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Marmy, thanks to you; happier than ever I expected; more peaceful than I ever deserved. Yes, yes; you do not know what my life has been. I am thankful to think you have no idea of such things. But God is merciful. If He chastens us here, it is only for our good hereafter.' And again he pressed his fingers to his side.

I was alarmed by this action; but much more so by his words and manner, which were such as I had never known him use before.

He went on to speak of death and judgment in words I shall not of course reproduce here. It was plain to me that if he had never talked of such matters before, he had long had them on his mind. He spoke with reverence and humility. 'I hope,' said he smiling, 'that I shall not be weighed against men like good Mr Glendell, but that allowances will be made for an old soldier. But enough of myself, Marmy. If I were to die to-night,' repeated he, 'there are but fifty pounds in the world for you to keep house upon. In trying to better ourselves of late, I have made matters much worse. I drew the last shilling I had at the bank out yesterday; and it all lies in my desk, with that Packet you wot of. When you have read its contents, you will take counsel of your own mind—for my word is pledged for you, Marmy, to conceal the matter. As to whether you wish to stay at the Point, where your great attraction lies—— O yes, dear lad, I know all about that, and I love her as though she were my own child. Dear, dear Rosa!' And to my wonder, or, I may say awe, I saw the large tears rolling down my uncle's cheeks. 'To have seen you two made one, Marmy, would have been too great a joy for such as I have been to witness; but perhaps, in time, it may be so. Yet do not risk her happiness by wedding on mere Expectations: you will know what I mean when the time comes. Fifty pounds, as I was saying, is all that is now left from the sale of my Indian jewels; but the Point and the ground about it, if you choose to dispose of them, will fetch some twelve hundred pounds; or you can raise a part of that sum on mortgage, and keep yourself here by your pen. It is best to trust to yourself, and calculate on no contingencies. Still, as you will have learned by the time I speak of, you may be one day a rich man. You will then remember the *poor*.'

My uncle's charity, considering his circumstances, was boundless; and every aged woman and sick child in the village blessed his footfall when they heard it at their doors. The parson of the parish, of which our hamlet was but an outlying district, with no church, used to call him the curate of Hershell.

'I will endeavour, uncle, all I can,' returned I, 'to imitate your example.'

'No, no, Marmy; not mine, but Rosa's. She is always good and wise. It is that you may secure her for a helpmate, I wish, most of all, that you may inherit what I have missed.—Listen, Marmy. Is the door fast?—I am not going to divulge what I have promised to conceal, but I may tell you this much: your future prosperity depends upon the Hindu. He is a bad man; and he does not like you, Marmy. Still, you will have a hold upon him. He must never leave your service. If he does so, pursue him to the ends of the earth; and recover him, Dead or Alive. Yes, *Dead* or *Alive*. The reason will have been explained to you in that writing after my death; but in the meantime, if I were to become ill and helpless, look to this. Tannajee has been on his good behaviour lately, and that is a bad sign. I could not run after him now across the downs,' said my uncle, with a sad smile, 'and bring him back by the scruff of his neck.'

'I, however, can do so,' observed I with significance.

'Yes, I think he's somewhat afraid of you now, Marmy; and that is no bad thing.—But there is another danger, to which you, who are yourself in love, ought not to have been blind: Tannajee is courting Martha.'

Ill as my uncle was, I was astonished at the gravity with which he made this announcement. For myself, I could not help laughing outright. True, I had observed that Martha and the Hindu had of late been very gracious towards one another; but I thought I knew the cause. 'Why, until within these last few months, my dear uncle,' reasoned I, 'those two have been like cat and dog. Why, he's almost a black man, and besides, our cook is quite an old woman!'

'That's the danger,' said my uncle with seriousness; and I am quite sure that his mind was then reverting to the princess who even to so late a period of life had evinced her partiality to Europeans. 'When a woman gets to her age, she is not particular about the colour of her husband.'

Since our prosperity depends upon Tannajee, thought I, we are in a manner his heirs, and supposing he married Martha, and had offspring, that would invalidate our claims. But I was not at all apprehensive of this danger, and perhaps the idea of it awoke a smile.

'It is no jesting matter this, Marmy,' continued my uncle earnestly, 'as you will understand some day. But this marriage must not be. Indeed, Tannajee has solemnly promised to remain a bachelor.'

'Then make yourself quite easy, my dear uncle,' replied I with confidence, remembering the persuasive powers of my pistol. 'The Hindu shall keep his word, you may take mine for that.'

'You must not treat him ill, Marmy,' said my uncle in low faint tones; 'and remember, you must not be impatient for a dead man's shoes. As for me, my sand has well nigh run out. Glendell knows it, my dear lad; and *I* know it.'

'You are tired, dear uncle,' said I; 'you have exerted yourself much this evening, and it is long past your usual bedtime.'

'No: no bed for me to-night. I could not lie down if I would.' He seized my hand, and griped it with a force I could not have supposed him to possess. His brow was damp; his face wore a look of mortal agony.

'For Heaven's sake, uncle, let me send for Mr Glendell. I am certain you are very ill.'

'Nay, Marmy; I am past doctors' skill, and I wish to be with you alone—quite alone.'

As I looked up swiftly at those tender words, I saw something more than my uncle's pallid face—I saw over his shoulder, at the half-opened parlour-door, a pair of gleaming eyes. They were gone in a moment, but I felt assured they had been there; that for some time, long or short, we had not been quite alone, but had had Tannajee for our watcher, and perhaps our audience.

'Bring me that nice arm-chair, Marmy,' whispered my uncle feebly—'the one you gave me.—Bought with his first book, dear lad, dear lad; Heaven bless him!'

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Before I could gently unloose his fingers from their hold on mine, he thought I had already left the room; his brain was plainly wandering; the noble ship was breaking up before my eyes. Presently, with some disconnected words of prayer, he sank into a doze, and then I went out on tiptoe, and softly fetched the chair. As I passed by Tannajee's room, I noticed his door was ajar, so I closed it, and in order to stop further eavesdropping, turned the key, which happened to be on the outside. Brief as was the period of my absence, it seemed to me that my uncle's looks had already changed for the worse; but at the slight noise I was obliged to make, he opened his eyes, and smiled.

'I thought the bugle had sounded, Marmy, and that I had obeyed it,' whispered he. 'It is time for the retreat. The battle of life is quite over with me.' And indeed it seemed to be. Yet, with my help, he managed to raise himself and shift his limbs to the arm-chair. A smile of mingled love and gratitude then played upon his features for an instant, and as his head fell slowly back, I heard him softly murmur 'Marmy.'

That was Uncle Theo's last word.

CHAPTER XIV.—THE HINDU FLIES.

I had never stood in the presence of death before, but my awe was nothing in comparison to my grief, which broke forth with such vehemence that it aroused both the maid-servants, whose terrified shrieks, when they saw what had happened, were shocking to hear. But their sorrow was at least genuine, and I was glad to think that I had made the Hindu secure, whose hypocritic face would have been far more unwelcome to me than their cries. After a while—I know not who fetched him—Mr Glendell arrived, and ordered all things duly. He was sincerely grieved, though he did not shew his sorrow in our fashion; use had blunted but not destroyed his sympathies. 'I always predicted that your poor uncle would go off in this way,' said he, not without a touch of professional triumph; then added reverently: 'He was a great-hearted man, my lad, and leaves no like behind him, so far as I know.'

When they had laid him on his bed, they left me alone with him, kneeling beside it, and sobbing as though my heart would break, I know not for how long. I remembered nothing; I was aware of nothing, except that my father, brother, friend, was lying there Dead, until a gentle hand was laid upon my shoulder, and a voice as dear as that which was hushed for ever, whispered to me that I was not left utterly alone and unfriended even yet.

It was Rosa, whom her father had sent at dawn to stanch the grief for which he had no other remedy, and mingling her tears with mine, wise homœopathist, she thereby healed me. In that dread presence, I told her how those dumb lips had spoken of her last, and what those fast-closed eyes had longed in vain to see. Not with any intent, Heaven knows, to bind her heart to mine, which was already one with it! I was thinking of him only.

While we yet spoke of this, and when it was still very early, Mr Glendell came and signed to us to follow him into the parlour. 'Marmy,' said he earnestly, 'there has been enough of grief. It is time to think of the wishes of the dead.'

'I think of nothing else,' said I, with my hand still fast in Rosa's.

'But you must bestir yourself also. Did not your uncle tell you to keep the Hindu in your service? Where is Tannajee?'

'I locked him in his room last night.'

'You locked his door, but he was not within. He was seen by the servants in the passage at the time your uncle died. He only waited for his death, I fear, to leave your roof.'

I started up and ran into the study. The window was wide open, and it was but a few feet from the ground. I flew to my uncle's desk, and there lay the canvas bag in which he used to keep his money—empty. The gold was gone. I touched the little spring, and out flew the drawer; but that was empty also. Mr Glendell and Rosa had followed me into the room, and at once perceived that some new calamity had occurred.

'The scoundrel has robbed you, I daresay?' observed the former drily.

'He has taken fifty pounds,' said I; 'but that is nothing. He has stolen the packet likewise that contains the "secret."'

'The devil he has!' exclaimed the doctor excitedly. 'At all events, it is well he took the money, for now we have the law upon our side. You must at once get a warrant for his apprehension, my lad.—Don't be cast down; we'll have him yet, depend upon it, Marmy: he can't elude folks' observation any more than an escaped orang-outang. Now we see how excellent are the ways of nature, and why it is he was made so ugly!'

Mr Glendell spoke thus cheerfully perhaps, because he read in my looks discouragement or despair; but if so, he was never more mistaken in his life. He should have seen in them only a fixed resolve. The words of the ex-maharajah seemed once more to fall upon my ears with solemn distinctness: 'Your future prosperity depends upon the Hindu; he must never leave your service. If he does so, pursue him to the ends of the earth.'

I was but resolving within myself that henceforth I would have no other mission in life, no other hopes nor fears, would know no rest, nor respite, nor enjoyment, until I had obeyed my uncle's mandate, and laid my hand upon the Hindu 'Dead or Alive.'

THE MOON.

As our steamboat was entering Southampton Docks the other day, we noticed the way the vessel was guided in. The bend was too sharp for the rudder to bring the vessel round it, so a hawser from the bows was slipped over a pile-head on the pier. The vessel steamed on, and the hawser continually pulling us out of our course, compelled the vessel to describe a part of a circle, and so safely to enter the docks. We might thus illustrate the motion of the moon round the earth. The attraction of the earth on the moon continually draws it out of the direction in which, at each instant, it is moving, and so compels it, roughly speaking, to describe a circle about the earth as centre. But there is this difference: the force by which the earth draws the moon is not a simple force, as the tension of a rope, but the result of all the attractions which all the parts of the earth exert on all the parts of the moon. Now, these attractions are different for

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different parts of the earth. They diminish rapidly as the distance increases, being inversely proportional to the square of the distance. Thus, at twice the distance, the attraction is diminished to one-quarter of its first amount; at three times the distance, to one-ninth. The moon, then, attracts the parts of the earth nearer to it more than it attracts the central parts, and these, again, more than the parts of the earth furthest from it. In consequence, the moon draws the earth away from the sea on the side of the earth which is furthest from the moon. It also draws the sea away from the earth on the side nearest it.

Imagine ourselves at the moon, looking down at the revolving earth. We should see on the west side new continents and seas continually appearing, hastening across the face of the earth, and disappearing round the east side. As the waters pass from the western edge to the middle of the face of the earth, they draw nearer to the moon than the centre of the earth, and in consequence are drawn towards the moon more quickly than the earth itself. They cannot leave the earth, and can only obey this impulse by moving round towards the moon more quickly than the earth on which they rest. When they have passed the middle of the earth's face, they are now moving away from the moon, and the action is reversed, and all the velocity given to them before, relatively to the earth, on which they rest, is taken away. We see thus that we may naturally expect the water directly below the moon to be moving from west to east more rapidly than the earth on which it rests; and as we go east and west from that point, this motion of the water will become less. The same will be true of the water furthest away from the moon. We may thus consider the ocean as a stream of water flowing round the earth, generally at the same rate as the earth below it, but sometimes slower and sometimes faster. Where it moves faster, it will be shallower. Thus, we may expect the sea to be shallow at the point below the moon, and that furthest away from the moon; and as successive places are brought, by the rotation of the earth, below or away from the moon, they have low tide, and intermediate to these, of course high tide. Such is a rough explanation of the tides. There are other circumstances to be taken into consideration, as, for instance, the fact that the seas cannot flow freely, but are impeded by friction. The general effect of it all is, that looking thus down on the earth from the moon, we do not see the low tide immediately below us, but to the west, in the western half of the earth's face; and the high tides are not on the western and eastern edges of the face, but are round behind the western edge and the other, between the point immediately below us and the eastern edge of the earth.

Now, the moon hastens the waters in the western half of the earth's face, as we thus view it, and retards those in the eastern half, tending to make the former move faster, and the latter slower, than the land on which they rest. But the tidal heap is in the eastern half, and therefore, on the average, more water will be in the eastern half than in the western. Thus, more water is retarded than hastened. If as much water were hastened as retarded, these motions would neutralise each other; but more being retarded than hastened, there results a slight average retarding of the waters of the ocean, causing them to move round more slowly than the earth, and so, relatively to it, to flow slowly westward. Of course, owing to lands hindering the free flow of the sea, innumerable local currents are produced, which in their backward and forward flow nearly neutralise each other; but as the final result of all these motions we find a slow westerly current in the ocean, due to the moon's action.

This current does not move without friction against the lands it meets, or the deeper waters of the ocean over which it flows. By this friction, as the earth is revolving in the opposite direction, it tends to check the rotation of the earth. Just as the brake upon a windlass checks the rotation of the windlass and the lowering of the weight, so this friction against the earth acts as a brake, gradually stopping it. If we set a celestial globe spinning, we can soon stop it by gently laying a finger upon it. So the moon, as it were, lays a fairy finger on our earth's equator, and, light as the touch is, the earth's rotation will in time be stopped. Ultimately, the earth will constantly present the same face to the moon, just as the moon does now to it.

There is a curious action in compensation upon the moon, which admits of an easy explanation. Owing to the tidal heaps of water, the general attraction of the earth on the moon is not directed to the centre of the earth, but to a point a very little distance from it on the tidal axis, which points, as we have shewn above, eastward of the moon. Roughly speaking, the moon moves in a circle round the centre of the earth from west to east; but it is thus continually pulled, not to the centre of the earth, but to a point a little towards the direction in which the moon moves. Now, when we have a stone at the end of a string, and wish to make it whirl round faster, we move our hand in a little circle, pulling the string continually, not to the centre of the circle in which the stone whirls, but to a point a little more in the direction in which the stone is moving. Thus, the loss of rotation in the earth is compensated for by a more rapid motion of the moon, which, in consequence, will fly further from the earth, and describe a larger orbit. This change, however, is practically too small to be observed.

We have shewn above how the moon produces a tide on the earth. Supposing the moon to possess an ocean, what kind of tides will our earth produce in it? The mass of the earth is eighty-eight times that of the moon. If, instead of one moon, we had eighty-eight such clustered together, each evidently producing a tide, there would result on the whole a tide eighty-eight times as high as at present. We can thus see how the tides in the moon, being produced by the earth, would be far greater than those we have. By calculations which we could hardly explain in an elementary manner, we come to the result, that the tides in the moon would be about forty times as high as those on the earth, or about one hundred and ninety feet high on the average. A rather surprising result. Such a tide would sweep a large part of England clean, twice a day. Alpine climbing, far from being a luxury, would be a necessity. But there is this difference: owing to the small mass of the moon, bodies weigh there less than a sixth of what they do here. So the labour of avoiding the tide would be but slight. Supposing the moon to be inhabited by creatures like men, we can compute their statures that they may have the same agility. Of men similarly formed, the weights will vary as their

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bulks—that is, as the product of their length, breadth, and thickness. As the men are supposed similarly formed, the breadth and thickness will both vary as the length, and thus men's weights will vary as the cubes of their lengths. Now, their muscular power varies as the cross sections of their muscles, which it is easy to see will vary as the squares of their lengths. A man twelve feet high will thus weigh eight times as much as one six feet high, but will have only four times the muscular power; and if the six-footer be sluggish, the twelve-footer will probably be unable to stir his vast weight. If, however, the twelve-footer were of materials only half as heavy as the six-footer, the relation between weight and power would be the same in both cases, and they would be equally agile. The material of man weighing less than one-sixth its weight here, on the moon, he could thus afford to be more than six times as tall, and be still as agile. Men forty feet high would move as freely on the moon as we do here, and experience no more inconvenience at a tide of one hundred and ninety feet, than we do at one of thirty feet—a height commonly equalled, in fact, often exceeded at places on our globe. We may notice in passing, that on Jupiter, man's stature would have to be dwarfed to thirty inches, to preserve his agility.

The action of tides in stopping rotation, shewn above, must take place whenever bodies capable of tidal action revolve round each other. The sun as well as the moon exerts an influence in stopping our rotation. Jupiter's moons, if he possess an ocean, will in time destroy even his rapid rotation. But this is too remote to be of much interest. It is more worthy of remark that we meet with many bodies whose rotation evidently has thus been stopped. Our moon is such, ever presenting the same face to the earth. The satellites of Jupiter and Saturn, as far as can be observed, are in the same condition. And we can see the reason of it. Imagine our earth and moon, each possessing oceans, starting with equally rapid rotations. Each will produce a tide in the other, and so tend to destroy the other's rotation (we perhaps should say independent rotation, but the reader will understand what is meant). But there will be a great difference in the two cases. The amount of rotation to be destroyed will be different in the two bodies. Take a grindstone, for instance—a great effort is required to set it rotating, and an equally great one to stop it. The larger the grindstone, the greater the effort required. Now, we might regard the earth and moon as two such grindstones; and computing, as can easily be done, the ratio of their amounts of rotation when revolving at the same rate, we find it to be about twelve hundred to one. If the earth and moon, then, exerted the same power in stopping each other, the earth, having only $\frac{1}{1200}$th part of the work to do that the moon would have, would do it in $\frac{1}{1200}$th part of the time. Thus, if the earth stopped the moon in 1,000,000 years, the moon would require 1,200,000,000 years to stop the earth. This is supposing the powers they exert, in stopping each other, equal. It is not, however, easy to see the relation between the power with which the earth and moon act on each other by the friction of the tidal current. It depends not only upon the actual amount of the tide, but also on the amount it lags eastward of the tide-producing body. The higher tide of the moon would probably lag behind the earth much less than the earth's tide lags behind the moon. If the lagging were equal, the earth's power would many times surpass that of the moon. If the lagging in the moon were less, the earth's power would not be so many times greater. Certainly the earth's power would not be less. Of course, the greater the power the earth exerts, the sooner the moon is stopped. Certainly, then, the moon would be stopped twelve hundred times sooner than the earth. Looking back, then, on the long ages during which our earth has existed, we can easily conjecture how long it must be since our moon had that rapid rotation upon its axis, which apparently is necessary for the existence of life.

It may perhaps appear that we have assumed a great deal. No oceans now exist on the moon; so our tides may seem pure imagination. Well, we will refer to the point again. Let us glance for a while at the moon's present condition. Practically, the moon has no atmosphere. This is shewn in many ways. When the sun sets on a clear day, it appears not round but oval; the air bends down the rays of light passing through it, and bends those most that are nearest the horizon. A ray being thus bent down, its direction, when it reaches us, appears to be from a point above that from which it really came, and the object will be seen above its real position. Thus, the sun appears higher in the sky than it really is, and the lower limb more so than the upper, so as to approach to it, and cause the apparent flattening. The sun, indeed, has really set to us when, by this bending of the rays, he is still visible. Rays of light grazing the earth, and passing out into space beyond, will be doubly bent to the earth; thus, the atmosphere would enable an eye behind the earth to see a little round the corner, and the sun would still be visible for a little time after it had really passed behind the earth. Now, the moon often, in its path through the sky, passes over a star; if she had an atmosphere, the star would be visible some little time after the moon had passed between it and the spectator, and also reappear a little before the moon had passed from over it; thus, the time that the star is hidden would be shortened by the moon's atmosphere. Observations of this kind prove that the moon has no appreciable atmosphere. Or, again, as the sun seems flattened when setting, if we watched with a telescope the moon pass over a planet, the latter would appear flattened if there be an atmosphere. No such alteration of form can be detected. Again, an atmosphere produces a twilight, and if the moon has the one, it will also have the other. Very careful observation has shewn that such a twilight exists in the moon, but so slight, that the height of the atmosphere, to which it is due, cannot be more than a mile, and it must be rarer than any vacuum that can be formed in an air-pump. Other reasons might be adduced; these, however, may suffice. With such an atmosphere, water, to any considerable amount, cannot exist on the surface of the moon; for, as there the day is as long as fourteen of ours, the sun's continued heat would create an atmosphere of steam greater than we know exists. At the same time, careful examination with the most powerful telescopes has shewn that no lakes or seas of any but the smallest size can possibly exist.

When we examine the moon—we do not mean with large and powerful telescopes, but such as any person can put together for himself at the cost

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of a few shillings—many particular features can be at once recognised. The southern part of the moon is especially noticeable as pitted all over with round cavities, often so close as to run into each other. They are of all sizes, from the minutest specks to great pits, almost discernible by the naked eye. Their character is singularly uniform. A great circular wall, the height of which can be easily estimated by means of the shadow it throws, surrounding a circular plain, usually depressed below the level of the plain without. In this plain, often one or more conical mountains rise. We are at no loss for objects on our globe to compare them with. Among the Andaman group is a volcanic island; a lofty and precipitous wall, eighteen miles in circuit, encloses a circular plain but slightly raised above the sea-level; in the centre a steep hill, the cone of an active volcano, rises to a height of about eighteen hundred feet. We could pick out mountains in the moon answering almost exactly to the same description. It is impossible to resist the conviction that the cause is the same. The lunar craters, indeed, usually vastly exceed in size those found on our globe; but we shall notice hereafter the reason for it.

These various mountains, and other natural features, have received names, and we may, in passing, notice a few of the more conspicuous. Plato is one of these vast craters, considerably to the north in the moon (readers will remember that astronomical telescopes invert objects, making north appear south, and *vice versâ*), and so presenting not a vertical but a bird's-eye view, appears as a vast oval, with the central plain extremely dark and depressed. Copernicus, which becomes visible, or, in other words, at which the sun rises soon after the half-moon, is very conspicuous, terraces in its circular wall being easily detected, while a group of conical hills, two of them very easily seen, stands in the centre of the enclosed plain. Tycho, a crater considerably to the south, is of such dimensions that, if a circle were cut out of Switzerland, including Mont Blanc, the Matterhorn, and Monte Rosa, down to a level with the sea, the whole might be placed within Tycho, and not a single peak be seen over the edge. Then, too, of conical volcanic peaks, such as that of Teneriffe or Adam's Peak in Ceylon, there are beautiful examples in the moon. Pico, which shines like a little triangular speck of burnished silver, with a little patch of shadow attached, a little to the south of Plato, is computed to be at least seven thousand feet high, and rising as it does abruptly from a comparatively flat plain, would be a magnificent spectacle if on our globe, the more beautiful, as several similar though smaller cones are clustered near.

But with all this show of volcanic force, the moon, though carefully watched, has given but few signs of fiery life. Herschel and others have observed phenomena at various times which resembled an eruption of lava in one of the lunar volcanoes, and lately it appears that the crater Linné has been slowly filled up, apparently by an eruption of mud or ashes. But the lunar volcanoes, if not actually extinct, are probably not far from being so.

Besides volcanoes, there are other interesting natural features in the moon: great depressed plains, presenting the appearance of ocean-beds; mountain ranges, produced evidently not by volcanic forces, but by the erosive action of water. For instance, the Apennines, a range some four hundred miles long, rise to the south of the Sea of Showers to a height of twenty thousand feet, sloping gently to the south, but to the north presenting a steep and almost precipitous descent to the great depressed plain. It thus presents a close parallel to the Andes, which rise gradually on the eastern side, but to the west overhang the Pacific with a far steeper incline. The Ghauts of India, too, have the same peculiarity; and many other instances might be named. The height of the lunar Apennines may appear extraordinary, considering the comparative smallness of the moon; but if the Pacific were drained, and we measured the height of the Andes from the bottom of the depression, we should probably double their height. When, as we believe was once the case, the Sea of Showers was filled with water, the height of the Apennines above the level of the sea would not be so surprising.

To produce a volcano, water is required. By the slow escape of the central heat of our globe, the interior parts cool and contract. The crust of the earth, left without sufficient support, cracks and subsides. The shock is propagated through the earth, and an earthquake is produced. Often water penetrates, and in the form of steam at high pressure drives up the molten rocks before it, and a volcano is produced. No water can be detected on the surface of the moon; where, then, is the water that produced the volcanoes we see there? Some have suggested that the solid part of the moon is pear-shaped, with the stalk end as it were towards us; whilst the water has all accumulated on the flattened end of the pear, and so is invisible to us. Such a supposition, however, appears extremely gratuitous, and besides is unnecessary. If any of Jupiter's or Saturn's satellites were so constituted, the part furthest from Saturn or Jupiter would be less bright than the rest of their surfaces; but though their surfaces do vary in brightness in different parts, the dimmer part, in no case, we believe, is that which is furthest from their primaries. So there is no analogy in favour of this idea. The solution of the difficulty arises from the different bulks of the earth and moon. The weights of bodies on the moon is less than one-sixth of what it would be on the earth. Now, we know that the sun is composed largely of elements such as exist on our globe; nay, further, remote fixed stars are so also. We have thus every reason to believe that the materials of the moon will not differ much from those of the earth. As the interior of the earth cools down and contracts, the weight of the outer crust, which, if strong enough, would be left as a shell, breaks it down, and crushes it into the contracted matter below, so that no cavities, or comparatively small ones, are left. But in the moon, the shell covering a cavity would be of smaller radius, the moon's radius being less than that of the earth, and consequently stronger. Above all, the weight of the materials composing it being less than a sixth of the weight of the materials of the earth's crust, but as strong, owing to the feebler force to crush the crust down, cavities would be formed on a far larger scale than could exist in the earth.

Imagine, then, the earth and moon at equal temperatures. They cool down—the moon, however, being the smaller, the more rapidly. The thin crusts at first formed on each are crushed down on the central mass as it contracts. After

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a while, when the crusts have acquired some thickness, the lunar crust becomes thick enough to withstand the crushing for a while, and cavities are formed. When the break-up takes place at last, the lunar oceans penetrate, and pouring in immense quantity into the large cavities, meet the still hot mass below, and a tremendous volcanic outburst is the result. When we remember that the power of the pent-up steam would be as great as on the earth, but the rocks and lava to be thrown up would weigh less than one-sixth, we can easily understand the vast craters which exist on the moon, so thickly in places as to suggest the idea of the surface having been blown up in bubbles. As the cooling process continues, other and larger cavities are formed, the weight of the superincumbent crust being too little to crush it down into them. Into these ultimately the oceans descend, and after them the atmosphere. We thus see how, by the cooling down of the moon, vast internal cavities have been formed, in which her ocean and atmosphere are now buried. The atmosphere that still clings to the moon is but the thin upper layer, the rest has long since disappeared. The rates of cooling down of the earth and moon are inversely proportional to their diameters, or as three to eleven. The disproportion between these is nothing so great as that between the times of their stopping each other's rotations. We can thus see why it is that, whilst ages ago, the moon has ceased to rotate independently of us, she still continues to shew some signs of central heat in the few cases of volcanic outburst that have been observed.

Dreary, indeed, must be the scene that the moon now presents. Here, our air spreads by day its blue curtains, to temper the black vault of night. No such veiling there. When the sun rides high, the stars will all shine with little lessened lustre on the black sky; the mountains will cast not a shadow but night itself. Could we but see it close, it would be as some nightmare vision we should gladly forget. Possibly the absence of all half-tones in shadow would confound our eyes, and we should see without perceiving; not, indeed, that all the rocks would be rugged and angular, the outlines not softened by time. When the volcanoes we see were thrown up, far other was the state of the moon; then the ocean wore the shore, and the rain and frost smoothed the mountain slope. Even now, amid the confusion and savageness of lava-beds and cinder-hills, we should see what would call to mind memories of happier times—here some smoothed chasm, where of old, under a bright sky, the brook murmured; there some shingly beach, where once the sea rippled round the polished pebbles. But all this is gone; and cracked, worn, wild, and barren, the moon presents an image of death. We admire its brightness, and are as the children of whom the poet speaks—

> She saw her brother Peterkin
> Roll something large and round,
> Which he beside the rivulet
> In playing there had found:
> She came to ask what he had found,
> That was so large, and smooth, and round.

We thus trace the history of the moon, once, like our globe, rotating with a day and night suited for organised existence. Its seas may have teemed with fishes, its air with birds, its plains with animals; some even may be endowed with reason—as fair as, may be fairer than our globe. We have seen how, by the tidal currents produced in its oceans, our earth, slowly but surely, has stopped its rotation, and so unfitted it to sustain life; at the same time, by cooling down, cavities have been formed, within which its oceans and atmosphere are now buried. It is a *memento mori* for our earth. As it is, so must this globe of ours become. Somewhat different, indeed, may be the manner of it, but the final ruin is the same.

Yet, dreary as, at first sight, the idea of this inevitable decay appears, it really suggests an encouraging thought. That which points to an end, points also to a beginning. We are not left the victims of blind and inevitable laws; there is behind them a power, dimly revealed thus even in Nature. Yet, weary of iron necessity, we turn gladly from Nature to Revelation, from Law to Love.

ZEKEL FLINT.

IN SIX CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER IV.

'Dig? Let 'em dig, and dig, and dig till they're tired, and faint, and hungry, and ragged, and their tools air worn out,' said Zekel; 'and then they 'll be glad to come down to old Skinflint's store, and buy his goods, for nuggets, and cents, and dollars, and dust. What do yew want to go up for? Stop where yew air, my lad, even if yer wound is well, and six months old, as I told yew it would be. Yer bread 's buttered this side, my lad, not t'other side; so stay where yew air. I 'm not going to make a lot of flam about it; but just shew me that yew 're a business fellow, and yew shall have Ruthy, and go halves in the store. There now! What more can yew want?'

'Nothing,' I said. 'But how am I to shew you that I am a business man?'

'Don't know: wait a bit,' said Zekel; and I busied myself in the store, where we used to do a famous trade, especially since I could go down to the port and buy first-hand of the captains, while Zekel minded the store. Previously, he had never cared to leave, on account of his child, and often, in consequence, bought at a loss.

But how was I to prove myself a business man? I asked Ruth; but she could not tell me, though matters went on so pleasantly that I felt no envy on seeing some of my old companions come into the store one evening, and seem half disposed to laugh at me for turning assistant to a storekeeper. They had had tolerable luck; but I knew that their luck was not so good as mine, for what man is there that will say gold is comparable to a loving, true-hearted girl; though, for that matter, there can be no objection to gold as well.

The store prospered; but at last a cloud came—a cloud of suspicion—for Zekel kept missing money in a most mysterious way. His custom was to place all the cash he took in a leather bag, which he always carried about his person; gold dust and nuggets, on the contrary, were, after weighing, packeted and marked before placing them in the strong box, over whose safety Zekel watched most carefully. For undoubtedly he was a prosperous man; and I knew of more than one valuable consignment of gold sent to New York for safety; while during the prosperous state of the diggings, Zekel's trade increased rapidly.

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Ruth mentioned the fact to me first, that her father felt sure that he was being robbed, for money kept disappearing in a most unaccountable manner.

'Does he lose it from his box?' I said.

'No,' replied Ruth; 'from the leather bag.'

'But he never parts with it for a moment. You told me yourself that it was buckled round him when he slept.'

'Yes; he never parts from it night or day,' said Ruth; 'but for all that, the money goes.'

'Well,' I said, 'it must be either fancy, or else there is a hole in the bottom of the bag.'

The conversation dropped, and in the bustle of business I soon forgot all about it, until the marked coldness with which the old man treated me brought it all before my mind once more. 'Why, surely the old fellow cannot think that I have robbed him,' I said to myself; and he grew so curt and suspicious at last, that I determined to speak to him upon the subject, being full of anxious thought for the future, especially since of late the old fellow had trusted me almost like a son. I could not afford to offend him; so, for Ruth's sake, I determined to bear with all he said patiently and calmly.

'*But* surely, Mr Flint,' I exclaimed somewhat warmly, after an hour's conversation, 'you cannot think that I would be so base, after all your kindness. Do you think my love for your child only a pretence?'

'What am I to think, my lad; tell me that? Yew say, how can I suspect yew? Who am I to suspect?—my own child? The money goes; and it lies between one of us three here in the store. I know that it is not me; while as to Ruthy, I'd sooner charge myself.'

'So would I, a dozen times over,' I said bluntly.

The old man chuckled for a few moments, but that cold angry look came over his face again as he said: 'I always said as no man living could do me; but by the tarnation creation, some one has done it this time, and slick too.'

'Regular business-like way,' I said bitterly.

''Nation!' said Zekel.

'But,' said I impatiently, 'how much have you lost? When did you lose it? And when was the last taken?'

'Dunno, dunno, dunno,' said the old man; 'but the money goes more or less every day.'

'Gold or silver?'

'Both, for anything I know; but mostly gold.'

'Then you must give it away by mistake in change,' I said; 'and it's too bad to suspect one whom you ought to trust in every way.'

'Change—give away!' exclaimed the old man angrily. 'Do yew think I'm a fool, young man? Now, just look here. We'd best part. It will be better for both of us; and been better still, p'raps, if we'd never come together.'

I begged, I prayed, I humbled myself in every way; but the old man was inexorable. He evidently suspected that I was the thief; and the only consolation I had was the loving trust of poor Ruth, who was nearly heart-broken when I left.

A few days after, I was busy with the rest up a creek, handling spade and pannikin, pick and cradle, working up to my knees in water to pick the bright specks of gold from gravel or washing stuff. Then a month passed, during which time I had no communication with those at the store, when one day, just in the height of business, I felt a hand laid heavily upon my shoulder, and looking sharply up, there stood Old Zekel, looking very grim and sallow; but he held out his great broad palm, and upon my taking it, made my eyes as wet as my feet with the gripe he gave me.

'I beg yer pardon, Harry,' he then said gruffly; 'it warn't yew as took the money!'

'What!' I said eagerly, 'have you found out the thief?'

'Cuss him for a skunk! No, I ain't,' he roared angrily; 'I only wish I hed.'

'Then how do you know that it ain't me?' I says.

'Why, how the tarnation could yew be up here at the diggins, and take the money down there, too, eh?'

'It still goes then?' I said.

'Goes,' he growled; 'yes, it goes; and I've tried every dodge I know to find out how. I've never let the bag go out of my gripe; I've counted my money of a morning; I've put down every penny I took upon a slate; and then counted up at night, and it's been short.'

'Made any mistakes?' I said.

'Nary one—not counted a cent out. There's something wrong somehow.'

'Any holes in the bottom of the bag?' I said.

'Look yourself;' and then, from beneath his blouse he drew the leather tourist cash-bag strapped over his shoulder, and suspiciously holding on still by the steel clasp, he let me examine the bottom, which was intact.

'Have you looked in the lining?' I said.

'No,' he replied bluntly.

'Then, why don't you? Perhaps a whole lot of pieces have slipped in between it and the leather.'

''Taint got no linin',' he said. 'The bag's right enough. This is the third new un I've hed since yew went away, my lad, and neither Ruthy nor me can't make nothing of it.'

'How is Ruth?' I said, conjuring up as I spoke her bright face behind the store counter, with half-a-dozen fellows eagerly seeking a smile; and then feeling half mad with the jealous feeling that came over me.

'She's all right,' said the old man; 'but she can't help me a bit.'

'Send me any message?' I said, turning a bit red, and feeling sheepish.

'Told me to give yew her love.—And now, my lad, you'll come back again, and help me, won't yew?'

'Come back!' I said angrily. 'No, I won't. You turned me out like a dog, and called me a thief.'

'Nary once, nary once, my lad!' he exclaimed.

'Well, you looked upon me as a thief, at all events,' I said, as I recalled the earnest way in which I had protested my innocence; and for the moment I felt that I meant it, when I declared that I wouldn't come back to please him after such treatment.

'I thought yew wouldn't,' he said drily, 'knowing how pesky yew young cocks air when yew're putt out; but Ruthy said she'd be much obliged if yew'd come back and help her old father.'

I began to melt a little.

'Trade wants yew to brush it up a bit, my lad; and Ruthy's looked 'nation dull since yew've been gone.'

I thawed a little more, and I'm nearly sure the

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old rascal winked to himself as he said: 'Yew're wanted there, too, 'mazingly, for there's a couple o' long down-south chaps as bother Ruthy a deal too much; and she don't like it, yew know.'

Of course that last hit did it; but I was too politic to give way yet.

'So you want me to come down and help you,' I said, 'to try and find out how this money goes?'

'That's it—that's it; for I'm down-beat with it, my lad.'

'He'd be a sharpish chap to find it out,' I said.

'Reg'lar razor-blade, my boy, fresh strapped.'

'Business-like enough chap to make Miss Ruth a husband, eh?' I said.

'Yew're a nice un, yew air, now, ain't yew?' said the old man, grinning all over his face, as he gave me a back-handed thump in the chest that took away my breath. 'There: I tell yew what, my lad,' he continued, 'if yew'll putt salt on the tail of the bird as does this job, I'll give yew a hundred dollars. Now then!'

'I don't want your dollars,' I said; 'I want something else. Now, is it a bargain? If I find this out, will you give your consent to you know what?'

Old Zekel hitched and screwed about; grinned, groaned, shuffled in body and speech; but that a favourable arrangement had been arrived at, may be judged from the fact that I was back that night at the store, with Ruth looking more bright and charming than ever, as she welcomed me as warmly as I could wish.

CHAPTER V.

Before I had been back a week, I found that I had my task to do before I could meet with my reward; for, in spite of all our vigilance, the money still went—mysteriously, unaccountably; and I was fain to declare myself as yet quite at fault; when, at supper one night, the old man again asked me what I thought of it.

'It's a nailer, ain't it?' he said, almost looking pleased at my discomfiture; but then there was Ruth to cheer me on, and I watched, and thought, and turned it over and over for another week without result, when, at supper, the old man declared his intention of pulling up stakes, and going elsewhere.

'I shall be ruined else,' he said gloomily. 'I'm sure I'm losing hundreds of dollars, and I can't stand it any longer. Why, the very idea of me—Old Raw—being done like this is eating my heart away, my lad, let alone the loss of the money. I'll make tracks.'

'Wait a little longer,' I said; and that night, while I lay awake, seeming to see Ruth fading away from me, and my chances grow less, I resolved upon a plan, and getting out of bed in the compartment next to the old man's—for, since my return, I had slept at the store—I began to call him gently, not daring to go near him, in case of a salutation from his revolver.

'Mr Flint! I say, sir,' I cried, till I woke him; and as soon as he knew that it was something about the money, he roused up, and over a couple of his best cigars we talked over my plan.

'Let yew carry the bag, and be money-taker,' he said. 'Well, is that all?'

'Yes,' I said, 'that's all; but I feel certain of detecting the theft if you let me carry the bag.'

'Young man,' he said solemnly, 'don't yew make sure of anything; there's something of what the Scotchmen call "no canny" about this job; but, howsoever, yew shall be bag-bearer if yew like.'

I felt half-sorry afterwards that I had disturbed him for such a little thing; but feeling more satisfied in my mind, I dropped off to sleep; and the next morning—first thing—Zekel slung the strap over my shoulder, saying: 'There's twenty dollars in silver in it; so, now, see how yew get on.'

One day—two days—three days—I took the money; a good deal too—enough to make the bag heavy; the old man quietly noting every transaction down upon a slate, as I took silver, gold, and copper, placing, according to his custom, gold and silver in one division of the bag, the baser metal in the other; but every night, when we came to reckon up, there was evidently a large deficiency, so that at last I was almost in despair, and offered to give up the charge of the bag, for I had been as particular as was possible in the hurry of the evening business, especially both in taking money and giving change.

But 'No,' said the old man; 'yew may just as well go on as me; for I trust yew, my lad, I trust yew.'

The old man seemed so down-hearted at last, that one evening I quite felt for him, as he sat with his head resting upon his hand, while Ruth was weeping silently as she tried to whisper comfort. The day's business was over, and quietly shut in together, we had been going over the money, counting it into little piles, and entering the amount in a book the old man always kept; while I felt as despondent almost as the old man, for all my sanguine hopes had been dashed, and what to do I could not tell. I sat quite still for some time, gazing mournfully at the couple before me, and then began, almost unconsciously, to pile up and spread about upon the table some half-dozen half-dollars, when a light flashed across my brain, and just as poor old Zekel exclaimed sadly: 'Yes, my little lass, we'll make tracks, or I shall be ruined,' I started up, gave a regular Indian whoop, as I shouted: 'Not this time, dad; I've treed him!' when, hugging Ruth furiously for a minute, I proceeded to perform a triumphal war-dance round the place, to the intense astonishment of the old man.

'He's mad!' exclaimed Zekel angrily.

'Yes,' I said, 'for joy. I've treed him!'

'Who? who?' cried Zekel.

'The thief!' I cried. 'I know him well. But stop a bit: be ready to-morrow, and we'll have him safe.'

'But, what? how?' began the old man.

'Never mind,' I said sturdily, as I strode about the place.

'How did yew find out?' he said again.

'Wait till to-morrow!' I shouted.

'But tell me how.'

'Wait till to-morrow!'

'He is mad,' cried Zekel angrily.

'Wait till to-morrow!' I cried again.

'But'——

'Wait till to-morrow!' I cried once more, almost beside myself with joy; and then, for fear of being talked out of my secret, which might get wind, I ran into my own sleeping-place, which that night turned out to be misnamed.

The next morning, I laid my revolver upon a

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little shelf just beneath the counter, and seeing my motions, old Zekel did the same, and then an anxious day passed, during which I could plainly see that the old man was in anything but a good humour, and had but very little faith in my declaration. Ruth looked heavy-eyed and reproachful, and she did not speak, though I do not think that the look of encouragement I gave her was without its effect.

The day went on, and all through the morning I eagerly scanned each piece of money I took till my heart began to sink for want of confirmation of my suspicions; but at last a customer or two came in, and when they were served and went away, my heart gave a great jump, for I was now sure, and could hardly contain my exultation.

Night came without anything eventful taking place; old Zekel was savage as a grizzly; for at every hint he dropped, I only said: 'Wait a little.' Ruth, too, looked hopeless and disappointed, while, when night came, and I had nothing to shew, the old man's fury was fierce, as I tried to pacify him in vain.

The next day I was hopeful still, for the same two customers came; and at night, when my heart was sinking, and I could not look Zekel in the face, up it came right to my throat with a bob, and then set to beating furiously, for the man I had spotted down in my own mind slowly sauntered into the store, called for an 'eye-opener,' swallowed it; asked for a cigar—one of the best—which was handed to him in a box, carefully chosen, rolled upon his tongue, and then placed ready for smoking; while the customer rattled a five-dollar gold piece down upon the counter.

'Change here, Harry,' said Zekel, after assuring himself of the genuineness of the coin; and then, with trembling hands, I counted out the amount upon the rough counter.

'Give me a light, young man,' said the customer, leisurely picking up, coin by coin, the money I had laid upon the counter, and rejecting, as I had known him do before, two or three pieces which were worn and thin, for a reason which I could now perfectly understand.

I changed the pieces, and then, as he was picking them up, I gave Zekel a fierce kick in the leg, to call his attention, as exclaiming loudly: 'Did you ask for a light, sir?' I leaned over the counter, clutched him tightly by the collar with one hand, while with the other I presented the barrel of my revolver containing a lighted match.

What followed seemed to occupy only a few seconds, when my pistol was dashed up, sending a bullet through the shingle roof, as the man bounded to the door; but the next instant, there was another sharp ringing report; the man leaped from the ground, and fell just outside, shot through the leg; while, with more activity than I could have given him credit for, Old Zekel followed his shot, and presented his revolver at the groaning man's head.

CHAPTER VI.

Grin, laugh, and pucker up his face—a walnut was nothing to it—when I told Old Zekel of the trick.

'Have her, my boy?—Yes, of course yew shall: when yew like, when yew like.'

'No, I won't,' I said.

'Yew won't?' he said blankly.

'No; not when I like, but when she likes,' I said. And the reply I had told me that I should not have very long to wait, as the sequel proved.

'But tell me again, lad,' cried the old man; 'I could hear it for a hundred times; and there, I should never have found it out, I naw.'

'Well,' I said, telling him once more, 'it struck me all at once that night as I was turning over those half-dollars, and saw that they had a strange, bright, unnatural look for old money. Gold has, you know, a strange affinity for mercury, so much so, that, at the diggings, they mix quicksilver with the broken quartz, when it takes up all the gold, and they come away mixed together. Now, if you take some quicksilver, and put it in a bag with some sovereigns, in a short time it will all have disappeared; and your sovereigns, or five-dollar pieces, will be all plated over with it, and look like so many shillings, or twenty cents. So their dodge has been to rub silver money with quicksilver, knowing you kept gold and silver together, come and spend it with you in the morning; while our friend there with the shot-hole in his leg would come and get change of a night, getting with it, most likely, one, two, or three five-dollar gold pieces given him for twenty cents, which they would look just like in the evening, after lying in that bag side by side with the quicksilvered pieces. And now, I don't think you'll mix them again, will you?—Oh! Your hand isn't light, though, upon one's back.'

'But he got his change this time, eh? my lad, eh?' and once more the walnut face was puckered up. 'He won't want any more, will he? Nary cent. But there, lad, I could listen to it a hundred times: quicksilvered pieces—gold—affinity—turned white; and did me! Old Raw done thoroughly. But there, lad, tell me again. Yew're a lad of mettle!'

'Well, thank you,' I said; 'but suppose we change the subject now to something for which I have a great affinity.' And we proceeded at once to talk about dear Ruth.

THE PEOPLE OF THE PARANÁ.

The English consul for Rosario, who, a few years ago, made the eastern world familiar with the natural beauties and the great resources of the Argentine republics, now gives it a description of the Paraná,* as he prefers to call the River of Silver, rejecting the appellation Rio de la Plata, conferred upon the western stream by Sebastian Cabot, after he had exchanged with the Guarani Indians, near Paraguay, what the historian styles 'some worthless drugs,' for many valuable silver ornaments which they were wearing. The grand old title Paraná, 'resembling the sea,' has much more meaning and beauty, and is not, like the other, suggestive of the successful chicanery which aided unscrupulous cruelty, in the European conquest of the New World. This book has been written with the intention of affording the fullest and clearest information to persons intending to

* *The Paraná, with Incidents of the Paraguayan War and South American Recollections, from* 1861 *to* 1868. By Thomas J. Hutchinson, H.B.M. Consul for Rosario. London: Edward Stanford.

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emigrate to the Argentine regions, and pressing the advantages of the country, as a field for emigration, upon public attention.

The advantages which the Argentine and Uruguayan republics offer to the emigrant are doubtless great, supposing the first and very important difficulty of the expense of the voyage —we are alluding now to emigration from Great Britain and Ireland—to be surmounted. The climate is mild, the soil is rich, and in its first fertility, and the great rivers are navigable. Capital, industry, energy, and intelligence are scarce among the native population, so that emigrants who introduce and use these elements of success have it very much their own way; and a system of well-organised emigration, composed of men of capital and labourers—there is no career, no place for the professions and the smaller industries—might be a very fine thing indeed. It is not likely the fine thing will come to pass, because men of capital find use for it, with large profit, much nearer than the Argentine republics; and 'hands that are expert with the shovel, the hoe, and most of all, the plough,' which Mr Hutchinson says are the emigrants wanted 'out there,' cannot afford, even if helped as liberally as any government could be induced to help them, to go to South America. Then there are three objections in the way of emigration, which are undeniably forcible: Spanish is the language of the country; the governments are not founded on stable bases; none of these governments will protect immigrants, who would therefore be obliged to protect themselves, a task whose magnitude is much more easily understood from Mr Hutchinson's narrative than the means of its accomplishment. But apart from its chief ostensible purpose, the book is full of interest for stay-at-home travellers. Remembering the dreadful deeds of Cortes and Pizarro, one cannot be altogether displeased to learn how the first Spaniards who landed on the shore of the Paraná were treated. Funes relates that in 1515, when the squadron of Solis came in sight, the Charruas Indians appeared in large numbers on the northern coast, and offered, by gestures, various presents of game and country produce, to induce the strangers on shore. For a time, Solis was distrustful; but as they left these gifts of friendship on the beach, and retired out of sight, the navigator proceeded to land with some of his people, and all unarmed. A party of the Indians, who had concealed themselves in a small grove between Maldonado and Monte Video, fell upon, killed, and ate them, in sight of the fleet that contained their companions. Mr Hutchinson does not think this is proof that cannibalism existed 'as an institution' among the Charruas. Perhaps not; but it is difficult to discern the moral difference between an 'institution' and an exceptional festival. They may not have cared about eating Indian; but plump foreigner, with felonious intentions, was another thing. At all events, it is not likely that the meal of proud invaders was an entirely original and spontaneous idea; and the historians Guzman and Centenura state that anthropophagy prevailed in other parts of South America, and that the cannibals ate human flesh on the principle of many African tribes—that is, the belief that eating their enemies made them more valiant, if not invincible.

Ten years later, Cabot arrived at the mouth of the Paraná, ascended the river above Rosario, and built the fort called del Santo Espiritu, had a ship constructed in the port, made treaties with several tribes, and ascended to the confluence of the Paraguay and Paraná. He had a good deal of fighting, but always conquered in the end, and ultimately penetrated beyond the boundary of the Guarani tribe to where Asuncion, the capital of Paraguay, now stands. This was a great achievement for one man, and thenceforth the Spanish rule, though occasionally troubled, and marked by several individual tragedies, was secure. Many leaders of the succeeding adventurers were murdered; some were utterly disheartened, and gave up the golden dream; but the Spanish cities rose; the forts were garrisoned; the Indian tribes, sometimes victorious, and frequently taking horrible vengeance, were driven back. Buenos Ayres was established and garrisoned; but La Garay, who accomplished it, was murdered. By 1620, the vast territories which are known now as the South American republics were European possessions, and the Indian tribes were intruders on their native soil. The developments of commerce, the increase of population, and the large addition to our knowledge of natural history, which are among the subjects of congratulation supplied by Mr Hutchinson's book, are supplemented after a fashion which will be found very pleasant by that numerous class of human beings who can by no means understand Argentine politics and statistics, by a great deal of delightful information respecting the Indian tribes, who have not suffered any kind of change, apparently, except in the matter of cannibalism, since they ate Solis and his companions. There is much generic resemblance between them, but considerable special unlikeness, so that one can follow the narrator from tribe to tribe without tiring of them. The Chaco Indians, concerning whom many writers have drawn very largely on their imagination, both in praising and in stigmatising them, find fair treatment from Mr Hutchinson. He repeats the story, of which one is never tired, of their 'noble horsemanship,' and adds to it one curt little sentence, which conveys an extremely ludicrous picture: 'The women of the *haut monde*, among the Chaco Indians, ride as men do, and carry behind them a large plume of ostrich feathers, which presents a very curious appearance when the horse is at full gallop.'

No trace now remains of the brief influence of Christianity among the tribes, who, in 1610, received the first Jesuit missionaries, Cataldino and Mazeto, with warm welcome, after the long series of wars, tyrannies, treacheries, and cruelties they had endured from the invading Spaniards. The first Jesuit establishment was founded at Loreto, in the province of Guayra, which was the commencement of the famous Missiones, which extended between Entre Rios and Corrientes provinces, dividing the eastern portion of the Argentine Republic from the empire of Brazil. So completely has all their work perished, that it is hard to arrive at any knowledge of what their influence really was, yet there exists the curious and significant fact which Mr Mansfield tells us, that one hundred thousand Indians, professing Christianity, declared themselves ready to fight for their teachers against the officials and soldiers of King Charles III. of Spain, who were ordered to carry out the decree of banishment in the year 1767. Many of the aboriginal tribes are entirely extinct, but those of the Pampas and Gran Chaco are still numerous, and the 'Gauchos,' who are of mixed Indian and Spanish

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blood, afford a curious study. They are spare and active, live entirely on meat, without bread, salt, or any kind of vegetable, and drink 'maté.' They gamble madly, and find in it their greatest delight. The women share this passion; the wife of a working Gaucho has been known to stake, and lose, every article of clothing on her except her chemise. Their achievements in horsemanship, and with the lasso and bolas, are truly wonderful; and their games of skill, dexterity, and daring, various and remarkable. The main cause of the popularity of the Dictator Rosas was his expertness in, and patronage of, Gaucho games. The Gauchos seem to do a great part of all the work done in the country, and a considerable share of the fighting. It is rather ungracious to describe them as being deficient in comprehension 'of the dignity or worth of human labour.' If they do the work, and other people profit by it, they may well be excused the absence of fine sentiments which there is nothing in their life or their surroundings to inspire. Elsewhere than in South America, the dignity and worth of human labour is more perceptible to thinkers than to workers.

'No sight,' says Mr Hutchinson, 'can be more picturesquely savage than a review of Gaucho soldiers. In 1858, General Urquiza, at that time president of the Argentine Republic, had reviewed before him an army of fourteen thousand. These Gauchos, especially the chiefs, were allowed to dress as they pleased; and therefore a great rivalry was generated between the commanders from the different provinces as to which would make the most brilliant turn-out before the captain-general. Ponchos of the most varied and flashy colours, calzonillas set off with the richest lace, most wonderful and gorgeous spurs, while the gear of the horses was adorned with a profusion of silver and gold. One Gaucho chief, from Cordoba, had his steed caparisoned with gold bedeckings to the value of fifty thousand francs.'

The semi-wild people may not be pleasant in real life, but they are much more interesting to read about than the Spanish and English colonists; and the country itself—the beautiful country of the Pampas, with its immense space, its suggestive grandeur, and its magnificent climate—is more interesting still. A ride over the plains, from Pavon to Rosario must be a delightful experience, for its real, and still more for its imaginary features. The mirage is frequent there, and as one rides along, the fresh 'pampero' blowing health and fragrance around, all sorts of fantastic images float before the vision, and break up the monotony of the vast plains. 'A white house appears like a ship at sea; and the troops of cattle, seen in this refracted atmosphere, as if their doubles were walking in air. The mirage is very temporary in location, and its position is constantly changing.'

The 'mataderos' and 'saladeros' (though these words mean slaughter-houses and salting-houses, they do not sound so ill) necessarily require a great deal of notice in a work on South America, and are very unpleasant subjects, except to those who make money by the repulsive processes carried on in them. It is much pleasanter to consider the immense expanse, the great natural beauty, and the presumably inexhaustible wealth of the Republic, which, with an area of 750,000 square miles, the greater part virgin soil, has a total population not equal to that of London. The over-crowded centres of toil may yet find an outlet in the direction of the vast Pampas, if all or any of the schemes detailed by Mr Hutchinson achieve a practical success. But first, the explosive order of politics must be abandoned, and at present there does not seem to be much chance of that. In the actual condition of things, the sparseness of population is an element in the beauty and interest of the country. The river voyage has glorious solitudes to offer to the eyes and the spirit of the traveller. From La Paz to Esquina, and thence to Goya, one hundred and fifty miles, the stillness and loneliness are most impressive. No noise of bird, or beast, or living thing is heard in the low marshy islands shadowed by lofty trees. Bright yellow and scarlet flowers glisten on the vivid green network of convolvuli which embraces the tree-trunks. The presence of strange animals, which are scared by the traveller, makes the solitude more impressive. The Gran Chaco is the wildest and most interesting portion of this huge territory, not only because of its hitherto unexplored botanical riches, but because there is the exciting feeling, in visiting it, that one is a trespasser on the Indian territory—a consciousness too nearly allied to the possibility of having one's scalp taken, to afford to the ordinary tourist all the pleasant excitement which Mr Hutchinson derived from it. He dwells rather complacently on the subject of this Indian territory. 'Everything to be met with in the Gran Chaco,' he says, 'speaks of its savagery, and tends to scare one. The relics of *toldas* (Indian huts) seen everywhere; the troops of wild horses; the frequent flitting by of ostriches; the screams of the parrot and caranecha; the twittering at night of millions of chattering insects; the desolate appearance of large whitish plains of salt or saltpetre, where once water has been; and the absence of anything like a purling stream, are its chief noticeable characteristics. In the profound stillness of the woods, where you take shelter from the almost tropical heat of a mid-day sun, you can find life under your feet in numerous ant colonies, in the burrows of biscachas (the Chaco rabbit), or the occasional presence of a beaver or armadillo. Now and then, you are conscious of an aguara, or American tapir, looking at you through the branches with an inquisitive though listless gaze, as if he wanted to know what business you had to come uninvited to his dominions.' Then there are the palm-trees, always beautiful, though less beautiful than in Africa, the rich scented orange-groves, and the clumps of grand forest trees, of immense height, and surrounded with the densest brushwood. The smaller forms of animal life abound; and in one instance, there is a remarkable contradiction to the ordinary experience of naturalists. The South American owls come out in the daylight: they are to be seen gravely watching by the biscacha holes under the blazing sun. Flocks of pheasants, woodcocks, and green parrots are constantly seen; and the insect world is numerously represented by some of its most beautiful and most aggravating varieties. One pleasant little creature, on whose pretty green body and shining black head Mr Hutchinson dwells quite fondly, 'sticks itself into any exposed part of our flesh, and, if allowed to do so, sucks our blood. The head is bent down to the work with the earnestness of a devoted student or mechanic, whilst the body is elevated, giving to the little beast the semblance of a ship on her beam-ends.'

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The province of Corrientes is full of interest, from its past history and its natural features, though at present it is a scene of desolation, in consequence of the war. Its greatest natural curiosity is the lake of Ybera. According to Funes, several Indian tribes inhabited the islands in this lake, the greater part of whose immense extent of seven hundred square leagues is covered with wood and aquatic plants, as well as alive with boa-constrictors and crocodiles. Its waters rise and fall with the increase and ebb of the river Paraná, although there is no visible communication between them. The vast extent of this great lake is composed of clear water, pools, marshes, *terra firma*, bramble-beds, and quagmires. In parts of it there are large sheets of water, on which are floating-islands, that become changed in their position by a strong wind. The beautiful colossal water-lily, the *Victoria regia*, is found growing on all the lakes of Corrientes, in which province it is called by the native Guaranis the *irupe*, a pretty word, but which simply means 'a large plate.'

Mr Hutchinson gives as lucid an account of the political condition of the Republic, and of the war between Paraguay and Brazil, as any man can give of things which are inextricably confusing to foreigners, and must be extremely bewildering to persons on the spot. The only thing quite clear to one's perception is, that we must wait until it is all over, if it ever is, to understand the war, and wait until things are settled, if they ever are, to comprehend the politics of the Argentine Republic. Such a state of affairs is hardly realisable by us; but surely we may take anything for granted concerning a country, in which a tombstone, erected to the memory of a certain well-known individual, records that he was buried beneath it at a certain date, 'after being assassinated by his friends.'

POLLY'S LIFE.

I RISE in the morning early, and get the breakfast spread;
I wash and dress the little ones, and make their milk and bread;
I walk with them to school, and then come back to mother,
To help her in the kitchen, or to sew a shirt for brother.

I sweep the floors, and dust the rooms; I get the dinner ready;
And all the neighbours wish their girls were as neat, and clean, and steady;
The lads look after me, and say: 'Her eyes and teeth are jolly;
Her voice how sweet, how small her feet; no lady's like our Polly.'

So I bow and smile to Dick, and I laugh and nod to Harry;
But they're much mistaken if they think I e'er intend to marry;
They only see half of my life, the part that they think real;
Ah, when my working-day is o'er, I live in a world ideal.

And when at night 'tis time to go to my chamber next the skies,
They would be surprised if they could see how it looks in Polly's eyes;
The bare white walls are hung with pink (it suits my complexion best),
And velvet curtains fall to the floor; and how grandly I am drest.

With ribbons rare my raven hair is decked by my waiting-maid,
Or bound with pearls, or flashing gems, and wreathed in many a braid;
Rich lustrous silks are softened by folds of beautiful lace;
Bracelets of gold clasp my rounded arms, and earrings hang by my face.

And then with my fan, and flowers so sweet, I start for brilliant balls;
And lords and ladies are glad to greet the beauty that graces their halls;
Lord Walter claims my hand for a waltz, and we're soon among the dancers;
And then Sir Frederick calls me false, though I promised him the Lancers!

Too soon my chaperon, Lady Maud, says she really can wait no longer;
I whisper Lord Walter, I'll ride with him next week if I feel stronger;
We had walked in the winter-garden, he had plucked a rose for my hair;
I placed it myself in a china vase: I wake—it is not there.

But the six o'clock bell is ringing for the men to go to work;
The children are having a game of play (that Bobby *is* such a Turk);
And I make my father's coffee, and I wash the steps of the door.—
What shall I say to Lord Walter when we meet in the blue boudoir?

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YEARS ago—how long I need not tell—I wished to learn the two prominent accomplishments of a gentleman of that day, fencing and dancing. A friend gave me the address of a tenant of his in Russell Square, a French refugee, who taught these arts. One afternoon I called and asked was M. Jacques at home. A stout, hearty-looking English girl opened the door, and replied that the old gentleman was in, would I 'come in here?' 'Here' was a small room on the right of the passage.

The heavy slipshod feet toiled up the stone staircase; I heard a door half opened, and the murmuring of voices, and then the slipshod feet toiled slowly up another flight, and a firm yet light tread descending told me that M. Jacques was coming.

The door opened, and a tall, white-haired, soldier-like figure entered the room, and the keen eyes swallowed me and my belongings at a glance.

'Good-day, sir. You are English; but, do you speak French?'

'*Un peu.*'

'Ah! I see, a very, very little; let us then talk in your tongue till by and by.'

Clearly, I did not speak French well, in M. Jacques' opinion.

'You desire me for what?'

'My friend, Mr Wilson'——

'Ah! your friend—he is a very good man—a gracious man; yes.'

'He stated that you could teach fencing and dancing.'

'Yes, that is true; I can teach fencing and dancing. Is it for that you want me?'

'It is. I desire to learn both accomplishments as speedily as possible.'

'Good; that is well: I like your energy. When will you begin?'

'Now, if it suits you.'

'Quite so. I am at your service.'

'But you have not mentioned the terms.

'Terms?'

'Yes. How much shall I have to pay?'

'Yes, to pay. I had forgotten. You shall pay me for four lessons, one guinea. Is it well? Are you satisfac—satisfacted?'

'Satisfied.'

'Yes, that is it. Are you satisfied?'

'Quite. I will take twelve lessons in each art.'

'Twelve lessons! Bah! you shall need little when you shall reach the ending of your course, if you have descent, as you call it here—blood—not bourgeois—you understand.'

'My father, sir, was a surgeon, the son of a poor county gentleman. I am'——

'*N'importe.* I can see what you are. I shall make you a good swordsman in a little time, if you will keep your eye on your adversary as you kept it on me when I made that speech to you. You have what you call "pluck." Is it right—"pluck?"'

'Quite right.'

'Then come, and we shall try your eye and wrist up-stairs.'

He went up-stairs, and I followed the old soldier. We entered a large well-lighted room on the first floor, bare of all furniture but a piano, then a rarer instrument than now, and a few chairs. On the piers between the windows hung some foils and masks, while some half-dozen single-sticks stood in the corner.

'Now, monsieur, will you place yourself there, as thus: with your body upright, and your arms hanging loosely to your sides, *comme ça.*'

The old gentleman put himself in position; as he did so, I noticed the slightest limp, the slightest possible, but still a limp—that I saw, as I watched him during the lesson, was from a stiffening of the knee-joint. I thought it was a curious thing to be taking lessons in the most active of exercises of an old gentleman who was lame, but I could see at once that he was a most perfect master of the weapon.

'That will do for to-day for the sword, monsieur; now for the dance, if monsieur is not too much fatigued.'

'Not at all—not the least.'

'Well, then, to begin. You know a little of the dance?'

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'A very, very little—as little as of French, monsieur.'

'Ah! you shall know all better in a little.'

He took from off the piano a small violin and bow, and ran a rapid scale on the strings.

'Good. Now, place yourself *comme ça*. One, two, three. You see it is simple—first position, second position, third position—you see. No, no, monsieur, that second position is wrong, all wrong; *comme ça*. *Un, deux*, now—— *Peste!* my limb is troublesome to-day; I cannot dance.'

'Another day'—— I began.

'No, no; remain; we shall manage.'

He moved to the door, and half-opening it, called impatiently in French: 'Julie, Julie, descend quickly in your shoes.' In a few seconds entered Julie.

Julie! It is a long time now since I first saw Julie. Can I picture her? A tall dark girl, with black—intensely black—large eyes, child's eyes; a small mouth, full lips, and a form thin, bony, and lithe as a grayhound's; dressed in a low child's dress, much too small and short for her. She was like a child of ten, seen through a glass that made her the size of a girl of eighteen. 'Mademoiselle de Bonheur—Monsieur Arthur Forrester.'

She courtesied low, in the style then in fashion; I made my best bow. 'Julie, my limb is to-day weak; I cannot teach; you shall teach this gentleman his dance.'

'Oui, mon père.'

'Now, begin. Un, deux, trois. Regard mademoiselle's feet, monsieur; it is her feet that dance. Un, deux, trois.' And so on for nearly half an hour, during which the eternal 'Un, deux, trois' was occasionally interrupted by little snatches of the strings with the fingers, and sudden sweepings of the bow over the instrument. 'Good, monsieur: you have life, you have soul; you shall yet dance—you feel the music. It shall be creditable to me to have taught you.—Julie, you shall wish monsieur good-day.'

'Bonjour, monsieur,' said Julie; and with a low courtesy she left us.

'And when will you come again?'

'The day after to-morrow I can come.'

'Bien; come then. I shall hope my limp will then be well. Bonjour, monsieur;' and the old gentleman rang the bell and bowed me out.

The day came, and I went again, and was directly shewn up-stairs into the room.

'Ah, monsieur, we are unfortunate; my limb is no use. This climate of yours is bad for old soldiers; my wounded limb aches for want of the sun.'

'I shall be glad to call another day, if more convenient.'

'No, no; it is of no consequence; Julie will teach you. Will you be so kind as to open the door for me?—I am crippled.'

'Certainly.'

'Julie, Julie!' thundered the old man; 'descend quickly, with your shoes and your *corsage*.'

Julie came in speedily, and with a small leather breast-guard in her hand. 'Bonjour, monsieur.'

'Bonjour, Mademoiselle Ju—— de Bonheur.'

'See, now, you shall take your lesson from mademoiselle,' said monsieur, as he buckled on her leather armour and fitted her mask. 'Now, salute. Julie, salute.' Julie went through the motions with an ease and grace that excelled her father's. 'Now, you must regard the hand of mademoiselle; the time has not come to you to watch her eyes. Now, *en guard*. Good. Carte—thrust.'

I thrust as gently as possible, while Julie, with the foil in her left hand, slipped the fingers of the right along my blade to aid the bend—in true fencing style.

'Bah! Monsieur, do not fear; it has not arrived to you yet to be dangerous to mademoiselle. Again, that. You must lunge with your body, and of mademoiselle have no fear; she can guard herself. Your nails up a little more. Now, the carte—thrust. That is better. Again.'

The situation was horrible; to be compelled to thrust full in the chest of this child; but there was no help for it, and I did it; and so we went on through the whole of the motions—prime, second, quint, parade, low carte, and the rest of it—Julie placing herself in the proper positions, and thrusting and guarding with a vigour and grace that more than equalled her teacher's.

After the fencing came the dancing, with its 'Un, deux, trois,' and a repetition of the caution that mademoiselle's feet should be regarded, as it was with those she was teaching.

The limb continued weak for some time, and the lessons continued to be given by Julie, and as my eyes began to get accustomed to look on hers through the haze of the wires of the mask—for I had become practised enough to be permitted to cross foils with her in real attack and defence—I saw a change had come over them; the child was growing a woman: there was no longer the stare of childish curiosity, or the simple glance of the practised fencer; there was more, the woman's soul waking in them. Her form altered; the angles were becoming rounded, the grace was more graceful, but the thin tightly stretched skin on the face and shoulders, that altered but little.

One day I bought a box of chocolates for the old gentleman, who was at last well enough to take the foils; he ate some, and gave the box to Julie, and we went on with our lesson, she remaining in the room for the dancing. When the lesson was over, he said: 'Ah! how I will enjoy one of your little chocolates.'

Julie started as if from a dream—the box was empty. He laughed, and said: 'Ah, my child, you are so fond of chocolates, you have not left your father one. *Ah, coquine*'—and he pinched her ear—'ah, greedy one!'

She blushed, the tears started in her eyes, she said nothing.

'Bah! Now, monsieur, I have broken my string.—Julie, go get me—— No; you don't know where; I'll myself go.—Mademoiselle shall play you some music while I am gone, monsieur; in a few minutes I shall return.'

The old man left the room with his instrument, and Julie turned to the piano and sat down. As I opened it, she said, with her voice full of tears: 'Monsieur, you must not think me a greedy child.'

'But,' said I laughingly, 'you ate the whole box.'

'True, monsieur; but since last Sunday I have eaten nothing but some bread—since yesterday, nothing. I am not greedy; I was only hungry and forgetful.'

'My God, mademoiselle! what can you mean?

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You are destroying yourself. Why did you not eat —at your age?'

'At my age! There was nothing to eat; after Mary had eaten, there was nothing to eat.'

'Heavens! Poor child! is this possible? I, wretch that I am, have never once offered to pay your father what I owe him; why, I have had one course of lessons after another, and paid for none. Why did not your father speak—remind me?'

'Monsieur de Bonheur would die first.'

'I will pay this moment. Fool that I was, not to see it in your face!'

'Am I then *so* thin?'

'Thin! poor child!'

'Child! I am seventeen, monsieur.'

'Seventeen, mademoiselle!'

'Oui, monsieur; j'ai dix-sept ans.'

'I am very sorry; I will at once see your father.'

'Do not disturb yourself so much, monsieur; it is nothing. If it had not been for the chocolates, you would not have known about it at all, but I could not let you think me a greedy child. You will not speak to my father, as if I had told you? Promise me. He would never forgive me.'

'Mademoiselle, I promise.'

The old gentleman now entered with the new string properly adjusted, and once more we began the one, two, three, four.

'*Machinalement*, Julie, *machinalement;* monsieur is to *learn* to dance, not to dance for his pleasure. Again that. Un, deux, trois, comme ça.'

And so we went through the minuet and the new waltz, to the scraping of the violin; and whenever we moved a little too much, as though we were dancing for pleasure instead of practice, the old gentleman's 'Machinalement, Julie, un, deux, trois,' speedily brought us to task level.

At the close of the lesson, I stated that I was uncertain about being able to come again for some time, and should be glad to discharge, as far as money could, my obligations to him.

'N'importe, monsieur; when you have completed, will be good.'

'I must beg you to allow me to settle the matter now.'

'Bien,' said monsieur, with a shrug, 'if you wish it;' and he dropped the guineas without counting them into his waistcoat pocket, with an air of indifference that would have been laughable but for the story I had just heard from poor Julie. I left the house, and waited at the street-corner to see what would happen; and in a few minutes I saw the English girl come out with her basket, and presently return with something in the basket, and on the top a little bottle of foreign make; and then I left, determined that while my ignorance of fencing and dancing could prevent it, Julie should never eat another box of chocolates from sheer hunger.

It was more than a week before I again went to the house. The change was complete; Julie was a woman, a beautiful brilliant woman. Food had acted on her as by magic. Her dress too was altered, higher in the throat, lower in the skirt, but still short enough to shew the most delicate foot and ankle I ever saw.

The old man saw no difference. When the limb was well, I fenced with him while Julie played; when the limb was bad, I fenced and danced with Julie, with only an occasional 'Plus machinalement, Julie; un, deux, trois.' And so it went on for months, till the old gentleman said to me: 'Monsieur, it is time for you to leave us. You are a good swordsman: it is only practice that you need to be one of the best. I can no longer take your money for teaching you, as I can teach you nothing.'

I pleaded for just one more course of lessons: I could not yet disarm.

'True, monsieur, you cannot; you shall have one more course of lessons. My wrist is now getting stiff, as well as my limb; but Julie's is of steel. She shall teach you. When you can disarm Julie, there is no more we can teach you.'

I don't know how it happened, but just at this time, when my admiration—I don't say love, but admiration—for Julie was at its highest point, I fell in love, literally headlong; not a moment's warning was given me. I went to my mother's one evening, and on entering the room, saw my destiny.

I went to take my lessons as usual, but I took no interest in them. I was changed; and never did I get fiercer thrusts in the fencing lessons. Six or eight times, my foil sprang out of my hand, as if I had been a novice. I was nettled. What had made Julie so angry? There was a flash in her eye. What had I done or said to cause it? I gave up guessing, and attended to the lesson once more. Her foil, like a lithe serpent, seized mine, and threw it with a loud clang against the wall.

'Doucement, Julie; doucement, ma fille; doucement. Monsieur is fatigued. You had better cease.'

And never once during the dancing lesson that followed was uttered the usual 'Machinalement, Julie;' all the life and energy seemed to have left her.

The next lesson presented the same features, a little more subdued.

Between the third and last lesson, I happened to meet Julie and her father in the street; I bowed; and my companion asked who they were.

'My fencing-master and his child.'

'Child! Arthur.'

'Daughter, I should have said. I'm going there to-morrow for my last lesson.'

'Oh!' And my destiny was more silent than usual during our walk home.

On the morrow, I went to Russel Square; and before we had been engaged ten minutes, the old gentleman was called away to see some visitor. He left the room with an apology to me, and I turned to renew my contest with Julie. She had thrown aside her mask, and was standing with the point of the foil in her left hand.

'Now, Julie,' said I—for insensibly we had dropped into the way of calling each other Julie and Arthur—'now, Julie, once more.'

'My name is Bonheur, monsieur; Mademoiselle de Bonheur. Who was that blonde Englishwoman I met you with yesterday?'

'Who was it? That lady, Julie, will be my wife in less than a month.—What 's the matter, Julie? Are you ill?'

'It is nothing. Take off your mask: we need not always play like children, monsieur.'

I threw it off into the corner of the room, and we began. I was quite cool; she, evidently under the influence of some strong passion, with amazing energy. Therefore she lunged at me with all her force and skill, and I felt once, as the point of her foil glided down mine, that though the leather was there, *the button at the end was gone.*

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'The button of your foil is off, mademoiselle.'

'I know it, monsieur; I have taken it off. Now, monsieur, you shall be married in a month, but not as you are. It is your fair, false face she loves; but it shall not be fair: she shall find marks on it that will change it! It *shall* not be the face that *I* know so well that shall be hers to caress! No, no.'

'But, Julie'——

'Be guarded, monsieur; the foil has no button. I doubt if you shall live a month.'

And she attacked me with a fury that made me need every artifice she had taught me to ward off her thrusts. At last, it came carte over the arm; I parried badly, and the pointed blade ripped up my arm from wrist to shoulder.

The moment she saw the blood, she threw away the foil, and rushed towards me. I sank on to the couch fainting from loss of blood, with just strength enough left to say: 'Break off the point, Julie, dear,' and then swooned.

When I came to, my arm was bound up, and I heard her sob as I lay with my mind awake but my body motionless: 'Oh, my Arthur! my love! I have killed you! I have killed you, for whom I would have died! Oh, wretch that I am, he will die—he will die!'

She laid her face on my breast, and shook me with her sobs. 'Don't cry, Julie, don't cry; it was an accident, I know, and'——

'No—you will live—you must live to forgive me. It was not an accident—I meant to kill you, wretch that I am!'

I could only say: 'Don't cry, Julie, dear. What do they say? Where is the point? Give it me.'

She gave me the broken-off part of the foil. I saw it had been rubbed on some stone till it was as sharp as a needle.

When M. de Bonheur returned, he brought with him his visitor, who by good fortune happened to be an old comrade of his.

'Well, are you better now? How did it happen?'

'The point of the foil broke off, and the edge took me on the wrist as I lunged.'

'Bah!—Julie, you must have guarded very badly to do that. Where is the foil?—Yes; I see the point is broken off. Where is the point?'

'It must be about the room.'

The visitor looked at Julie, and said: 'It does not matter; it can be found by and by, when this gentleman has gone. He will be strong enough in an hour to go—meanwhile, let him rest a little; Julie can take care of him.'

'Ah, Julie, but it was an awkward guard of yours, and the foil too must have been bad; I shall have to complain to the maker.'

Poor Julie sat by me, quite penitent and quite forgiven, for an hour or more, and when we heard them coming, I turned to her and said: 'I quite forgive you, Julie, dear; you must love me still like a brother, as I shall love you like a sister.' And then—well, there's no harm in these things between brothers and sisters—and then I went home, rather faint and weak, to explain matters, and meet my destiny.

As for Julie, the family property of the De Bonheurs was restored to the old gentleman some months afterwards, and they quitted England; soon after which I received from the Marquise de Charenton a letter which I at once burned, beginning, 'My dear Brother,' and ending, 'Your most affectionate sister, Julie.'

Among the treasures of the past which I, like others, keep so carefully and so secretly, there is a packet that contains six inches of steel, and on it is engraved but one word—'Julie.'

ST PAUL'S.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

THE late Dean Milman has left to his fellow-countrymen a most fitting bequest—the annals of his own cathedral. If it is not so interesting as the records of Westminster Abbey, so lately compiled by Dean Stanley, the fault is in the subject, not in the writer. St Paul's has not the general interest belonging to it which surrounds its sister structure. Its history is essentially sacerdotal; and, except in late years, the bones of our mightiest men were not interred within its vaults. The struggles of which it was the scene were for the most part what at this distance of time appear almost party conflicts; although the events that resulted were often of enormous consequence—at all events to those immediately concerned. A great many good folks were burned to death, for instance, upon doctrinal points, which do not, now-a-days, seem very important, but which the state, by the mouths of the preachers at Paul's Cross, pronounced to be indispensable, at all events to the salvation of the body. Dry, and comparatively dull, as is the early part of this instructive volume,* one almost prefers it to the terrible details of religious cruelty which light up the central portion of the narrative as with the glare of the Smithfield fires.

It is not known with any exactness at what period St Paul's first became a spot devoted to religious worship, although, from the report of Camden and others concerning the excavations which took place there in the reign of Edward III., when 'stags' horns, boars' tusks, and instruments and vessels thought to be sacrificial' were found, it has been supposed that a temple of Diana once occupied the site. That there was a catacomb beneath, or on the declivity of the hill, seems, however, certain, which doubtless contained the remains of successive masters and inhabitants of London. 'Upon digging the foundation for the fabric of St Paul's, Sir Christopher Wren found under the graves of the latter ages, in a row below, the burial-places of the Saxon times. The Saxons, as it appeared, were accustomed to line their graves with chalk-stones, though some more eminent were entombed in coffins of whole stone. Below these were British graves, wherein were found ivory and wooden pins of a hard wood, seemingly box, in abundance, of about six inches long. It seems the bodies were only wrapt up and buried in woollen shrouds, which, being consumed, the pins remained entire. In the same row, and deeper, were Roman urns intermixed. This was eighteen feet or more, and belonged to the colony when Romans and Britons lived and died together.'

It is probable that Mellitus, the companion of Augustine, who fixed his episcopal see in London, first used the spot on which St Paul's now stands as a place of Christian worship; and in obedience to the wise counsel of Pope Gregory the Great—that places hallowed by the religious feeling of

* *Annals of St Paul's Cathedral.* By Henry Hart Milman, D.D. London: Murray.

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the heathen were to be thus utilised—he perhaps turned what was a heathen temple into an orthodox fane. His fourth successor was Erkenwald, whose munificence towards the fabric was such, that his memory was long held in higher honour within the cathedral than its patron saint himself. The Saxon kings that followed him abetted his efforts, and Canute the Dane (we have authentic proof) ratified their splendid donations. But of this first edifice (in which Lanfranc certainly sat in convocation at the head of his clergy) we have no detailed record, except that we know it was destroyed by that enemy which was destined to overcome it again and again—fire—in 1087. One of the last acts of William the Norman was to contribute stone towards the rebuilding of this structure. In Henry I.'s reign a great portion of it seems to have been burned down once more. In Henry II.'s time it was sufficiently restored to admit of a solemn scene before its high altar, namely, the excommunication of its own bishop. 'It was, as it seems, during the solemn service at St Paul's that an emissary of Becket had the boldness to enter the cathedral, to advance to the altar, and thrust the roll bearing the sentence into the hands of the officiating priest, and to proclaim with a loud voice: "Know all men, that Gilbert, Bishop of London, is excommunicated by Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury." He escaped, with some difficulty, from the ill-usage of the people.'

The next striking incident within the walls of St Paul's was the arraignment of William de Longchamp, the chancellor, for many atrocious and tyrannous crimes, including ill-usage of the Archbishop of York. Prince John (his brother Richard being in the Holy Land) presided, and all the bishops met in the nave. In the same reign, Paul's Cross first became remarkable as the place from which William Fitz Osbert poured forth his inflammatory harangues against the crown. He seized and held the tower of St Mary-le-Bow, and being hard pressed, set fire to that sacred edifice, dedicated to the Virgin; they dragged him out of the flames only to carry him naked through the streets, and burn him alive in chains, as a caution against democratic principles. Paul's Cross thereupon, we read, without much wonder, 'was silent for many years.'

This spot was more historic than even the cathedral itself, outside whose walls—at the north-east corner—it stood. It was originally, perhaps, like other crosses, set up at the entrance of the churchyard, to remind the passers-by to pray for the dead interred within. But at an early period a pulpit was erected of wood, on a stone base, with a canopy of lead. These were supplanted by a more splendid stone cross with a pulpit, of whose grace and beauty London was justly proud. The discourses from Paul's Cross ruled the public mind more than ought that was preached elsewhere. 'Except the king and his retinue, who had a covered gallery, the congregation, even the mayor and aldermen, stood in the open air.' Here papal bulls were promulgated; here excommunications were thundered out; here sinners of high position did penance; here heretics knelt and read their recantations, or, if obstinate, were marched off to Smithfield.' Nor was it only with church matters that it was connected; royal edicts were published here; kings proclaimed and traitors denounced. What strange scenes must that north-eastern corner of St Paul's have witnessed! The Reformed religion was in fact proclaimed here, and afterwards recanted. On the latter occasion, when the preacher began to inveigh against Ridley, a dagger was thrown at him, and a riot raised. Ridley himself had preached there a few years before in a manner little to his credit. On the accession of Lady Jane Grey, he had denounced both the sisters, Mary and Elizabeth, as bastards. Then, when Jane's cause was lost, he had stolen away in a dastardly manner to Cambridge, in order to make his peace—but in vain—with Mary. Many of our so-called martyrs appear here in indifferent colours; though, indeed, their persecutors were more base, more mean, more cruel. From the reign of Henry VIII. to the end of that of Elizabeth, these Annals are stained with blood, and smirched with fire. Scarcely a bishop on either side but exhibited a slavish awe when his party were depressed, and a tyrannous brutality when it became uppermost. It is a sad page of human nature.

Perhaps the most terrible scene of which St Paul's was witness, was the reading of the Interdict pronounced against the whole realm in the reign of King John; 'when London heard the fearful office which shut all the churches of the land to the devout worshippers, and deprived them of the prayers, the masses, all the spiritual blessings and privileges of the church. Infants lay unbaptised, except with some hasty and imperfect ceremony! Joyless marriages were hurriedly performed in the church porch: the dying yearned in vain for anointment with the blessed oil and for the holy Eucharist; the dead were buried in unconsecrated ground; when day after day the bells ceased to toll, and the few citizens passed by or pressed in vain against the inexorably closed doors of the silent church.' Characteristically enough in those days of respecting of persons, 'the Bishop of London, who, without resistance, had pronounced the fatal ban against his whole diocese, had fears or conscientious scruples about the sentence against the king. The godless John alone remained unsmitten, untouched.' The greatest humiliation that this realm ever suffered took place before the altar of St Paul's, when the interdict was removed, and the legate of the pope received the cession of the kingdom as a fief of the holy see. The English clergy, with the exception of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who 'could not suppress his deep groans during the ceremony,' submitted patiently to this outrage; but when another legate, in the succeeding reign, preached the first sermon of which we have any report, at the cathedral, his insolent words went not unanswered. The Holy Father had been so indiscreet as to meddle with vested interests, and when his ambassador came to the new canon, which required a dispensation from the pope to hold pluralities, there arose from the dignified ecclesiastics who surrounded him 'a low and ominous murmur.' Cantelupe, Bishop of Worcester, took off his mitre, and, in the name of the clergy of England, made his solemn protest. 'Many of the prelates of England were men of high birth. They had been wont, by holding many benefices, to maintain their dignity, to shew generous hospitality, and to be prodigal in alms-deeds. Some were old; they would not consent to be robbed of their income, and reduced to ignominious poverty. Some were young and bold, and would endure a hard struggle before they would surrender their rights. For myself,

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before I was a bishop, I made a firm resolution not to be so plundered.' And *that* matter was reconsidered by the Holy Father.

In 1250, Primate Boniface (the nominee of the pope, and a foreigner), having obtained from Rome a grant of first-fruits from all the benefices in his province, and spent them, set forth on a visitation, 'not, as it was said, for the glory of God, but, as too plainly appeared, in quest of ungodly gain. He appeared in London, and treated the bishop and his jurisdiction with contempt. The Dean of St Paul's stood by his bishop. 'The primate appeared with his cuirass gleaming under his pontifical robes. The dean closed the doors of his cathedral against him. Boniface solemnly excommunicated Henry, Dean of St Paul's, and his chapter, in the name of St Thomas the martyr of Canterbury. The sub-prior of St Bartholomew's (the prior was dead) fared still worse. He calmly pleaded the rights of the bishop; the wrathful primate rushed on the old man, struck him down with his own hand, tore his splendid vestment, and trampled it under foot.' A strange scene in the sacred edifice, truly.

In 1458 occurred on the same spot an imposing spectacle, though fated to bear no fruit. It was the solemn reconciliation of the claims of York and Lancaster. 'There was some dread of a collision between the hostile and ill-accordant factions. King Henry and Queen Margaret slept at the Bishop's Palace in the precincts. The great lords assembled in the chapel of that palace. The king, holding his full court, surrounded by Yorkists and Lancastrians, sat on a throne. The Archbishop Bourchier set the crown on his head. The procession to the church, preceded by the archbishop, his cross borne before him by the Bishop of Rochester, was met by the dean and chapter. Two and two came those terrible nobles, so soon to meet again in deadly battle—the Duke of Somerset and the Earl of Salisbury, the Duke of Exeter and the Earl of Warwick. Then came the poor king, crowned, with the sceptre in his hand. The queen followed smiling (oh! the bitterness of that smile), and "conversing familiarly" with the Duke of York. They knelt in prayer—one at least, the king, on his faldstool—in devout, earnest, Christian prayer. The nobles were on their knees behind. High mass was sung; the archbishop pronounced the benediction—"Go in peace!"—a benediction which had but a brief effect indeed. 'Thirteen years later, the body of the hapless Henry—not without strong suspicion of foul play—was displayed in the cathedral. Blood gushed from the king's nose—which was held a corroboration of this dark belief. Twelve years afterwards, Jane Shore did penance in St Paul's.' Her beauty appeared extraordinary as she walked in very scanty attire with a cross before her, and a paper in her hand, 'the gaze of the people flushing her fair cheeks with exquisite colour. They thought less of her shame than of the cruelty of the Protector.'

Perhaps they did, and certainly well they might. But nothing is so striking and so sad as the blindness of these days to the sense of justice, if only it was outraged by persons high enough in power. Even in the very few who exercised liberty of conscience, there seems to have been little of what we are now accustomed to call 'principle' of any sort. Dean Colet—whose intellectual qualities were for that time a perfect marvel—thought it no harm to hold, while yet only in subdeacon's orders, a living in Suffolk, and prebends in York, Salisbury, and St Martin's-le-Grand. Yet our author truly says, 'the more the veil is withdrawn from the mind and character of Colet, the more does he stand out as beyond his age.' Besides his striking lectures on St Paul, certain treatises of his upon the Book of Genesis have been unearthed in the Cambridge Library. 'If on St Paul, Colet rigidly adhered, not to the letter (he was far beyond the notion of plenary verbal inspiration) but to the sense of the apostle, we find him in a far more free spirit treating the first chapter of Genesis as a noble poem, designed by its author, Moses, to impress upon a rude and barbarous people the great truths of the creation of the world by one Omnific God. The description of the successive acts of creation is followed out with singular ingenuity; and these and the periods of time have in his view a profound religious scope, but in themselves are only pious fictions to commend the great internal truths.' Here follow some extracts, which might have been published yesterday by some 'Broad Church' Divine, and of which our author may well remark: 'Strange that the Dean of St Paul's in the nineteenth century should find the views which he has so long held, so nearly anticipated by the dean of the sixteenth.' Colet, indeed, was by far the most remarkable person immediately connected with the subject of this volume. Had he lived a few years later, he would undoubtedly have been burned alive by Papists or Protestants, and been considered a martyr by neither party. He even ventured to declare in his own cathedral—and after a convocation therein had that day condemned three-and-twenty Lollards to abjure or be burned in Smithfield—that the lives of wicked priests were the worst heresy. Again, when wilful, passionate Henry VIII. was wild for war, Dean Colet preached before him on the victory of Christ, and against wars waged from hate or ambition. Before Wolsey, he preached against pride. The great Erasmus describes Colet as one of the two most perfect Christians whom the world, in his time, had seen.

It must be remembered that throughout this same dean's time there was nothing like simplicity (far less rationalism) in religious matters: the cathedral in which he preached was still adorned with its ancient shrines, and lit with its ever-burning tapers. St Erkenwald still held his splendid state, as in the old times when Richard Preston left the saint his best sapphire to remain for curing infirmities of the eyes; the body had been translated from the crypt with infinite pomp by Stephen, and was deposited immediately behind the high altar; a grate of ironwork of exquisite workmanship protected it (and its treasures) from the too familiar devotion of the faithful; and 'no wonder, for the very dust, mingled with water and drank, wrought instantaneous cures.' Before these shrines 'the greatest paid their devotions and made their oblations. King John of France, the captive of Poitiers, made his orisons in the cathedral of the metropolis of England; his offerings were those of a king, not of a prisoner. Twelve nobles at the Annunciation, twenty-six at the crucifix near the north door; as he approached to the high altar, he presented four basins of gold. He gave to the dean five florin nobles, of which the petty canon officiating (John Lillington) had his share.' He gave St Erkenwald twenty-two nobles. Near each crucifix and altar was a strong iron box, or pyx,

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in which the oblations were deposited: those on the high altar were assigned to the dean and chapter. According to archives now in existence, the box under the great northern cross yielded fifty pounds a month, or, according to the present value of money, nine thousand pounds a year. What a profitable investment must popular St Erkenwald have proved! But St Paul's was not wanting in other objects of 'devout worship. Dugdale has preserved from older days two lists of the inestimable treasures of reliques, one drawn up by Dean Radulph de Diceto, as belonging in his time to the church. The other is of a later period. Of the first list, the most remarkable are a knife of our Lord, hair of St Mary Magdalene, with bones and part of the dresses of saints and martyrs, and the dust of other reliques. But they advanced in wonder. In the second list is some of the blood of St Paul, hair of the Blessed Virgin, the hand of St John the Evangelist. Another reliquary contained the milk, the vest, and more hair of the Holy Virgin. Another had pieces of the skull, and part of the dress, of St Thomas of Canterbury. Another the head of St Ethelbert, king and martyr. The whole body of St Mellitus, of which the cathedral once boasted, seems to have dwindled down to his two arms, one large and one small.

'These reliques were encased in reliquaries of crystal, adorned with gold and silver work and precious stones, some of them, no doubt, of exquisite workmanship. The crystal vase which contained the milk of the Virgin was supported by two images of St Peter and St Paul, incensing the vase, and a certain angel. The base was of silver gilt, having on its three corners three lions, on the fourth, a dragon supporting the vase. The jaw of St Ethelbert, the Confessor and founder of the church of St Paul's, was in a case, silver gilt, adorned with three great precious stones, four of a moderate size, ten smaller, and above two round crystals; but there were not more than four teeth in the jaw.'

But the time was coming when all these geese with the golden eggs should cease to lay.

A PERFECT TREASURE.

CHAPTER XV.—ON HERSHELL REEF.

Was it well for me to leave to others, not his kin, the task of following my beloved benefactor to the grave? Or was it well to neglect his last commands during that precious time in which alone I might be able to obey them? The delay of even a single day might offer to the Hindu an opportunity for flight, which would place him beyond the reach of my outstretched arms for ever. On the other hand, to quit that roof, which had been my happy home so long, while its late master yet lay beneath it, was most abhorrent to my feelings. Mr Glendell, as I expected, took the practical view of the matter.

'If your poor uncle were dying, Marmy, your presence, even if you could do him no good, would be a comfort to him; and I would not have had you deprive him of it, for any amount of material profit; but since he is dead, it seems to me you can do no better service to him than that of carrying out his express injunctions.'

On the whole, my own judgment tallied with this verdict; but the thought that it was no longer my uncle who was interested in the recovery of the Hindu, but myself alone—that the pursuit on which I was about to enter had my own advantage for its end, held me still irresolute. I turned inquiringly where I knew worldly prudence would have no grain of weight if loving duty were indeed in the opposite scale—to Rosa.

'It is a question for yourself alone to answer, Marmy,' said she quietly, 'and not for us. If you are secretly aware that the idea of personal profit chiefly actuates you to leave him yonder'—and she pointed to the chamber of death—'rather than his own mandate, then I should bid you stay, for the sense of such a misdeed might be a ghost to haunt you, such as no worldly prosperity could ever lay.'

'I am quite conscience clear,' said I earnestly, 'in that matter, Rosa. But to leave him thus'——

'He is not here, Marmy—he is in heaven,' answered the young girl softly. 'The empty house of clay which he has quitted will, you may trust my father, have due reverence, even though you do not watch beside it; and when it is borne to the grave, it shall not lack at least two true mourners.'

I took her hand, and pressed it fondly. 'I will go, Rosa: that is the best and wisest course. I know not how long I may be away'—I was going to say 'from home,' but the word stuck in my throat; 'the Point' seemed home no longer, now that it had lost its master. 'I know not whither this search of mine may carry me—perhaps across the seas. But I will find this man, if he is above ground; so help me Heaven!'

'Amen!' said the little doctor cheerily. 'Folks may say that colour is but a matter of fancy, but I, for my part, would never knuckle under to a black man, nor yet to a whity-brown. Trust to me and Rosa for having all things as you would wish them to be at Hershell; and be off at once. There is every reason for haste. I have found out from Martha, who is outrageous against the Hindu for taking himself off at such a time, that he has spoken to her of late about returning to India. There is a ship, I know, about to start from Daisyport for Calcutta, and I should not wonder if he tried to get a passage in her. You must catch him where the warrant can run, which, for all I know, it cannot do upon the high seas.'

'If I catch Sangaree Tannajee,' said I between my teeth, 'I'll answer for it I'll bring him back, warrant or no warrant. I shall take one of those persuaders with me which I have already found so influential with this scoundrel.'

'That 's not right,' interposed Rosa firmly. 'You must only do what the law empowers you to do. Suppose this man is obstinate, and you are equally determined? Oh, pray, pray, Marmy, for my sake, do not take your pistols.'

'Rosa is right,' said the doctor reflectively: 'you might get in a passion with the scoundrel.'

'I shall not do that,' said I savagely; 'I am past passion.'

'Dear Marmy,' urged Rosa solemnly, 'is it possible you can persuade yourself you are obeying your dead uncle's wishes in acting as you propose? Would *he*, who has borne with this poor wretch so patiently for years, and who, we almost may say, in preserving his life, has just lost his own, approve of such a course of conduct as you are now contemplating? Come; give up this mere longing for revenge, which belies your nature, Marmy, and keep within the pale of right. Who are you, even

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if you could do so with impunity, that you should thus play the part of a despot, of a tyrant, and towards so despicable an object?'

'I was wrong, dear Rosa,' said I ruefully; 'and you shall keep my pistols for me—although I did but intend to frighten the rascal with an empty barrel.'

But in reality I knew not what I had intended to do, and even now, under the influence of my darling's gentle sway, I was scarcely master of myself. The awful event of the last night had of course unhinged me. It was the first time in my life I had ever been thrown upon my own resources. The simple commonplaces of home-life, and the quiet pursuits of literature, were about to be suddenly exchanged for—I knew not what poverty, toil, and failure; or perhaps for sudden affluence, the very source of which, at present hidden from me, I was as eager to discover as any lad in the Arabian tales, thwarted by some malignant Jin. And I was not afraid of my Jin; I longed to meet with him, that I might clutch him by the throat, and bid him disgorge that secret, the mystery of which seemed to possess me wholly, now that it had come by inheritance mine. Perhaps I should not soon have disentangled myself from this web of thought, had not Mr Glendell swept it away from me with: 'The gig and mare are at the door, Marmy; and my man shall drive you first to the nearest magistrate, to get the warrant; and then on to Daisyport.'

'Thanks, thanks,' cried I, grasping the doctor's hand.—'Good-bye, dear Rosa.'

Then I had one more 'good-bye' to say to one who could not return it. I took my last look at that dear face, which had always worn a smile for me (and wore it yet), and kissed its cold white lips; then hurried into the little hall.

'Here is money, Marmy,' said Mr Glendell, putting in my hand a well-filled purse, 'without which the mare cannot be made to go: we will square accounts at another time.'

I had actually been about to start without a single sixpence.

'Master Marmy, Master Marmy, you've forgotten your luggage,' cried Martha, running out with a carpet-bag, into which, by Rosa's orders, she had put a few things, as I climbed into the gig. 'And here's some of your poor uncle's wraps, as he'll never want more; for you'll find it main cold upon the downs.'

And it *was* bitter cold. The north-east wind blew upon the high and open down-land with a force that the game little mare could scarcely make head against, and the view to seaward shewed a mass of tumbling foam. But the sharp coolness was pleasant to my fevered brow, and lightened my laden brain. For the first time since the previous night, I began to think clearly. The visit to the magistrate also did me good. His cut-and-dried phrases of condolence, his matter-of-fact questions, and even his superfluous advice, all helped to bring me to myself; and long before we had reached our destination, I had formed a definite plan. We inquired of all whom we met respecting the runaway, but could glean nothing; indeed, he had had so many hours' start of us that this was hardly to be expected. But my first question at the inn where we put up—the same at which I had dined with the fascinating Mr Swete—was concerning the ship of which I had heard as about to leave the port for India. The people of the hotel exhibited the usual ignorance of their class respecting anything not immediately connected with their own calling; they 'really could not say;' but there was a local paper in the coffee-room, which would doubtless contain the shipping intelligence of the place. This periodical was, however, mislaid. I hurried to the docks, and made my inquiries at head-quarters. The *Star of the West* had sailed that morning for Calcutta. It was to have started the day before, but the weather had been too tempestuous. True, it was stormy enough to-day; but the wind had changed, which before had been directly adverse to the ship's course.

'Had a passenger—a Hindu—joined the vessel?' inquired I, 'at the very last moment?' My limbs trembled as I asked this question, and I could hear the beating of my own heart. I should have thought it would have been easy for the most unobservant to perceive that my business was of the last importance; but the clerk only settled down to his work with a surly: 'How should I know? This is not the passenger department.'

I could have leaped across the counter and strangled him; but I managed to ask with civility where the passenger department was. 'Next dock,' answered the man with irritation. This jack in office could, as I subsequently learned, have answered my question readily enough, but he would not compromise his dignity. The passenger department was an inferior branch of the Company's offices. What unnecessary suspense and pain does man in his brutal egotism inflict upon his fellow-creatures! The booking-clerk was, on the other hand, a communicative young fellow enough. —"Yes indeed: a fat Hindu had gone on board the ship not an hour before she set sail. A pretty voyage he was likely to make of it. He looked sea-sick before he started.—When would another vessel sail for the same destination?—Oh, immediately. The consort of the *Star of the West* would start that day fortnight.—Couldn't say which was the fastest: all the Company's ships were fast ones —clippers.—Didn't know as to the state of sailing of other Company's vessels; but he knew one thing—that none of them would catch the *Star*. She had a great treasure—as doubtless I had heard —on board: fifty thousand pounds in gold, consigned to ——.'

Very wretched and sick at heart, I left the man, still dilating upon the wealth and importance of the mercantile firm with which he was officially connected, and went back to the inn. It was almost my first acquaintance with the world outside Hershell Point, and how selfish all folks seemed! I sat down at a table in the huge coffee-room, and rested my head on my hands, thinking how vastly I had underrated the difficulties of the pursuit in which I was engaged. So long as the Hindu had remained in England, I should have felt certain, sooner or later, of laying hands upon him. His colour and speech would have isolated him from others, and left an easy trace. But thus to have placed the seas between us at the outset, was to have escaped me at once. I had not really faced the possibility of such a thing, and the stroke of good-fortune which had befallen him in this unexpected manner fairly paralysed me. It had been all very well to vow to follow him to the ends of the earth, but how was I to find him in the wide waste of India?

'You seem sad, Mr Marmaduke Drake,' said a quiet voice close to my ear. It was a bantering

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voice, and I was not in the humour for banter. I looked up angrily, and perceived that a stranger had seated himself at the next table—a stout hale man, who had apparently taken a great deal of port wine in his time, and was taking some now with his luncheon. He was dressed neatly in black, with a white tie, and yet he did not look like a clergyman.

'Sir,' said I coldly, 'I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance.'

'Yes, you have,' replied he carelessly. 'You have had more—I have done business for you, and never charged you for it—a most unprofessional proceeding. My name's Geoffrey Moulden.'

I rose up at once and warmly shook his hand. 'Excuse my ill manners, sir,' said I. 'I know no one to whom it more behoves me to be courteous. But of course I did not know you. How came you to know me?'

'The landlady told me who you were. I am going down to spend a day or two with Mrs Blunt at Sandiford; and when I was ordering my trap, she said there was a young gentleman here from those parts. You seem in trouble again, my friend. You have had no more business transactions with Mr Percival Swete, I trust?'

'No, indeed, sir. I am amateur thief-catching just now, and my man has just escaped;' and I told him how the Hindu had carried off the money the previous night, and was now safe on board the *Star of the West*.'

'Well, fifty pounds are not worth taking a voyage to India for,' observed Mr Moulden. 'There is nothing for it but to go home again. Can I not take you some miles in my conveyance?'

I hesitated, unwilling to return home so soon with nothing accomplished. Yet, what could I do? The gig had already gone back, and Mr Moulden's offer was not reasonably to be refused.

'Come, Mr Drake,' urged he cheerfully; 'it would really be a kindness to me, for besides the advantage of your company, the more ballast we have the better, for this wind seems strong enough to put anything on four wheels topsy-turvy.'

The wind had indeed risen, till it was well-nigh a hurricane. Even where we were, in comparative shelter, its effects were visible enough: the leafless trees swayed and bent; and the snow, which had fallen lightly days ago, but, thanks to the frost, still lay about here and there, was carried up into the keen blue air, and once more cast upon the clean-swept earth. But as we left the low-lying land, and climbed the downs, the blasts were terrific. Fortunately, they came from behind, for otherwise we could not possibly have held on our way. Conversation, although we were in a closed fly, was rendered impossible, and I was not sorry for it, for I had not heart for the blithe old lawyer's cheery talk, but was plunged in my own sad reflections.

Suddenly, however, an ejaculation from my companion made itself heard, and he hastily pushed down the window. 'Look, look!' cried he excitedly. 'Great Heavens, what a sight!'

We had by this time reached the summit of the downs, only a mile or two above the Point, and the vast stretch of ocean lay in view for the first time. To a landsman's eyes, the spectacle must in truth have been majestic; and even to mine, well accustomed to the ocean in her fits of fury, it was wondrous grand. The whole sea was sheeted with foam, while Hershell Bay, generally smooth, except in very rough weather, boiled like a caldron. On the north-eastern side, where the reef lay, the spray spouted up in floods, and the short winter day was fast closing in.

'What a night awaits folks at sea,' exclaimed the kindly lawyer. 'It seems as though no ship could live in such a whirlpool.'

The fly-man had stopped, either thinking that my companion's ejaculation had been addressed to himself, or arrested by the spectacle before him, which was indeed unparallelled even on that coast.

'There *is* a ship, gentlemen,' cried he, for an instant leaving hold of his hat to point seaward with his whip. 'Poor souls!'

'I see no sail, Mr Drake,' exclaimed the lawyer impatiently. 'You have younger eyes, can you see any?'

'No sail could stand for a second in this tempest, Mr Moulden,' answered I; 'it would be blown to ribbons: the vessel will be scudding under bare poles. Yes, there she is; and—God help them—she is going straight on the reef.'

'Can we not warn them—can we make no signal?' inquired my companion, who had now got out of the conveyance, and was standing with myself and the driver under the lee of it, as it were. 'Can *nothing* be done?'

'Nothing,' said I solemnly, for had I not seen a dozen noble ships in a similar strait, although never perhaps in one so desperate. 'They know their danger better than we do. Look! she drifts no longer; they have thrown their anchors out.'

'Then she is saved,' exclaimed the lawyer. 'I would give a thousand pounds to see her saved.'

'If her anchors hold,' observed I gloomily; 'but they will not hold; I know that ground so well.'

'They are dragging already, sir,' said the fly-man, who was making a telescope of his hands. And, indeed, we could see her sensibly drawing nearer and nearer to her doom.

'Let us get on towards the sea,' cried Mr Moulden. 'I cannot go to Sandiford while this is taking place. I will go with you, Mr Drake.'

'Alas, sir,' said I, 'my house cannot now receive a guest, or I should say welcome. But we can get down to the beach, of course, if that is your wish.'

So the fly-man drove to the first zigzag, where we left him and the horses in comparative shelter from the fury of the wind, and hurried down to the shore. This was already lined with Hershell men, and among them Mr Glendell, who had a telescope. He was too humane a man to think of anything save the peril of the poor souls before his eyes, and he only grasped my hand without questioning me.

'Is there no hope?' said I.

'No, none,' answered he, 'as you may see;' and he handed me his glass.

The vessel, which was a very large one, was now within a few feet only of the reef. Upon its decks, the few sailors who had not been swept off by the huge seas were engaged in cutting away the masts, of which there were three, and the rigging. The ship soon tumbled about a mere hull in the trough or on the summit of the waves.

I offered the telescope to the lawyer, but his hands trembled so excessively that he could see nothing through it. 'I am glad I don't live here,' said he with agitation, 'to see such sights as this!'

The men about us were looking on gravely enough, but without any passionate excitement.

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'I never knew a storm like this,' answered Mr Glendell; 'nor the wreck of so great a vessel. She must have a great many souls on board. I fear we only see a few; the rest are below.'

'Where is Rosa?' inquired I.

'Getting all things ready, in case we can be of any help; but they will not be needed. Nothing with life could come ashore in such a sea as this.'

'There she goes, stern foremost,' cried a man beside us.

'What! gone down?' exclaimed the lawyer. 'Surely I see her yet.'

'No, sir; gone on the reef.'

'I'll give a hundred pounds,' cried Mr Moulden, 'to the man who takes a rope out to that ship.'

'No man without wings could do it, sir,' returned the fisherman quietly. We were standing under the cliff in comparative shelter, and could converse easily enough, because the wind was blowing from off the land. 'It is now only a question of a few minutes. When her cable parted, her last hope was gone. See, she is coming broadside on! And now she is gone!' And yonder, true enough, there was now no object to be seen save the wild waves, leaping and roaring, as though exulting over their captured prey.

'It is all over,' said Mr Glendell reverently. 'God help them!'

'What! must they all drown?'

'Ay, all, sir,' said the fisherman. 'By to-morrow morn, there will be plenty come ashore, most like; but they will be Dead Men.'

'It was a fine ship, too.'

'Do you know what ship it was?' asked I, with a selfish heart-throb.

'Yes; I know her well; she was an Indiaman—the *Star of the West*. She came round from Daisyport only this very morning.'

CHAPTER XVI.—LEFT ALONE.

What a day had I just passed! What an eight-and-forty hours of sleepless anxiety, and bitter loss, and then of loss again, though of another sort, and again of vain pursuit, ending in that tragedy of shipwreck. And now that Mr Moulden had gone on his way to Sandiford, and I was to return to my desolate home with what it held, the thing that was no more my dear, kind, noble Uncle Theo, a cold shudder crossed over me. Mr Glendell said: 'You must come with me to-night, Marmy, else you will want nursing.' I knew that he spoke the truth. This sudden change from the quiet uneventful life in which every day repeated itself, had been too much for me. Until I had taken some food, the doctor would not allow me to enter upon the subject of my late expedition, and even then he was against it; only Rosa, who was a wiser physician than himself where the mind was concerned, contended, as I afterwards found out, that it was better for me to say my say.

'Well,' said the doctor, musing, when I had finished my story, 'it is so far satisfactory that the matter is over: there is no more suspense to be endured. The Hindu, poor devil, has escaped us, and there's an end. So now, early as it is, go to bed, Marmy; and if you can sleep four-and-twenty hours, so much the better.'

I did as I was bid—it seemed so pleasant to me to be directed—to be no longer dependent on myself alone; and, although my rest was troubled with hideous dreams, I did sleep until after daybreak. Then I arose, and finding that my host had already gone down to the beach, I followed him. The shore was strewn with spars and timbers; but the sea, after its day of fury, had sunk to almost a dead calm; in the still blue air, one could hear the voices of the men who thronged the shore, in almost as great numbers as the previous night, for a great distance: some were in boats at the end of the reef, above the very place where the great ship had gone down; but most of them were looking for what had been cast ashore, as usual.

'He would be a good haul,' said one to another; 'and a deal more worth having, if we could find him, than ever he was when alive.'

'You may say that,' answered the other. 'His Master was a very different sort—God bless him. But how strange it was that they two should have gone and died within twelve hours of one another, eh!'

'Ay, strange indeed.'

Of whom could they be talking, unless of my uncle and his servant? I listened eagerly, but they said no more until I came up with them.

'Have many bodies come on shore?' inquired I.

'No, Mr Marmaduke; half-a-dozen poor sailors; and that's all. The passengers, you see, were under hatches; and they say out yonder that the ship has settled down quite upright, and did not break amidships, as we thought certain. I doubt whether we shall find him as you're looking for, at all.'

'Him that I am looking for?'

'Yes, sir; the poor black fellow as was Mr Braydon's man. Mr Glendell told us as you wished to have him buried right and proper, and has offered ten pounds to whoever finds him.'

I nodded, but did not speak.

It was clear that Mr Glendell did not consider the matter wholly ended, as he had endeavoured to convince me. There was still a chance of finding the Hindu's body, and with it the secret. At this idea I seemed to feel new life. Action, at all events for the nonce, lay now before me, not merely barren regret and choking grief. Had not my uncle enjoined on me to recover Sangaree Tannajee *dead or alive!*

Presently, I saw Mr Glendell searching with the rest, and began to thank him for his forethought in the matter. 'It would indeed be a comfort to me,' said I, 'if the corpse should be found; and besides, although you would not have known it, the packet was wrapped in sealskin, so that the salt water will not hurt what it contains.'

'That's well,' returned the doctor; but by no means with the satisfaction I had expected from him, since he had been of late so eager about the secret. 'We can but do our best; in a few hours the thing must be decided one way or the other.'

'Why in so short a time?' inquired I, for I knew that bodies would often come ashore for many days, and even weeks, after such shipwrecks.

'Well, this is a curious case, Marmy; the vessel has gone down at the very extremity of the reef, and almost outside it, so that when she breaks up, all she contains may go hither and thither, and not necessarily come into the bay.'

'And if what we look for did come,' said I, unable to repress a shudder, 'it would, I suppose, after a very few days, be totally unrecognisable, no matter how great was the diversity from its fellows while in life?'

'Why, yes; you know yourself what difficulties

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there have been here in the matter of identification. Two mothers claiming the same body as that of their drowned son, and so forth,' observed the doctor coolly. 'The features of the dead, in this country at least, are not generally recognisable after eight-and-forty hours. I remember, in the hospital in which I learned my trade, there was a leather body which was sworn to once or twice by enthusiastic witnesses. There is nothing which more requires, and less often receives, a cool judgment than the identification of the dead. But I am speaking, of course, of bodies which have been exposed to atmospheric influences; the sea is a great antiseptic, and as long as the subject is kept under water'——

The doctor, diffuse only upon professional subjects, would doubtless have extended his lecture considerably, but that at this moment a number of fishermen began to run together towards one part of the beach, and we could see some huge object floating towards them.

'Good Heavens! it is some poor woman,' ejaculated the doctor.

Then a great shout of laughter broke from the men: it jarred discordantly enough, as may well be supposed, upon such a scene, and I felt hot with shame and anger.

'The brutal scoundrels!' said the little doctor fiercely; and off we both ran to the spot in question. We could scarcely believe our ears when we heard, as we drew near, the shouts of mirth repeated; for Hershell folks, although used enough to such spectacles, were never callous, and far less ruffianly. Their own perils in the deep made them pitiful for the victims of the sea.

'What is it, men? Are you mad?' cried I, who had outstripped my companion.

'Lor bless ye, Mr Marmaduke; only look at this. We thought it was some drowned fellow-creature, and it 's only the blessed figure-head.'

And indeed there was the huge female figure which had adorned the prow of the sunk ship, comparatively uninjured—for the Indiaman had struck, as I said, stern foremost—with *Star of the West* carved beneath it in large gold letters.

'How Tragedy and Comedy go hand in hand together through the world,' mused I.

'True,' said the doctor: 'the very observation, while speaking of Tannajee and your poor uncle, Mrs Blunt made last night.'

'What!' exclaimed I, surprised, 'did you see her last night?'

The doctor looked confused. 'Yes,' said he. 'I thought it right to ride over to Sandiford, when you had gone to bed, to tell her what had happened to Mr Braydon, and about the wreck.'

'That was very good of you,' said I; 'you think of everything for me; although, indeed, I suppose it was Rosa who thought of that?'

'No; it was entirely my own idea,' answered Mr Glendell carelessly.—'Well, we can do no good here that these fellows cannot do for us; let us go in to breakfast.'

My thoughts were too much occupied with weightier matters to dwell upon it at that time, but even then, it seemed to me a very strange thing that the doctor, who loved his ease, should, on such a stormy night, have gone to tell Mrs Blunt what she must needs already have heard hours before from the lips of Mr Moulden.

All that day, and the next, I watched the sea with keener expectation than any wrecker; but the dreadful gift for which I looked with such weird longing it refused to give, and we were told that now it would never come. On the third day, Mr Glendell had a long and serious talk with me. 'You are very far from well, Marmy,' said he; 'you do not eat, nor, as I fear, sleep. Is it not so?'

'I do not sleep much,' said I; 'but I am well and strong.'

'That is impossible, my friend: the state of excitement in which you at present subsist seems to you to be strength, but it is in reality wearing out your stamina, and when it leaves you, there will be danger.' He felt my pulse, looked graver still, and shook his head. 'When the wave of life flows as yours does, Marmy, it strands a man almost like those poor fellows on the beach yonder. I fear low fever for you at the best. You must have quiet; you must indeed.'

I felt he spoke the truth, for though I was not sensible of fatigue, I knew no rest, to be called such. I loathed my food, and every morsel went nigh to choke me; my veins seemed to flow not with blood, but fire; but I also felt that the remedy which he proposed was utterly beyond my reach. Quiet! My brain was filled with thoughts that pressed so close upon each other's heels, that there was not a moment's space between them; yet not with thoughts, but rather with visions, dreams, and ghastly chimeras. I could not think, in the ordinary sense, at all; I could not have written a sentence of my usual literary work, for instance, if it had been to save my own life, or recall that of my beloved Uncle Theo. Even Rosa had no power to soothe me.

'I cannot but reproach myself,' said Mr Glendell, 'for my own part in this matter; if I had not been so eager to help you to get back this wretched Hindu, you would have been less anxious to do so, and by this time have put up with the loss. But now you are consumed with a vain longing for a secret which is hidden for ever in the depths of the sea.'

I did not attempt to gainsay this. How could I, whom the first dawn of morning and the last faint flush of sunset had found watching by the calm and mocking deep, and to whom all night there appeared hideous shapes, all with some fantastic likeness to the form he spoke of, and each with a finger at its lips! If ever there was a haunted wretch, it was I.

'Now, look you, Marmy,' continued the doctor; 'if you do not wish myself and Rosa—for it was she who finally decided you upon undertaking this idle search, and she regrets it as bitterly as I do—to have your illness on our consciences, you will do your best to face this matter like a man. While there was hope, I clung to it as closely as did you. I confess that I was bitten with the mystery that hung about that wretched creature, and would have given much, especially of late, to solve it. But now that there is no hope, I bow to Fate's decree. It is foolish, it is wicked to oppose one's-self to that. From henceforth, I think no more of Sangaree Tannajee and the secret, which is buried with him for ever. I will not speak of him more, nor suffer others beneath my roof to do so; and to-morrow, when we have laid your dear good uncle in his grave, I leave this place, to spend a month in town, whither business calls me, and I shall take you with me.'

Then ensued the nearest approach to a quarrel

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that ever took place between myself and good Mr Glendell. I felt the force of his reasoning, and I gave him every credit for his excellent intention, but I knew better than he did the disease that was in my own mind, and how powerless would be his remedy to cure it. Nay, I was well convinced that to tear myself away from Hershell just now would only be to aggravate my symptoms. It was at the doctor's house, which was inland, that, notwithstanding Rosa's presence there, I always felt worse; whereas by the shore, and with my eyes fixed on the deep, that had robbed me of my secret, and held it in its bosom, I was more tranquil. I cannot explain my condition; but I have heard that some folks whose hopes are centered in a Chancery suit, are, however frail their chance of gaining it, for ever haunting Lincoln's Inn, as though the very locality where the trial is pending soothes their anxiety, notwithstanding that they only hear bad news there; and so perhaps it was with myself—a baffled suitor of the unjust sea. At all events, I was firmly determined, while the timbers of the *Star of the West* yet held together beyond the reef yonder, beneath that treacherous dimple of the smiling deep—for both days and nights were now summer-like in their calm—to remain at Hershell, notwithstanding I was informed on all hands that when the ship did break up, it was certain, from her situation, that should any bodies be still in her, they would drift seaward, and never come to shore.

I was therefore adamant to all the doctor's appeals, though, when persuasion failed, he did not hesitate to use sharpness. To Rosa (as I afterwards learned) he even said: 'Unless we take him with us, when we come back we shall have to tend a madman;' whereby of course he secured her most earnest co-operation in his efforts. But all failed. At home I was resolved for the present to stay. And after we had reverently laid dear Uncle Theo in his last resting-place, Mr Glendell and Rosa started for town, leaving me alone at the Point, to which I had now returned. How little I guessed what a change was to take place in me, and in life's prospects, before I beheld them again!

EPITAPHS.

As numberless as stars in the heavens are graves on the face of the earth. Reader, do you care to wander through country churchyards, where sheep are nibbling the long grass and wild-flowers, and blithe birds singing in old trees, whose rough bark and branching splendour have been the growth of centuries—where peace, and quiet, and everlasting stillness seem fitting for the repose of the sons of Adam, when their spirits have journeyed from this troubled world for ever?

Do you care to wander through ancient burial-yards in the midst of noisy cities, where living, waking, busy man is constantly passing by the dust of his brother man—where life, in its very essence of activity, seems strangely at variance with the mound that covers him who is 'a dead man out of mind?' And again, do you care to wander through beautiful new cemeteries, where elegant monuments, carefully tended flowers, and fresh young trees may take away from the solemnity of the old churchyard, but give bright and pleasant feelings about the grave? Do you like to read the records of the dead, the lamentations of the living, and the curious ideas and verses that one finds inscribed on stone and engraven on granite?

If so, perhaps on some snowy or rainy day, when the 'ingle nook' is preferable to the regions outside, the following collection of epitaphs may while away some spare half-hour.

Epitaphs are what?—The thoughts of the living (and sometimes those of the dead) expressed in words, and engraved in memory of those who are gone before. Very often they are texts from the Holy Scriptures. Affection, mingled with Hope, speaks forth in these terms: 'I shall go to him, but he will not return to me;' or in praise of the good life and blessedness of the death of the departed, as, 'Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord,' and such-like texts. Resignation exclaims: 'Thy will be done;' and Faith: 'I know that my Redeemer liveth.' Again, we find quotations from the poetical version of the Psalms, and verses of poetry of different kinds, recording, generally, the brevity of life. In the cemetery at Tunbridge Wells, we see the following:

Our life hangs by a single thread;
Soon 'tis cut, and we are dead.
Then boast not, reader, of thy might;
Alive at noon, and dead at night.

Also, in the same cemetery, on a girl aged sixteen:

Behold this flower, so young and fair,
Called hence by early doom,
Come forth to shew how sweet a flower
In Paradise might bloom.

An epitaph of a much higher character claims our notice on an old stone in a desolate little kirk-yard at Roslin—the same is also to be found at Haddington:

Underneath this stone doth lie
As much beauty as could die,
Which, while it lived, did vigour give
To as much virtue as could live.

At Melrose Abbey is another of the same kind:

Earth walketh on the Earth,
Glistening like gold;
Earth goeth to the Earth
Sooner than it wold;
Earth buildeth on the Earth
Palaces and towers;
Earth sayeth to the Earth,
'All shall be ours.'

A beautiful inscription is this on the tombstone of Sir John Grahame, in Falkirk Churchyard:

Heir lyes Sir John the Grahame, baith wight and wise. Ane of the chief reskewit Scotland thrise. Ane Better Knight not to the world was lent—nor was guide Grahame of Truth and Hardiment. Sir John was slain by the Engl. 22d July, 1298.

In Glasgow Cathedral is an epitaph, which is engraved on the lid of a very old sarcophagus, discovered in the crypt:

Our Life 's a flying Shadow, God 's the Pole,
The Index pointing at him is our Soul,
Death 's the Horizon, when our Sun is set,
Which will through Chryst a Resurrection get.

On a stone in the churchyard at Langtown, in Cumberland, we read:

Life 's like an inn where travellers stay;
Some only breakfast and away;
Others to dinner stay, and are full fed;
The oldest only sup and go to bed;
Long is his bill who lingers out the day;
Who goes the soonest has the least to pay.

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To go farther afield. Come to Russia, and amidst the thousands who fell in the roar of the battle, and found a grave in that far-distant country: the *Times* says: 'At the Malakhoff there is nothing but a large wooden cross at the head of a mound full of dead, with this inscription in white paint:

Unis pour la victoire,
Réuni par la mort,
Du soldat c'est la gloire,
Du brave c'est le sort.'

In a secluded ravine, among many other tombs, we find this quaint inscription:

I am anchored here below, with many of the fleet,
But once again we will set sail our Admiral Christ to meet.

Here and there, the melancholy yew-tree and fading rosebud speak for themselves of the weary and of the young who repose beneath the dust of the earth, without other record than the silent thought that occurs to the mind of the passer-by, that 'all flesh is grass, and the glory thereof is as the flower of the field;' but here and there also, rude country wit makes sad havoc with solemn thoughts, and causes a smile, however unwillingly, to rise. For instance, in the churchyard at Nettlebed, Oxfordshire, we have what follows:

Here lies father and mother, and sister and I;
We all died within the short space of one short year.
They all be buried at Wimble, except I,
And I be buried here.

Here is one which apparently included the living as well as the dead:

John Palfreman lies buried here,
Aged 4 and 20 year;
Near this place his mother lies;
Likewise his father when he dies.

Surely the following must be of Hibernian origin:

Here lies the body of Nicholas Round,
Who was lost in the sea, and never was found.

The next inscription which I have noted down is to the memory of a wife:

Here lies my wife, a sad slattern and shrew;
If I said I regretted her, I should lie too.

At Ocknam, Surrey:

The Lord saw good, I was lopping off wood,
And down fell from the tree;
I met with a check, and I broke my neck,
And so Death lopped off me.

At Cookham we find,

An honest man's the noblest work of God.
Here lies an honest woman.

A very impolite one exists in Sunbury Churchyard:

Here lies my beast of a first wife.

In striking contrast we find in Ross Churchyard:

Behold an angel dwelt among men.

At Lincoln:

My sledge and hammer lie reclined,
My bellows too have lost their wind,
My fire's extinguished, forge decayed,
And in the dust my vice is laid.
My coal is spent, my iron gone,
My last nail *driven*, my work is done.
Finis coronat opus.

Walking through the old churchyard at Carisbrooke, Isle of Wight, I came upon the following:

This world's a city full of streets,
And Death's the market-place where all men meet.
If Death were merchandise that gold could buy,
The rich would live, the poor alone would die.

Here is a great mistake! To make sense, it should be, 'If *life* were merchandise,' &c.

On the south wall of Streathem Church is this singular inscription:

Elizabeth, wife of Major-general Hamilton, who was married 47 years, and never did *one* thing to disoblige her husband.

The following is on a tombstone in San Viego, California:

This year is saked to the memory of William Henry Shraken, who cam to his deth being shot with Colt's revolvers—one of the old kind, brass mounted, and of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.

A curious play upon words is this epitaph on Barraud, the watchmaker, late of Cornhill, London:

My *main-spring broke*—no further use the *key*
That served to *set me going;* my *Hour* is come,
And I who made—to *measure Time*—full oft with glee,
Have fall'n beneath th' unerring *hand*—'tis done.

Encas'd within this marble Tomb—I wait
The *action* of th' Almighty *regulator*—my *works if good*
Will meet reward—and tho' 'tis now too late
To *mend*, I hope redemption thro' my Saviour's blood.

The next is perhaps more widely known, but so singularly unflattering, that I cannot refrain quoting it. It is an epitaph on Mr William Wright:

Here lies the body of W. W.,
Who never more will trouble you, trouble you.

The following epitaphs, many of them quaint and comical in the extreme, I believe to be authentic, but (with one exception) I know not in what quiet grass-grown nooks they have their habitation. Whilst in life, we often have a desire to choose the spot where our mortal remains shall rest; when death comes, our friends, guided by various reasons, choose that last home for us. In the following epitaph, we see a strange contentment with this choice, supposed to be the utterance of the dead himself:

Here lie I at the Chancel door;
Here lie I because I'm poor.
The further in, the more they pay;
But here I lie as warm as they.

The next is on a Miss Partridge, who died in the month of May:

What! shoot a partridge in the month of May!
Was that done like a sportsman—eh! Death, eh?

Our interest is now awakened by an extraordinary assertion:

Here lies
Elizabeth Wise,
She died of thunder sent from heaven,
In 1777.

I withhold all comment on the next:

Oh! do not weep, my husband dear;
I am not dead, but sleeping here;
Then mend your ways, prepare to die,
For you are soon to come to I.

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Written under in pencil was this:

I do not weep, my dearest life,
For I have got another wife;
Therefore, I cannot come to thee,
For I must go to cheriah she.

In the following, also, the widower seems to rejoice in his loss:

This dear little spot is the joy of my life,
It raises my flowers, and covers my wife.

The annexed epitaph is on a young woman who gained her livelihood by selling eggs, and from the tenor of it, we judge her brother must have erected the stone to her memory:

Here lies the body of Mary M'Groyn,
Who was so very pure within,
She broke the outward shell of sin,
And hatched herself a cherubim.
N.B.—Her brother, made of sterner stuff,
Adds to her business that of snuff.

On a tombstone in a churchyard near Cheltenham, we find a strong and unvarnished opinion in the mineral-water line:

Here lies I, and my three daughters;
So much for drinking the Cheltenham waters.
If we had kept to the Epsom salts,
We never would have lain in these 'ere vaults.

The next calls forth our sympathies, there is such a ring of sorrow, such deep pathos in the few words so curtly spoken:

Poorly lived,
Poorly died,
Poorly buried,
And no one cried.

On a photographer, we read:

Here I lie taken from life.

He was hard up for a rhyme who penned this to the memory of a neighbour:

Here lies W. A.,
Lately removed from over the way.

The next is highly complimentary to a father's feelings:

Here lies the mother of children 5,
Three are dead and Two are alive;
Those who are dead preferring rather
To die with their mother, than live with Father.

I conclude with a sonnet (Does that mean an epitaph in this case?) on a youth who died from excess of fruit-pie, and also with a species of puzzle I copied from a tomb at Monmouth Churchyard. To begin with the sonnet:

Currants have check'd the *current* of my blood,
And *berries* brought me to be *buried* here;
Pears have *par'd* off my body's hardihood,
And *plums* and *plumbers spare* not one so *spare*.
Fain would I *feign* my fall; so *fair* a *fare*
Lessens not hate, yet 'tis a *lesson* good.
Gilt will not long hide *guilt*, such thin washed *ware*
Wears quickly, and its *rude* touch soon is *rued*.
Grave on my *grave* some sentence *grave* and terse,
That *lies* not as it *lies* upon my clay,
But in a gentle *strain* of *unstrained* verse,
Prays all to pity a poor patty's *prey*,
Rehearses I was fruitful to my *hearse*,
Tells that my days are *told*, and soon I'm *toll'd* away!

Last of all, this Monmouth one, made by the man himself when dying:

e	i	n	e	R	n	h	o	J	s	J	o	h	n	R	e	n	i	e
i	n	e	R	n	h	o	J	s	e	s	J	o	h	n	R	e	n	i
n	e	R	n	h	o	J	s	e	i	e	s	J	o	h	n	R	e	n
e	R	n	h	o	J	s	e	i	l	i	e	s	J	o	h	n	R	e
R	n	h	o	J	s	e	i	l	e	l	i	e	s	J	o	h	n	R
n	h	o	J	s	e	i	l	e	r	e	l	i	e	s	J	o	h	n
h	o	J	s	e	i	l	e	r	e	r	e	l	i	e	s	J	o	h
o	J	s	e	i	l	e	r	e	H	e	r	e	l	i	e	s	J	o
h	o	J	s	e	i	l	e	r	e	r	e	l	i	e	s	J	o	h
n	h	o	J	s	e	i	l	e	r	e	l	i	e	s	J	o	h	n
R	n	h	o	J	s	e	i	l	e	l	i	e	s	J	o	h	n	R
e	R	n	h	o	J	s	e	i	l	i	e	s	J	o	h	n	R	e
n	e	R	n	h	o	J	s	e	i	e	s	J	o	h	n	R	e	n
i	n	e	R	n	h	o	J	s	e	s	J	o	h	n	R	e	n	i
e	i	n	e	R	n	h	o	J	s	J	o	h	n	R	e	n	i	e

The capital H in the centre is the clue; in fact, it simply reads, in ups and downs, &c., 'Here lies John Renie.'

'FRIENDS' IN NEED.

In these days of religious freedom, wherein even Spain has announced toleration for all creeds, and when in our own country such mild measures as 'inhibition' from this or that practice is held to be Persecution, while those at whom it is aimed constitute themselves as Martyrs accordingly, it is quite refreshing to come across a genuine denominational grievance. One may think it hard that as a priest he may not dress in green and gold, and another may complain that all liberty of conscience is at an end since his incense-pot has been denounced by the Privy Council; but we have not come to the Inquisition yet, nor is it likely that we shall do so. Laymen, indeed, are permitted any theological eccentricity, so long as they do not obstruct the public thoroughfares, by missionary enterprise; and to hang up a Quaker gentleman by the thumbs (unless it was Mr Bright, which would undoubtedly give pleasure to some people), because he sticks to his own doctrinal views, would certainly be held in England a strong measure. And yet under the shadow of the wings of that much vaunted bird of freedom, the American eagle, this (and a great deal worse) has, it seems, of late been done.

The record of it now lies before us in *A Narrative of the Cruelties inflicted upon Friends during the Years* 1861 *to* 1865, *in consequence of their Faithfulness to the Christian View of the Unlawfulness of War;* and a very remarkable narrative it is. 'The statements,' says its preface, 'may be accepted as literally true, taken down in most instances from the lips of the sufferers themselves;' and the pamphlet itself is issued by direction and on behalf of the representatives of the North Carolina yearly meeting of Friends, in July 1868.

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At the breaking out of the civil war in America, if the Quakers were unpopular with the North as being non-combatants, they were doubly odious in the South, on account of their hostility to slavery. Upon that subject, they were far in advance of their southern fellow-countrymen. In 1740, this same North Carolina Meeting contented itself with pronouncing an 'advice' that all slaves be 'well used;' but thirty years later, it declared the importation of negroes from Africa to be 'iniquitous;' and in 1776, the practice of slaveholding was formally condemned. For more than thirty years after, there were 'Friends' who were not fully convinced of this evil, or were so involved in it as to make their extrication difficult; but in 1818, slaveholding was abolished in the Society, and the brief record of the yearly meeting ran thus: 'None held as Slaves.'

To begin with, therefore, the Friends had placed themselves in antagonism with the people of the Southern States, and, when hostilities commenced, the ill-feeling towards them took a practical shape, and increased with the duration of the contest. By the passage of the Conscription Act in the Confederate Congress in 1862, every man between eighteen and thirty-five years of age was required to enter the army; in 1863, it was made to include all between eighteen and forty-five; and in 1864, all between seventeen and fifty. The Friends petitioned Congress for relief; and, in the first instance, obtained exemption on the payment of one hundred dollars each, which tax, however, was raised a few months later to five hundred dollars. As the war proceeded, and the necessities of the Southerners increased, the Quakers were more and more severely treated. Rude arrests, short but uncertain imprisonments, and violent menaces, were at first the lot of those who were drafted and refused to fight. Some escaped to the West; others 'felt at liberty' to engage in the state saltworks, 'though not a few of the latter, finding their work too closely connected with war' [probably the making of gunpowder], 'relinquished it.' Then the Southern gentry began to use sharpness, and to hang up Quakers by the thumbs. Here is one instance out of many. 'In the spring of 1865 about forty men, professing to be in search of conscripts, came to a mill belonging to J. D., of Cane Creek, Chatham Co. The miller was first hung up by a rope three times, to force him to betray his sons, who were hidden. Upon hearing the screams of the miller's wife and children, J. D. went out to the crowd. The same information was demanded of him, but he assured them of his entire ignorance as to their retreat. He was at once seized and carried into the barn. A rope was tied around his neck, and thrown over a beam, while he was mounted upon a box. Then, beginning to tighten the rope, they said: "You are a Quaker, and your people, by refusing to fight, and keeping so many out of the army, have caused the defeat of the South;" adding, that if he had any prayers to offer, he must be quick, as he had only five minutes to live. J. D. only replied that he was innocent, and could adopt the language, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." They then said they would not hang him just then, but proceeded to rob him; then ordered him under a horse-trough, threatening to shoot him if he looked up. While lying there he could hear them hanging up the miller three different times, till the sound of strangling began. After finally extorting a promise from him to find his sons, they left, charging J. D. to lie still till they came back with some others to hang. They did not return, however, but went on to one of his Methodist neighbours, whom they hung until unconscious, and then left him in that state; and the next night they found one of the missing conscripts, whom they hung until dead.'

This was not a mere ebullition of anger on the part of a pressgang. The officers of the Southern army were instructed to carry out these persecutions; at all events, they did so. On their refusal to take a gun, the unfortunate Friends were subjected by the military authorities to something very like torture. Not only were guns tied to the arms of these non-combatants, and straps round their necks, by which they were dragged about, but they were married to a sort of Scavenger's Daughter. 'S. F.,' for instance, 'was subjected for two hours to the brutal punishment known as Bucking, in which the person is placed in a stooping position, the wrists firmly tied and brought in front of the knees, with a pole thrust between the elbows and the knees, thus keeping the body in a painful and totally helpless position. After this, he was made to carry a pole for two or three hours, and then tied during the night. The next morning, he was tied up by the hands for two hours. The same afternoon, a gun was tied to his right arm, and a piece of timber to his neck. Unable longer to endure the weight of it, he sat down, in order to support the end of it upon the ground, when he was pierced by a bayonet. They then bucked him down again, and gagged him with a bayonet for the remainder of the day. Enraged at the meekness with which these cruelties and indignities were borne, the captain began to swear at him, telling him it was useless to contend further; he must now take a gun or die. As the captain proceeded to tie the gun upon his arm, S. F. answered quietly: "If it is thy duty to inflict this punishment upon me, do it cheerfully—don't get angry about it." The captain then left him, saying to his men: "If any of *you* can make him fight, do it—I cannot." Two young men now appeared with their guns, telling him they were going to take him off and shoot him. "It is the Sabbath," he replied, "and as good a day to die as any."' The next day, the Bucking was again resorted to.

There are, in fact, so many examples given of this practice, that Bucking a Quaker seems to have been an amusement as popular with the Southern army as the game called 'fighting-cocks' is with schoolboys. Friend H. M. H. suffered a still more severe punishment. 'At three different times, he was suspended by his thumbs, with his feet barely touching the ground upon the toes, and kept in this excruciating position for nearly two hours each time. They next tried the bayonet: their orders were, they said, to thrust them in four inches deep; but, though much scarred and pierced, it was not so severely done as they had threatened. One of the men, after thus wounding him, came back to entreat his forgiveness.'

If the 'four inches deep' strikes the reader as a little exaggerated in the martyr's recital, this mention of entreating his forgiveness must be set down *per contra*. It seems to us, indeed, that Friend H. M. H. was not only a martyr, but a fanatic, since he declined to make use of such means of relief as Providence placed within his reach, though with what precise object, unless, through

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extra suffering, to increase the subsequent spiritual penalties of his persecutors, does not appear. His story runs as follows: 'In the spring of 1862, two brothers, H. M. H. and J. D. H., were drafted, arrested, and taken to Raleigh. Being allowed to return home for ten days, they faithfully reappeared. They were soon sent to Weldon, where they were required to drill, and were warned of their liability to be shot if they proved refractory. They were, however, only kept in close custody in the guardhouse, and the next month were discharged, and sent home. About a year after this, they were included in the conscription. They were assigned to an artillery company at Kinston, and after various threats, were sent to Gen. R——, who declared that his orders should be carried out at all hazards. They were now confined in an upper room without food or drink. Various persons were allowed to converse with them, and, as day after day passed on, so far from sinking under the suffering, they used their little remaining strength gladly in explaining their testimony, and telling of their inward consolation. They felt that, in this time of fiery trial, this did indeed turn to them for a testimony, and that they knew the promise fulfilled: "It shall be given you in that same hour what you shall speak." Their sufferings from thirst were the most acute. On the third night, the brothers were wakened from a peaceful sleep by the sound of rain. A little cup had been left in their room, and from the open window they could soon have refreshed themselves. The first thought of each was to do so. They were in nowise bound to concur in this inhuman punishment; *yet an impression was clearly made upon their minds, before consulting each other, that they must withhold*, and they scarcely felt the copious showers tempt them. The next morning, several officers entered the room and questioned them closely: they claimed it to be impossible for them to retain so much strength without any food, and charged them with having secretly obtained it. They then, in much simplicity, told them of their not feeling easy to take even the rain that fell. This evidently touched the hearts of the officers. Soon after the end of four and a half days' abstinence, a little water was allowed, and about the end of five days their rations were furnished again.'

We can easily imagine that the virtue and determination of this excellent pair of brothers must have put the warriors of the Southern army very much out of patience; but nothing can excuse such infamous persecution, and this pamphlet details many other similar cases. The Southern Confederacy was, according to its own account, fighting for Liberty, above all things; Liberty (for white men at least) to act and think as they chose; and nothing can shew more clearly how little they were really actuated by that principle than this treatment of an inoffensive sect. It is curious to see, how, under a stress of circumstances sufficiently strong, the worst practices of the worst ages are thus found to make their reappearance. To suspend a man for two hours by his thumbs, with his toes barely touching the ground, because he will not abjure the religious principles he has always professed, is an act which, to Englishmen at least, seems to put the world's clock back for three centuries. We have no doubt of the general truth of the statements above reported, but must differ altogether from the views of the North Carolina Friends on one point. We cannot think that the severe measures adopted with those who became Quakers after war was declared, is to be spoken of in the same breath with the persecutions inflicted on those who professed the non-combatant faith of their Fathers. The conversion of the former to 'the principles of peace,' was, to say the least of it, most suspicious and inopportune. In many cases, nay, in most, it could only have been another form of 'malingering.' Even if 'the pressure of the Spirit' had been ever so powerful, a man of honour would have hesitated to leave the ranks of his fellow-countrymen in that supreme hour of their peril, to shelter himself under the Exemption Act. The North Carolina Meeting seems to take it for granted that all such converts were sincere; this credulity, and a certain Methodistic twang in the style of its narrations, are the only drawbacks to this singular pamphlet, which certainly discloses cruel wrongs, and illustrates anew how human nature repeats itself, under pressure, in acts which one might have hoped no civilised country would witness more.

MY BABY'S LULLABY.

Oh, hush! little baby! Hush, hush! lullaby!
Thine eyes should be closing, and silent thy cry;
My babe, softly couched on thy mother's warm breast,
All past is thy toying—'tis time thou shouldst rest.
Cease, pretty fingers, to stray in my hair;
Peace, joyful murmur, enriching the air;
Droop, brightsome eyes—seek thy mother no more;
Smiles durst not come, though thy mother bends o'er:
At morn, to thy touch, 'tis her joy to reply;
She shuns thee but now, sweet! Hush, hush! lullaby!

Oh, hush! pretty baby! Hush, hush! lullaby!
Thine eye is not hidden; still lingers thy cry
My babe, though thy babble is life to my breast,
I sing thee to sleep, love, I lull thee to rest.
Part not thy lips; my glad kiss I must keep;
I may not caress till I see thee asleep.
Slumber, my babe; the gay sunlight is past;
Flow'rets so tender in sleep should be fast.
I heed not thy prattle, I turn from thy cry;
Sleep, sleep, baby darling! Hush, hush! lullaby!

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THE ROYAL MARINES.

SOLDIERS were habitually employed in ships long before the Marines, as we know them, were called into existence. At first, the Foot-guards supplied the required men. In 1664, in the time of the Merry Monarch, the first 'maritime regiment' was raised, and was numbered, it is supposed, third on the list, or just before the 'Buffs,' which were at first No. 4. The regiment was created 'upon Report of the Lords Commissioners for the Affayres of His Majestye's Navy Royall and Admiralty of this kingdom.' It was, moreover, twelve hundred strong, and 'under one collonell.' A regiment expressly designed for sea-service is mentioned in the Army List of 1684; and in the description of a review at Putney, in that year, the corps is alluded to thus: 'The Lord High Admiral of England, His Royal Highness the Duke of York and Albany's Maritime Regiment of Foot, commanded by Sir Charles Littleton, called also the "Admiral Regiment."' It consisted of twelve companies. It had yellow coats, lined with red; and amongst other appointments, Samuel Tatham and John Tatham were respectively 'chirugeon' and 'chirugeon's mate.' Between the years 1687 and 1698, several more 'maritime regiments' were added, and included in the navy estimates. About this time, too, the men of these corps were retained continuously in them, whereas, before that, they were drafted into the navy, as sailors, as soon as they had learned how to work a ship, their places being filled up by recruits. These troops are spoken of as 'Marines' for the first time on the occasion of the attack on St Christopher, where they were disembarked, and fought on land. On the peace of Ryswick, however, which terminated the hostilities between ourselves and France, Spain, and Holland, in 1697, the Marines were disbanded entirely.

One of the very first acts of Queen Anne, on her accession in 1702, was to establish a powerful force of Marines; twelve regiments were created—six for regular sea-service, and six to act on shore with disciplined land-forces. These troops were soon after employed for the absurd purpose of upholding the pretensions of an Archduke of Austria to the throne of Spain (of which he called himself Charles III.) against Philip V. One very important result, however, followed upon this struggle, for, in 1704, eighteen hundred marines, under the Prince of Hesse, landed at Gibraltar and captured that important fortress, which has never since been out of our possession. The attack was so sudden and dashing on this occasion, that the assailing force penetrated between, and separated the men of the garrison and their women, who were all at their devotions at a chapel some four miles off; and it is supposed that this circumstance had some influence on the governor and other authorities, when they decided to surrender to the summons of the Prince of Hesse. This same force held Gibraltar that year against an attacking force of seven thousand men, until relieved by Sir John Leake. The fortress was then maintained against the Spaniards, until it was ceded to us by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. During the wars of this period, the Marines also assisted, besides other services, at the capture of Sardinia, Minorca, and Nova Scotia; and at the Treaty of Utrecht, the two latter remained in our possession.

In the early part of the reign of George I., economy was the order of the day, and great jealousy was entertained towards the maintenance of a standing army. As one effect of these feelings, therefore, and of the Treaty of Utrecht, the Marines were for the second time disbanded, four invalid companies only being retained. This unusual state of affairs lasted, strange to say, for twenty-five years, when, getting pugnacious again, six regiments of Marines were enrolled in the year 1739, receiving their commanding officers and non-commissioned officers from the Foot-guards. Frequent expeditions were now sent out, and notably those for the capture of some of the West India Islands. Marine soldiers were at a premium, and strange as it may now seem, it was actually proposed to 'convert most of our marching regiments into marines.' In 1741, there were no less than ten regiments of marines; but in 1746, curiously enough, they were incorporated with the

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line, and numbered from the 44th to the 53d regiments inclusive; at the same time, however, they were also called the 1st, 2d, 3d, &c. Marines.

It is well known that the 3d Buffs have the privilege, denied to the rest of the army, of marching through the City of London with colours flying and drums beating. It is not, however, so well known that the Marines have the same privilege. A curious case, proving this, is thus recorded by a Major Donkin. 'It happened in the year 1746 a detachment of Marines were beating along Cheapside, one of the magistrates came up to the officer, requesting him to cease the drum, as no soldiers were allowed to interrupt the civil repose. The captain commanding (an intimate friend of mine) immediately said: "Sir, we are Marines." "Oh, sir," replied the alderman, "I beg pardon; I did not know it. Pray, continue your route as you please."'

In 1747, the Marines were first placed under the Lords of the Admiralty; but in 1748, after nine years of continuous fighting, the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was concluded, and for the third and last time this celebrated corps was entirely disbanded. On this occasion, many of the disbanded men were sent out to Nova Scotia, as military colonists, by Lord Halifax, and they founded the town called by his name.

It is curious to observe what a kind of war-barometer the corps of Marines has been. In peaceable times, they were either greatly reduced or altogether disbanded; but on the first pressure of war, up they went in numerical strength, as certainly as the column of mercury in fine weather. Thus, in 1755, when a serious struggle with France seemed inevitable, the Marines, from zero, were speedily made up to fifty companies strong. They were divided into three divisions, one of which was stationed at Portsmouth, one at Plymouth, and one at Chatham. They were not again disbanded, although their strength has been subjected to great fluctuations. In 1756–7 commenced the protracted war with France, during which Mr Pitt so nobly upheld the honour of the country, and added so largely to our dependencies at the expense of our enemy. In this year we were threatened with an invasion by France, and in consequence thirty more companies were added to the strength of the Marines. They were then gradually augmented, until, in 1758, they numbered about fifteen thousand men. This, by the way, was the celebrated year when our great constitutional force, the militia, was first raised. War with France or Spain continuing up to 1763, the Marines had been increased up to nineteen thousand men, they had materially assisted in driving the French out of their East Indian settlements, and had helped at the capture of St Lucia, St Vincent, and Grenada. In 1763, however, the war was concluded, and the corps was reduced to seventy companies.

During the war between England and her American provinces from 1775 to 1783, they were gradually augmented in strength until they reached twenty-one thousand; but on the conclusion of peace in the latter year, again they were suddenly reduced to between four thousand and five thousand men. Not very long, however, were they allowed to remain at this strength, for on the outbreak of the great war with France in 1791, their numbers were again raised; and in 1807 they attained their maximum strength of thirty-one thousand. Up to 1802, this body had been called simply 'Marines,' but in this year they were honoured by the appellation 'Royal,' a title which they had fully earned by their brilliant services in the four quarters of the globe. After the peace of 1815, they were reduced to six thousand men; but they have been gradually augmented, until they now number 14,700.

The marines have always been noted for their stanch, steady, and reliable conduct. On shipboard they have often strengthened the hands of naval captains in maintaining discipline amongst the sailors, who, on account of their uncertain service and free-and-easy ways, were often very insubordinate in times gone by. The celebrated case of the mutiny at the Nore developed this characteristic of the Marines in a remarkable manner. For a long time the sailors had felt aggrieved concerning their pay and allowances, but no overt act was committed until Easter Sunday of the year 1797, when the men of the ship *Queen Charlotte*, on being ordered to weigh, positively refused to stir 'unless the enemy's fleet put to sea.' All the measures for repressing the mutinous feeling having failed, and the men having tried to hold a convention on board the *London*, Admiral Colpoys had the marines under arms, and ordered them to fire on the mutineers; but these latter were too strong for them, and the whole of the marines and naval officers were taken prisoners. In fact, neither on this occasion nor on any other during all this trying time, did a man of the Marines join the mutiny. At Yarmouth Roads, too, where there was an outbreak of mutiny in the fleet under Admiral Duncan, the marines, by seizing the ringleaders on board the *Venerable*, quelled the disturbance. On this occasion, it is recorded of Captain David Wilson of this corps, that on the mutineers demanding from him the keys of the arm-chest, he threw them overboard, and told the sailors to go and fetch them. In 1798, there were serious popular disturbances in the kingdom, and again the marines were prominent in quelling the insurrection.

From the description given of the Marines from their first establishment down to the present day, it will be seen that they have always proved most useful soldiers, and admirably adapted for the service of an insular and maritime nation like ours. At first, they were required not only to fight on shore and on board ship, and to assist the sailors to work their ships, but to keep the latter in check. In the present day, however, Jack is procured, disciplined, and treated in a very different fashion from that of the olden time, so that the marine is no longer required as a check on the sailor. Moreover, since

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the introduction of steam, and of a small number of powerful guns, in place of a large number of small guns, the crews of vessels of war have not been required to be so large. Hence it is that the recent idea of reducing the Marines was started. But the Marines are great favourites of the public. It is felt that they are just the reverse of the flunky who was 'for hornament,' not 'for work.' It is felt that on shore they are quite equal to our best troops, and on shipboard, of course, greatly their superiors. It is felt, moreover, that they are snubbed by the Admiralty and the navy, and treated coldly by the army. Therefore, the British public are, and naturally so, partial to the Marines, and by no means eager for their reduction.

There is one mode of employing the Marines, which assuredly any other nation in our position but our curious selves would have put in action: namely by garrisoning many of our isolated maritime dependencies all over the world with these troops. If this plan were adopted, the men might be taken out and brought back in our ships-of-war, and shifted from ship to shore and from shore to ship, as their health and the convenience of the service required; and a great portion of the expensive system of transports and the relief of invalids be rendered unnecessary. The great Nelson *is supposed* to have said, on the subject of employing Marines: 'When I become First Lord of the Admiralty, every fleet shall have perfect battalions of Marines, with their artillery, and commanded by experienced field-officers, to be prepared to make a serious impression on an enemy's coast.' Now, although we entertain no intention of making impressions on enemies' coasts in the present day, still we do require to possess the means of supporting and reinforcing our outlying dependencies. If we have too many soldiers, let us by all means curtail the number, but think twice before reducing one of the most useful and serviceable corps we have, our *per mare, per terram* sailor-soldiers.

LOST AT THE GOLD-FIELDS.

'D' ye mind the big snaw-storm o' saxty-three? Eh, but yon was an awfu' sair time. I was oot in 't mysel, and got near smoored, forbye losin' ane o' my taes, nippit wi' the frost. Mony and mony a wild storm hae I seen at hame afore I left bonny Scotland; but I never saw onythin' sae fearfu' bad as yon.'

A tall, well-built man was Sandy Macfarlane, the speaker. As he stood in the sunlight, leaning on a long-handled shovel, his muscular arms stripped to the shoulders, his well-developed throat bared to the breeze, and his bronzed features set in a shaggy framework of bright-coloured hair, he looked a very model of human strength. It must have been a fearful storm indeed to which a frame so powerful had been compelled to succumb.

I will tell the story nearly in his own words, only slightly toning down the rich Doric—reminiscent of far-away heathery braes—in which it was told to me.

'Ye see,' he continued, 'I had been workin' for a spell in Conroy's, on a bit claim there, when tidins cam' fleein' aboot o' a grand "rush" to a fine new gully somewhere oot ower the "Auld Man" Ranges. I had done gey weel in Conroy's, though I wadna hae tell 't ye sae if ye had forgathered wi' me at the time; but there 's no sae muckle harm in speakin' o 't the noo. Five punds and nine ounces—that 's saxty-nine ounces in a', ye ken—was each man's share; and a' braw, nuggety gowd—none o' your pouthery stuff, sic as the lads wash oot o' the sands o' the Molyneux, though I 'm no denyin' it 's vera gude gowd to get, when there 's plenty o 't.

'We had wrought oot our claim, and had just done "washin'-up,"* when the news got aboot. At first, I gave sma' heed till 't; but when Saturday cam' round, I thought I 'd just gae down to the township, to pit my gowd into the bank, and maybe hae a crack wi' a few cronies. As I was wantin' a few claes, I steppit intil a store—ye mind it weel: it was keepit by an auld Israelite that ca'd himsel the "Wonder o' the Warld;" and wha should be there buyin' bran-new blankets and rugs, and a hantle mair things, but Willie Cranston! I kent Willie fine, for we cam' oot thegither in the *Cheviot*. Sae I speered at him, was he bringin' hame his lassie, that he wanted sic a heap o' furnishins. And he up and tauld me that he had been ower to Campbell's (as they ca'd the new rush), and was mates wi' three ither lads in a claim; and how it was as cauld as the tap o' Benvoirlich there. Willie had been in a warehouse at hame, sae he was sent down to the township to buy blankets and sic-like, as he kent mair aboot these matters than ony o' the ithers.

'You may be sure we didna pairt without payin' our respects to the Kirkliston, though it 's but sma' bree that comes oot in bottles frae that still, and no to be compared to the grand auld Glenlivet. And Willie gied me sic an account o' the place he was workin' in, that I went back to my mates, e'en red-wud to be aff at ance; but they wadna hear tell o 't, for, as they said (and it was nae mair than truth), there was plenty o' grun' left in Conroy's yet, and maybe as gude as ony in Campbell's; and they thought me daft to leave it, as we had done sae weel. But "first at a feast, and last at a fray," was aye my way; sae we just pairted, no in anger, but gude friends, and I joined a party wha were settin' oot for the rush. Twa o' them were fine buirdly fallows; but the tither ane was a wee bit English laddie—a kind o' hafflins callant—ca'd Tam Page. He was a sonsie lad, wi' a trifle o' book-lear, and made the way lightsome wi' his queer stories and cheerfu' havers. I mind his tellin' that when he was at school he was ca'd the page that never turned ower a fresh leaf. I took a great likin' to the chiel, for he wasna strong; and aften when we were speelin' up the sides o' the ranges, I used to lighten him o' a pairt o' his "swag."† Not that he ever complained; for he aye set a stout heart to a steep brae, and tried to keep up wi' the lave; but I could see it was ower muckle for him. And eh, the weary work we had afore we gat to the tap o' the Auld Man! Puir Tam was right-down dunted; but for a' that, his een fairly glinted wi' pleasure, as he loot his

* The process of gold-washing is so termed.

† Any burden is usually spoken of as a swag.

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swag fa' to the grun', and lookit round at the prospect. Weel, it was a bonny sight, nae doubt, wi' the Dunstan Plains and the Teviot far below us, and the tents shewin' like wee specks in the distance, and the Molyneux wimplin' alang like a siller thread in the bottom; and the Leanin' Rock, and the Knobbys, and the Lammerlaws, and mony ither mountains that I dinna ken the name o', standin' boldly oot in the wanin' sunlight. But I think I cared mair just then for a gude scone, or a cog o' parritch, wi' a pannikin o' tea, and maybe a drap whisky to end wi', than for ony prospect in the warld.

'We campit oot the first night in a neuk o' the mountain, and mony a fire forbye ours glimmered on the face o' the brae; for by this time the tidins had spread through the diggins, and folk were makin' their way to the rush frae a' pairts. Next day we gat up early, and were the first to reach Campbell's. Sae, as we had the pick o' the grun', wi' Willie Cranston's advice, we sune markit a claim; and a gude claim it turned oot. Ane o' my mates, wha had been in Victoria, said it minded him o' the claims he had worked in at auld Gowden Point and Eaglehawk. Nae doubt, as ye are sae weel acquent wi' Victoria, ye 'll ken what that may mean, so I needna say ony mair. But I tell ye the wash-dirt * was a braw sight for sair een. We wrought there easy for a time; but as the winter creepit on, the water would whiles get frozen up, sae that we could only work for a few hours in the day, and aften no at a'. And when August cam', the burn wad stop rinnin' for days thegither. Then a little snaw began to fa'. At first, it wad melt awa'; but after a while the grun' got that hard that ye couldna pit a pick † intil 't. And the snaw didna melt then; but it got deeper and deeper, till it covered up a' the claims, and lay upon the grun' sae hard and firm that ye could step on't without breakin' the crust.

'Still, we didna care to leave the gully; for a'body said the snaw wad sune be gane, and the claim was far too gude to lose. Sae we stopt on, and amused oursels as weel's we could in our huts, whilin' awa' the time wi' cards and sic-like, or, as Tam said, leavin' our cards on our friends. Tam's cheery ways helpit us alang fine; for he had aye a blithe sang, or a jest, or a rantin' story to gie us at a pinch. But the cauld continued, and the snaw cam' down mair and mair. And the sma' store o' provisions in the gully began to dwindle, for nae packers cam' through till us, and folk began to think o' gettin' awa afore worse cam' o't. First they flitted, ane or twa at a time, then mair went, and at last they gaed aff by dizzens, and a' things got unco dreary wi' us then in Campbell's.

'There was plenty o' timmer in the gullies, and we had biggit a warm hut, but we couldna live on fire alane, and there seemed nae certain prospect o' a mair seasonable meal if we stopt ony langer. Sae one mornin' we got a padlock frae the store, and lockit up the hut (for we meant to go back when the weather broke), and shouthered our swags, wi' a number o' ithers a' bound for the Dunstan. There were twenty-seven o' us a' tauld; and it seemed as if naethin' could hinder us, for if ane fell, twa could help him on. But we had bided too lang for sic a journey, and we had a warnin', nae doubt, if we had but ta'en it. I mind weel as we took a pairtin' cup wi' our friend the storekeeper—auld Alick Burniewin', as we ca'd him, because he had a smiddy next the store—he said to Tam Page (and I hae often and often thought on't, for aiblins he was tauld what was to happen): "Tammy, my lad, ye 'd best stop in my auld smiddy, for it 's a cauld bed ye'se hae the nicht on yon range." Tam leugh, as his way was, and simply answered that he 'd rather lie in a cauld bed than a het ane, sae lang as he didna lie his lane. And wi' that we started for up the lang brae.

'The cauld white snaw covered the haill mountain wi' a braid white sheet, vera tryin' to the een, and sae thick ye couldna tell the gullies frae the hillocks, and no a glimpse o' the blue sky could we discern; but ower them a dour heavy cloud was hangin', and the air was snell and piercin'. Still there was no down-pour, and we a' expectit to mak' the low grun' on the tither side afore night-fa'. But it was no to be. Afore we were weel half-way to the tap o' the range, the snaw began to fa' in sma' feathery flakes, and as it did sae the day seemed to darken. Tam said it was the last kick; but I misdoubted that, for I hadna been herdin' nigh auchteen years at hame for naethin'. However, we gaed on and on, aye hopin' it would sune clear up. But the snaw fell thicker, and the wind rase and blew it in our faces till we were amaist blin' and fairly dazed wi't. Naethin' could we now see but snaw aboon and around. The government folk had pit up cairns and guide-posts a' the way, for some wha kent the kintra foreboded what was comin'; but the deil a cairn or onythin' else but the snaw could we see. Some o' the lads had travelled the track ower and ower again, and as they seemed to ken the road sae weel, we gave them the lead. But they sune gat bewildered like the lave, and by the time we won the crown o' the range, they kent nae mair where we were than the rest o' us.

'We had brought some sticks wi' us, to mak' a fire and boil our "billies" * wi'; and aboot mid-day we cried a halt, and got ahint ane o' thae big rocks, like broken-down pyramids, that are scattered all over the mountain. But a' we could do, the wind and the snaw pit oot the lowe, and it wadna bleeze mair than eneugh to light our pipes wi'. Sae we were fain to be content wi' a drap whisky and a smoke, forbye a trifle o' cauld provender; and then we had a kind o' consultation. Some were for gaein' back to Campbell's, and ithers were for gaein' on to the Dunstan. Tam and mysel took different sides. I had reckoned the time and counted the cost; and we had been frae seven till almost one strugglin' sae far, and it was still a lang way down to the river; and the storm was aye growin' fiercer; and abune a', we didna rightly ken our whereaboots, for we had fairly lost the track. But for a' that could be made oot against it, some o' the lads were downright headstrong to gae on in the vera teeth o' the tempest, for they said it was a' down-hill either way, and how could they gae wrang if they keepit gaein' down, and it was as far to Campbell's as to the river-side, wi' mony ither arguments, sic as wilfu' men use to their ain destruction. The upshot o 't was, that we pairted. Fourteen o' us turned to gae back to Campbell's, and Tam and twal ithers pu'd their bonnets o'er their brows, and pushed on for the Dunstan; for Tam, the silly chap, wadna be guided

* Earth containing gold. † Pick-axe.

* Tin kettles or pots, so called.

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by me. There were thirteen o' them—a maist unchancy number—and I did my best to keep the laddie by my side; but he just snapt his thumb in my face; sae I e'en let him gang his ain gate.

'I a'maist think I wad hae gane wi' Tam when I found him sae firm set to push on, for I was laith to leave him; but he angered me. It's o' nae special consequence the noo how it cam' aboot; but someway Tam cast it up till me that I was a coward for turnin' back.—"Tam," said I, "there ne'er was a Macfarlane a coward yet, and I'm sair vexed ye should hae used the word. I'll no harm ye, Tam; and I dinna wish to quarrel wi' onybody," said I, for I saw the lads girnin' a' round; "but if ony ither man here wad like just to say the same, I'll gie him twa-three powerful reasons for no ca'ing Sandy *Macfarlane* a coward."

'Weel, they up swag and awa' wi' that misguided bairn—wha but he—at their heid, and a' skirlin' out an uncanny sang aboot "John Brown's body moulderin' in the grave." And sae, ane by ane, God help them! they vanished oot o' sight into the mist and the drivin' snaw; and the clatter o' the sang deed awa' till the sound cam' faintly to us mingled with the sough o' the wind, like a maist gruesome and unearthly wailin'. And I turned back sick at heart, for somethin' tell't me I'd never see them again.

'But indeed, we werena in muckle better plight oursels, for it was a far road to the gully, and the snaw-drift had smoored our tracks, forbye fa'ing sae thick that we couldna see frae the tae end o' the line to the tither, as we trampit alang in Indian file. The first man had aye to tramp the snaw down, ye ken, which was vera tiresome wark; sae, when he was tired oot he wad stan' by, fa' behint, and anither wad tak lead in turn. There was nae rantin' or daffin amang us—we were in ower muckle trouble for that; and we trudged on in solemn silence, only broken by the crunchin' o' the snaw under oor feet, or whiles by a cry o' "Spell—oh!" when we were fain to rest oursels. As near's I can tell we had gane on like this aboot three hours, or maybe less, when a great cry cam' frae the rear, and I ran back to speer what was't was wrang; and I found that ane o' the lads was missin'; naebody kent how lang for he was the hindmost ane and it seems he must just hae drappit down in the snaw without a word. Weel, I got them to stop, while twa o' us travelled back a quarter o' a mile or mair to look for him. But we couldna find ony trace o' him; and though we "*coo-eed*"* wi' a' our strength there was nae answer but just the moanin' o' the wind as it sweepit by. We went back wi' the black tidins to our mates and a great fear fell upon us. Naebody spak', for a' were feared to say onythin'; but we lookit in ane anither's faces, and the shadow o' death seemed hoverin' ower us a'. Then without a word we cast off our swags and hurried on, like as if we were fleein' for life, as indeed we were.

'Sune after it cam' to my turn to step oot and take my place ahint. I counted the lads as they slippit by; and oh! my heart sank within me when I saw there were but eleven o' us left oot o' the fourteen that started frae the hill-tap. Gude forgie me if I did wrang, but I judged it best to say naethin' for as the gloamin' was comin' on we couldna bide to search for the puir lost fallows, and I didna wish to fright the lave. It was bad eneugh without that, sae I just keepit it to mysel. But presently ane staggert and fell down in a kind o' dwam in our midst, and a' we could dae, we werena able to rouse him; and to carry him was no to be thought o'. Then the lads got clean wud-mad. Willie Cranston wha was wi' us, and mysel did what we could to keep them a' thegither; but we couldna. They gaed aff, helter-skelter, ony way, and sae got scattert ower the brae-side like scared sheep. Willie and I and twa ithers keepit company for a time, but somehow in the dark and the drift we missed them baith, and there was Willie and mysel alane on the dreary mountain.

'It was an awfu' moment when we found it oot. There was nae sign o' the gully, and we werena quite sure that we were on the down-track. Willie gied a kind o' sab, and "Sandie," he said, "there's Ane abune a'; and if it's His will that we leave our banes in the wreath, let us dee like Christian men, and no like brute beasts."

'It was lang since either o' us had prayed to Him—the mair shame to us, for no mindin' the gude teachin' o' our forbears. But we knelt down there in the snawy wilderness wi' the cauld wind ragin' and howlin' round us and swirlin' the half-frosted flakes in our een; and we prayed for help and forgiveness in the hour o' our extremity, as few men ever pray mair than ance in the space o' a lifetime.

'Then we thought o' our mithers, wha little kent their bairns were sae sair pit till't that night; and I gave Willie a bit o' my hair and made him gie me some o' his; and we made a solemn compact and grippit hand upon't, that if ane o' us got back safe to the livin' warld he was to send it hame as a memento o' the ither. "And now Willie," said I, "there's just a wee drap whisky left, sae we'll mak' an end o't at ance; for if we dinna sune find the gully we'll never want whisky mair."

'It was unco dark noo sae that when we lifted a foot we werena vera sure where we should pit it down again. But I think we baith felt mair comfortable, and gaed on wi' a new courage. I'm no just sayin' that our prayers were directly answered; but God was gude to us. We hadna gane abune a few hundred yards, when a light flickered oot far down below us just as we turned the breist o' the hill; and we kent fu' weel that where that bleeze was there was life o' some sort. And sae it proved; for atween rollin' and lettin' oursels slip down we sune got till't; and eh! the feelin' o' thankfulness that cam' ower us when we found we were at the vera door o' auld Burniewin's smiddy.

'We were the first that cam' in, and when we tellt what had happened the folk fired aff guns to guide ony o' the ithers that might be wanderin' aboot in the snaw. And syne ane cam' and then anither; and a pairty that gaed oot in search wi' lights brought in three mair. But that was a'. Seven o' us were saved, and seven were lost in the drift that night.

'The storm had spent its fury afore morn; and three days after some folk cam' ower frae the Dunstan, for news had gotten abroad that five hundred men were snawed in and starvin' at Campbell's. A number o' the diggers volunteered for a relief pairty, and the storekeepers gied provisions and medicines and a' things needfu'; and they got horses and cam' right through till us.

* Coo-ee, the Australian call; can be heard afar off.

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When they found the condition we were in they bided a while till the track was clear, and then took us in till the hospital for we were a' mair or less sufferin' frae frost-bites, whereby, as I mentioned afore, I lost ane o' my taes. But some were far worse than mysel and ane o' the seven deed on the way, and anither in the hospital; sae that only five were spared oot o' the lot that tried to find their way back to Campbell's.

'But no ane o' the thirteen that we pairted wi' on the range had reached the plains alive. A few bodies were found leein' alang the wayside and some no far frae the shanty they ca' Chamouni. It was thought that they had tried to mak' to the shanty for shelter; but the people that keepit it had flitted the week afore when the snaw first began to fa'; and there bein' nae light to guide them they werena able to find it. When the snaw was clean gane mair bodies were pickit up; and they were a' buried decently. I was aye speerin' for Tam Page, but I couldna hear onythin' aboot him, till ane day they brought me Tam's coat, that they tellt me had been ta'en aff his body. His "Miner's Right," * and some ither things that I kent weel were Tam's were in the pouches; and then I was sair troubled in my min' that I had ta'en a huff at his silly words and hadna forced him to come back wi' me that day.

'I got ower to Campbell's again as sune as I was weel eneugh to walk; and our claim and our bit hut were aye as I left them. Willie had lost twa o' his mates in the storm and I had lost a' mine; sae we pit the claims thegither and wrought them as ane. I had the hut a' to mysel, and whiles I felt unco lonesome, and then I wad gae down to auld Burniewin's for a crouse crack wi' folk. Weel, one night when I was there, Geordie Tamson, wha wrought higher up the gully, cam' birslin' in wi' a face like a dishcloot; and—"Sandie, man," said he, "div ye no believe in ghaists?"

'I didna weel ken what to mak' o' the question; sae I speered: "What for aye, and what for no?"

"Weel," he says, "I 'm no thinkin' ye hae done onythin' wrang by Tam Page; but I 'm feared he canna rest, for he 's been walkin' in the gully. And I saw his ghaist, as I was comin' down this vera night, as sure 's ye 're sittin' there."

'We a' leugh at Geordie, and tauld him he had been scared at his ain shadow; but he wadna hae 't. A' we could say, he stickit till 't he had seen the ghaist o' Tam Page beside the auld claim, and keekin' down in till 't. But the lads sae sair daffed him that he said nae mair, but sat silent and grumpy in a corner. Sae, when I got up to gae hame, I said till him: "Come awa' wi' me, Geordie, and we 'll hae a *deoch-an-doruis* † at the hut."

'Geordie cam' awa', and sae did Willie and ane or twa mair, and up we a' gaed till the auld hut. I was a bit dumbfoundered to see a light shinin' through the chinks o' the door; but I thought maybe the logs had bleezed up. But Geordie stopped us as we cam' near: "Wisht! wisht!" says he. "Whatna 's yon?" And, as true as death, I heard a faint croonin' o' the sang aboot "John Brown's body," just as I heard it when I last saw Tam on the big range!

'It dirled through me like a stang, and my heart louped to my mouth. Biddin' the lads stan' fast, I creepit up saftly, and keek't through a chink, and there was the figure o' a man sittin' by the lum and seemin' to warm its han's ower the lowe. At first its back was to the door, sae that I didna see its face; but after a while it half looked round, and I saw it was the vera likeness o' Tam Page; but sae pale and waesome was 't that I was fair dumb wi' fright.

'I signed to Willie and the lave to come up, and they a' saw 't. Some o' them were minded to flee awa'; but Willie said: "It 's no a ghaist ava'; but just Tam himsel." And wi' that he opened the door and the ghaist jumpit up and pit his loof in my ain; and then I kent that Tam Page after a' wasna dead but actually livin' in the fleah.

'It turned out that sune after thae unlucky thirteen got awa' frae us, they began to misdoubt they were on the right track, and some gaed this way and some anither, and Tam got pairted frae them a'. When he found himsel gaein' his lane, he thought on what he had aften heard aboot keepin' to a gully or a burn and aye followin' it down, when no sure o' the track. It 's the only safe course in sic matters and Tam owed his vera life till 't, under Providence. He wandered about a' that night, but his senses never deserted him, and his steps were guided—nae doubt on 't—to a spot where, by riggin' up a blanket he was able to get shelter under the lee of an ower-hangin' rock. I hae seen the place since, and there 's no anither the like o 't on the haill mountain-side. But he daured na gae to sleep for he was feart he might never wauken mair; and when he felt drowsy, he walked aboot, to rouse himsel. Neist morn he was awa' wi' the daylight; but though he could see the river before him he was sae weary for want o' rest that he couldna gae far, and at last was fain to lie down in despair. But afore the sleep o' death itsel' cam' ower him twa men passed by on their way in frae the Pomahawk, and Tam had just eneugh strength to "coo-ee" to them. Weel, they heard his cry and went back, and ane o' them took him up on his back, and sae they carried him by turns to their tent on the Molyneux. And as sune 's the weather cleared up they sent him on, wi' some friendly packers to the hospital at Tuapeka; but we kent naethin' o 't at the Dunstan. Tam had been sair bitten wi' the frost, but he aye had a gude sound constitution which helpit him to hirple ower the danger without ony loss o' his limbs; and when he was set up ance mair, his first thought was to gae back to Campbell's and seek for his mates in the auld place.

'I forgot to mention that afore he was fair pairted frae his company, he changed coats wi' ane o' them (as is aften done amang mates), which accounted for his claes bein' found on the puir creature wha deed in the wreath.

"O Tam, Tam," said I, when he had tauld us a', "I 'm wae for ye and for a' ye hae gane through; but what for did ye ca' me a coward yon time?" For, ye see, I couldna get it oot o' my min'. And he leugh in his auld wild way, and said it was just some trash that cam' intil his heid, oot o' ane o' thae rantin' ploys that a loon ca'd John Falstaff, ance said to bonny Prince Hal. And wi' that he grippit my han' wi' his puir wasted fingers, and said he didna intend to vex me. "And, Sandie," says he, "dinna bear malice for a thoughtless word, for I hae paid dearly for 't."

* A document authorising the holder to search for gold on crown lands.

† A parting glass, or stirrup-cup.

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Sae, I e'en took the laddie to my heart again, and we haena pairted since syne.

'It's a' by and gane noo, but aften I gae through it a' ower again in my dreams; and then I start up in a cauld sweat thinkin' I'm sinkin' down—down in the snaw-drift. And when I wauken I seem to hear that wearisome sang o' "John Brown's body" in ilka blast that whistles round our hut.'

ST PAUL'S.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

The first vital blow was struck at the Church when Henry VIII. bade the bishop tell his clergy in the cathedral of St Paul's that they would have to pay his royal master one hundred thousand pounds, as penalty for having submitted to the legatine authority. The king himself had acquiesced in it for years; but there was no instrument to shew the royal licence, and his majesty wanted the money. The whole church, he contended, had incurred the penalty of Præmunire. Six hundred of the clergy attended the bishop's discourse: there was an attempt to keep the affair private, or at least only to admit a few. With difficulty, the officers succeeded in closing the doors. 'This only exasperated the tumult without. "We will not be left without, our fellows being within. We know not what the bishop will do with them." The unclerical multitude goaded them on; there was a rush at the door, which gave way with a crash, and in they all poured, lay and clergy, with a great rending of gowns and cassocks, crushing of caps, and all the wild affray of a London mob. One, it is to be hoped not of the clergy, struck the bishop's officer on the face. The chapter-house was filled to its utmost corner; it was long before silence could be obtained. At length, the smooth bland voice of the bishop, who maintained his calm self-possession, was heard above the tumult. "I marvel, my brethren, that ye be so heady, and will not hear what may be said unto you. I pray you keep silence, and listen to me with patience." He went on: "Friends! we are men, not angels. We have miscarried ourselves towards the king. All our promotions, goods, lands, and chattels are forfeit to him, and our bodies liable to imprisonment. The king, on the humble petition of us, the fathers of the clergy, has inclined, as he ever does, to mercy. He will release us from the præmunire on the payment of one hundred thousand pounds in five years. Therefore, I charitably expect you, brethren, to bear your parts in the payment from your livelihoods and salaries." The reply was prompt, brief, resolute, not easily answerable. "My lord, thirty nobles a year is but bad living for a priest, now that victuals and everything else is so dear; our poverty enforceth us to say: 'Nay.' My lord, we never offended in the præmunire, and never meddled in the cardinal's business. Let the bishops and abbots who have offended pay." High words were uttered, not by the bishop, but by his officers, no doubt offended at the insolence of these low priests to their lord and master. Blows were struck: the "temporals" backed the priests, so that the bishop himself began to quail with apprehension for his sacred person. With his silkiest tones, he pardoned their rude demeanour, gave them a hasty blessing, and entreated them to depart in charity. The bishop withdrew, and the priests too, thinking all was over, withdrew. But the bishop's pardon was only from his lips: he hastened to the Chancellor, Sir Thomas More. Fifteen priests and four laymen were arrested by the Chancellor's order, some committed to the Fleet, some to the Tower; they paid the penalty of their resistance by a long imprisonment.'

Once that the taxing of the clergy was begun, it went on apace; and as long as they paid, they were permitted every indulgence in the way of persecution. In 1535, they condemned in the cathedral nineteen wretched Anabaptists, men and women, and sent them to be burned alive, two in Smithfield, the rest in various provincial towns, as an edifying spectacle. James Bainham, terrified by the stern Stokesley, Bishop of London, recanted his opinions. 'The next day he recanted his recantation. He was taken to the Bishop of London's coal-cellar at Fulham, the favourite episcopal prison-chamber. There he was ironed, put in the stocks, and left for many days in the chill March weather. Bainham, after repeated whippings, was burned in Smithfield. Stokesley flew at higher game. He had a strong desire to burn Latimer.' This is not at all to be wondered at in Bishop Stokesley. Except Dean Colet, there was no such outspoken preacher in the church as Hugh Latimer, then Bishop of Worcester. He dared to say in St Paul's—it was just after Anne Boleyn's execution—before all the prelates there assembled, these pregnant words, addressed to the clergy: '"While they thus preached to the people that dead images, which at the first, I think, were set up to represent things absent, not only ought to be covered with gold"—(Did he glance at St Erkenwald, still in all his splendour?)—"but who ought, of all faithful, and church or people, yea in this scarceness and penury of all things, to be clad with silk garments, and those all laden with precious gems and jewels; and that, besides all this, images are to be lighted with wax candles both within the church and without the church, yea, and at noon-day, as who should say no cost can be too great; whereas, in the meantime, we see Christ's faithful and lively images, bought with no less price than his most precious blood (alas! alas!), to be an hungered, a-thirst, a-cold, and to be in darkness, wrapped in all wretchedness, yea to be there till death take away their miseries; while they preach those will-works that come of even our devotion, although they see not the necessity of works of mercy and the precepts of God; yet they said, and in the pulpit, that will-works were more principal and excellent, and, plainly to utter what they mean, more acceptable to God than works of mercy..... The cries of your convocation," Latimer goes on to say, "shall shew what ye have done, the fruit of your consultation shall shew what generation ye be of. For what have ye done hitherto, I pray you, these seven years and more? What have ye engendered? what have ye brought forth? What fruit is come of your long and great assembly? What one thing that the people of England hath been better of a hair? or you yourselves more accepted before God, or better discharged towards the people committed to your care? For that the people be better learned and taught now than they were in time past, to whether of these ought we to attribute it—to your industry, or the foreseeing of the king's Grace? .... What went ye about?

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What would ye have brought to pass? Two things taken away?—the one that ye, I heard, burned a dead man" (this was William Tracy, dug from his grave and burned); "the other, that ye, which I felt, went about to burn one being alive" (Latimer himself—was Stokesley on his throne and Latimer's eyes on Stokesley?) "Ye have oft sate in consultation, but what have ye done? Ye have had many things in deliberation, but what one is put forth whereby Christ is more glorified, or else Christ's people made more holy?"'

Never did the cathedral ring with more noble words; if they who heard them had but acted on them, it is possible that it and its contents might have escaped the hands of the spoiler that were already menacing the sacred pile. But the audience were blinded to the church's peril; Stokesley, and Gardiner, and Bonner, and their likes were there, and leavened the whole mass. Even Ridley, present on this occasion, proved capable (in after-years) of helping to burn a poor crazy old woman. These things must be taken into account in order to estimate Latimer, to whose charge no cruelty or baseness has been laid, at his true value. It is terrible to track the footsteps of some of his contemporaries. When Rogers, the 'protomartyr of the English Church—and of the English Bible, which first came whole and complete from his hands'—was tried in St Mary Overy, upon the question of the pope's supremacy, he answered Gardiner thus: '"My lord, I do not believe that ye yourselves do think in your hearts that he (the pope) is the supreme head. . . . . For ye, and all ye be of the realm, have now twenty years long preached, and some of you also (Gardiner, Bonner, Tunstall) writ to the contrary, and the parliament had so long ago condescended unto it." Here Gardiner interrupted him, alleging that they were compelled to it by cruelty. "Cruelty!" answered Rogers, "if 'twas hard that your eminences were persuaded by cruelty, would you have us persuaded by cruelty?"' By Gardiner first, and Bonner afterwards, this man, upon his way to be burned alive, was refused a parting interview with his wife and children.

When Bonner was deprived of his see, his mother and sister still resided at Fulham, and were constant and welcome guests at Ridley's hospitable board. 'The place of honour was always reserved for our Mother Bonner.' Under such circumstances, it is scarcely to be credited that, when Bonner became bishop again, he should have assisted in Ridley's burning; but he did so. At the execution, the preacher, one Dr Smith of Whittington College, took for his comfortable text, 'Though I give my body to be burned, and have not *charity*, it profiteth me nothing.' Certainly it requires something more (or less) than charity to excuse such men and such deeds.

Bonner was never burned, but only suffered one imprisonment, which 'turned to his safety, being so hated by the people, that it would not have been safe to him to have walked in public, lest he should have been stoned or knocked on the head by the enraged friends and acquaintance of those whom he had but a little before so barbarously beaten and butchered. He grew old in prison, and died a natural death in the year 1569, not suffering any want, or hunger, or cold. For he lived daintily, had the use of his garden and orchards, when he was minded to walk abroad and take the air.' He had some coarse humour about him, which seems to be the only good thing he did have. As he went and returned from the Marshalsea prison to his trial, he had some passages of wit with the rabble. 'One said to him: "The Lord confound thee, or else turn thy heart." "The Lord," he replied, "send thee to keep thy breath to cool thy porridge." To another, saying: "The Lord overthrow thee," he said: "The Lord make thee wise as a woodcock." A woman kneeled down and said: "The Lord save thy life. I trust to see thee Bishop of London again." To which he said: "God a mercy, good wife," and so passed on to his lodging.'

He was never to be Bishop of London more, and with him disappeared much else that was more valuable. Ten years before his death, St Paul's had become the prey of the spoiler. Mr Froude's description of the wholesale robbery is but too true. 'In the autumn and winter of 1552—1553, no less than four commissions were appointed with this one object; four of whom were to go over the often-trodden ground, and glean the last spoils which could be gathered from the churches. In the business of plunder, the rapacity of the crown officials had been far distanced hitherto by private peculation. The halls of country-houses were hung with altar-cloths; tables and beds were quilted with copes; the knights and squires drank their claret out of chalices, and watered their horses in marble coffins. Pious clergy, gentlemen, or churchwardens, had in many places secreted plate, images, or candlesticks, which force might bring to light. Bells, rich in silver, still hung silent in remote church towers, or were buried in the vaults. Organs still pealed through the aisles in notes unsuited to a regenerate worship; and damask napkins, rich robes, consecrated banners, pious offerings of men of another faith, remained in the chests of the vestries.' 'Who seized, who appropriated, who profaned the splendid banners which had waved over the processions in St Paul's and from St Paul's? To what baser uses were the countless gorgeous vestments—the copes, the albes, the chasubles, degraded? What became of the plate, the jewelled and enamelled vessels—the flagons, the chalices, the patens concealed? Whither went some of the splendid altar-cloths, singularly enough, we can shew. Spanish cathedrals still boastfully deck themselves in the spoils of St Paul's.'

A few years more, and profanation was added to spoliation. In Cromwell's time—of whom a strange story is told, that he meditated selling the cathedral to the Jews—'the portico was let out for mean shops, to sempstresses and hucksters, with chambers above, and staircases leading to them. The body of the church, the sacred building, Dugdale, who saw it, declares with sorrow and bitterness of heart, became a cavalry barrack, a cavalry stable. The pavement was trampled by horses, the tombs left to the idle amusement of the rude soldiers, if religious, not much disposed to reverence the remains of a popish edifice. Sir H. Ellis has quoted a curious notice from a printed paper in the British Museum, dated May 27, 1651: "Forasmuch as the inhabitants of St Paul's Churchyard are much disturbed by the souldiers and others, calling out to passengers and examining them, though they go peaceably and civilly along, and by playing at nine-pins at unreasonable hours. They are therefore to command all souldiers and others that hereafter there shall be no examining and calling out to persons that go

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peaceably on their way, unless they do approach the guards, and likewise to forbeare playing at *nine*-pins and other sports from the hours of nine o'clock in the evening till six in the morning, that so persons as are weak and indisposed to rest may not be disturbed."' But it is not to be imagined that even at a much earlier date the cathedral was always treated with reverence. Upon the whole, we have now-a-days much more respect for sacred places than was entertained by our more superstitious forefathers. An act of the Common Council so early as 1563, complains that many of the inhabitants of London were accustomed 'to make their common carriage of great vessels of ale or beer, great baskets full of bread, fish, flesh, and fruit, fardels of stuff, and other gross wares, thorow the cathedral church of St Paul's, and some in leading mules, horses, and other beasts irreverently to the great dishonour and displeasure of Almighty God.' Again, 'the Elizabethan literature teems with passages which shew to what base uses the nave and aisles of the cathedral were abandoned, as lounging-places for the idle and hungry, for knaves, thieves, ruffians, or women; a mart for business of all kinds, even the lowest and most coarse. The walls were covered with advertisements, not always the most decent; it was the unrebuked trysting-place of both sexes, the place where villainies and robberies were plotted; where everything was bought, sold, hired. Shakspeare makes Falstaff buy Bardolph in Paul's; servants bought and hired there were proverbially no better than Bardolph. Parasites who wanted a dinner haunted what popular fame had transmuted into the tomb of the good Duke Humphrey. There was a noble monument of the Beauchamps at the foot of the second column, at the north-east end of the nave. This was changed into the tomb of the old duke (who was buried at St Albans), and hence the common proverb, "to dine with Duke Humphrey!"' From 1378 down to Bonner's time, the cathedral was used as a theatre, in which plays—quite other than sacred ones, and, indeed, some of most indecent character—were acted by the choristers.

The first Lotteries in England were drawn at the west door of the church in 1569; 4000 lots, at tenpence a lot—the prizes being plate, and the profits to be applied to repairing the havens of the kingdom. Seventeen years later (on the verge of the Armada invasion), another lottery was held, wherein the prizes were armour.

Until very recent times, we had only two accounts of that great fire in which old St Paul's shared the fate of a hundred other London churches—that of Pepys and that of Evelyn. On the 7th day of September 1666, and on the seventh after the conflagration began, the former walked into the city, and 'saw all the Town burned, and a miserable sight of St Paul's Church, with all the roof fallen, and the body of the quire fallen into St Faith's.' On September 4, writes Evelyn: 'All Fleet Street, the Old Bailey, Ludgate Hill, Warwick Lane, Newgate, Paul's Chain, Watling Street, now flaming, and most of it reduced to ashes; the stones of St Paul's flew like grenades, the melting lead running down the streets in a stream, and the very pavements glowing with a fiery redness, so as no horse nor man was able to tread on them, and the demolition had stopped all the passages, so that no help could be applied, the eastern wind still more impetuously driving the flames forward. Nothing but the almighty power of God was able to stop them, for vain was the help of man.' But of late years, there has been disinterred a fuller and more interesting account of this awful event by a third eye-witness, one Dr Taswell, who was at the time on the point of admission as a king's scholar at Westminster, and seems to have had the spectacle deeply graven upon his boyish mind. His testimony is peculiar, inasmuch as it contradicts the generally received opinion that no lives were lost in the fire that consumed so many human habitations. On the second day of the catastrophe (Monday), the Dean of Westminster, with all the Westminster boys, including the narrator, set gallantly forth into the city to do what they could in aid. The people who lived near the cathedral, says Taswell, placed the greatest confidence in its absolute security, by reason of the immense thickness of its walls; they placed all sorts of goods in it, and in the Church of St Faith (which was *under* that of St Paul) they deposited libraries of books, and with great caution and prudence, even the least avenue by which a spark could enter was stopped up. 'But this precaution availed them little. As I stood upon the bridge' (a small one over a creek at the foot of what is now Westminster Bridge), 'among many others, I could not but observe the progress of the fire towards that venerable fabric. About eight o'clock it broke out on the top of St Paul's Church, almost scorched up by the violent heat of the air and lightning too, and before nine, blazed so conspicuous as to enable me to read very clearly a 16mo edition of Terence, which I carried in my pocket.' On Thursday, Taswell made an expedition eastward upon his own account. 'The ground was so hot as almost to scorch my shoes, and the air so intensely warm, that unless I had stopped some time upon Fleet Bridge to rest myself, I must have fainted under the extreme languor of my spirits. After giving myself a little time to breathe, I made the best of my way to St Paul's.

'And now let any person judge of the extreme emotion I was in, when I perceived the metal belonging to the bells melting; the ruinous condition of the walls, with heaps of stones, of a large circumference, tumbling down with a great noise just upon my feet, ready to crush me to death. I prepared myself for retiring back again, having first loaded my pockets with several pieces of bell-metal.

'I forgot to mention that near the east end of St Paul's' (he must have got quite round the church), 'a human body presented itself to me, parched up as it were with the flames, white as to skin, meagre as to flesh, yellow as to colour. This was an old decrepit woman who fled here for safety, imagining the flames would not have reached her there; her clothes were burned, and every limb reduced to a coal. In my way home I saw several engines which were bringing up to its assistance, all on fire, and those engaged with them escaping with all eagerness from the flames, which spread instantaneous almost like a wildfire, and at last, *accoutred with my sword and helmet*, I traversed the torrid zone back again.'

Taswell states that the papers from the books at St Faith's were carried by the wind as far as Eton; and that even at Oxford the rays of the sun seemed to be tinged with an unusual kind of redness, while a black darkness seemed to cover the whole hemisphere. On the seventh (that is, the sixth of

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the fire), Taswell got as far as London Bridge. 'I was infinitely concerned to find that stately church, St Paul's, now a sad ruin, and that beautiful portico (for structure comparable to any in Europe, as not long before repaired by the late king) now rent in pieces, flakes of vast stones split asunder, and nothing remaining entire but the inscription on the architrave, shewing by whom it was built, which had not one letter of it defaced. It was astonishing to see what immense stones the heat had in a measure calcined, so that all the monuments, columns, friezes, capitals, and projections of massy Portland stone, flew off even to the very roof, where a sheet of lead (covering a great space no less than six acres by measure) was totally melted. The ruins of the vaulted roof falling in, broke into St Faith's, which being filled with the magazines of books belonging to the stationers, and carried thither for safety, they were all consumed, burning for a week following. It was also observable that the lead over the altar at the east end was untouched, and among the monuments the body of one bishop remained entire. Thus lay in ashes that most venerable church, one of the most ancient pieces of early piety in the Christian world, besides near one hundred more.' And thus perished the cathedral that had stood 'brooding over London, a silent witness of all the civil and religious revolutions of England,' since the time of William the Norman.

The present edifice, as every one knows, built by Sir Christopher Wren, narrowly escaped being erected by a Frenchman, one Perrault, who had been invited by Charles from Paris; but he fortunately declined the undertaking. Wren, son of the Dean of Windsor, was one of those few precocious geniuses who fulfil the promise of their youth. At thirteen he presented his father with an astronomical instrument of his own invention; at Oxford, Evelyn tells us, the lad was considered 'a miracle' of learning; 'a rare and early prodigy of universal science.' His range was 'boundless, all-comprehensive. Nothing was too profound for his restless mind. In astronomy, Wren became Savilian Professor of Astronomy at Oxford, Gresham Professor of Astronomy in London. In the higher mathematics he gave a solution of Pascal's celebrated problem; in aërostatics, he claimed to be the inventor, at least the first who, with his friend Boyle, ascertained the use and value of the barometer; he studied chemistry, mechanics—for him nothing was too profound, nothing too minute. Orders are sent to him from the king (Charles dabbled in scientific pursuits) to send up his lunar globe, and at the same time to continue his microscopic investigations about insects. There is extant a catalogue of no less than fifty-two inventions or discoveries, some of high importance, claimed by or attributed to Wren.' It is most curious that Wren had had no special cultivation as an architect; he had not even seen St Peter's, which his own creation was in some sort destined to rival. The great Roman temple, it must be remembered, 'has some insuperable advantages. Let us imagine what would be the effect of St Paul's, rising in its grace and majesty, and basking in the cloudless sunlight of the Italian heavens, instead of brooding under a dense and murky canopy of vapour, up to a pale and lifeless sky. See, too, the vast open area in which St Peter's stands.' Yet even as it is, St Paul's is undoubtedly one of the grandest and most beautiful churches in Europe—*outside*. 'Wren's designs for the interior were not only not carried out, but he was in every way thwarted, controlled, baffled in his old age, to the eternal disgrace of all concerned, the victim of the pitiful jealousy of some, the ignorance of others—the ingratitude of all.' The history of the great architect's woes in connection with this great work, as told by our author, is indeed quite painful to dwell upon. The first stone was laid on June 21, 1675, and a curious incident took place at its commencement. 'When the surveyor in person had set out upon the place the dimensions of the great dome, a common labourer was ordered to bring a flat stone from the heaps of rubbish (such as should first come to hand), to be laid for a mark and direction to the masons; the stone which he immediately brought and laid down for the purpose happened to be a piece of a gravestone, with nothing remaining of the inscription but this single word in large capitals, RESURGAM.'

What remains of interest to be told of the great cathedral is within living memory, although, perhaps, few recollect that robbery, half a century ago, by which all the sacramental plate—nearly two thousand ounces—was carried off, none of which has ever been recovered.

Dean Milman himself was present, as a mere lad, at the burial of Nelson, and performed the funeral service over Wellington. Those two great captains, one—

> The greatest sailor since our world began,

the other—

> Great by Land as he by Sea,

lie side by side together in St Paul's; and it is in its possession of their honoured dust—a National Treasure—that the vast cathedral looms grandest, and will ever loom in the eyes of Englishmen.

A PERFECT TREASURE.

CHAPTER XVII.—MY AMPHIBIOUS FRIEND.

I AM now coming to an event, with the narration of which, since the experience happens only to very few persons, and those of an illiterate sort, I might hope, from its very rarity, to interest my readers; but, unfortunately, circumstances unqualified me for the task of description. Had the event occurred to me a few days earlier in my little life-story, I venture to think I might have related it to an audience that would not have refused me their attention; or, had it happened later—supposing that nature had exerted her healing forces, and made me myself again—then also I might have succeeded. But if, at the period of which I speak, my mind was not absolutely off its balance, it was worn and weak, disturbed by vague desires, and altogether unfitted for receiving or retaining impressions however striking.

On the afternoon which first found me alone at Hershell Point, and within an hour or two of the burial of its late master, I was sitting in his deserted chamber, looking as usual out to sea, when, among the well-known objects in the bay, I suddenly perceived a new one. A small sloop had rounded the extremity of the reef, and cast anchor immediately over the spot where the Indiaman lay sunk. I had myself visited the place in a small boat, and gazed down with a beating heart through the still blue deep upon what the sailors

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had assured me was the veritable wreck itself, wedged upright between the rocks almost in the same position as when she had sailed upon the surface; but, to my comparatively unaccustomed eyes, the water seemed a little darker in the spot thus indicated, and that was all. Why the sloop had stationed itself there, I could not imagine; but it was evident, from the number of small boats that were making for it from the shore, that a great significance was attached to its presence. I was out of the house in a moment, and ran down to the shore. Let it not be imagined that I was actuated with any mere object of curiosity, or that I seized with avidity on any opportunity of forgetting the loss which had so recently befallen me. It was because I remembered it so well, because I lamented my dear protector so truly, that I was thus moved. That wreck, as I believed, still held the secret which he had enjoined upon me to become possessed of; and anything that seemed to connect itself with that, had an attraction for me which it is impossible to describe. An old fisherman of my acquaintance and his son were putting off just as I reached the beach, and I jumped into their boat.

'You are going to that sloop yonder, are you not?' inquired I.

'Ay, ay, sir. Everybody seems to take his look at her, and so why not we? Not that she's much of a craft to look at neither, except for what she carries.'

'And what is it she carries?'

'Why, bless my soul, sir, don't 'ee know? Why, they was talking of nothing else this morning up at the *Rainbow*. But I forgot you were otherwise engaged, Mr Marmaduke;' and the man pointed respectfully to my black clothes and the deep band round my sailor's cap. 'He was a kind soul, was your good uncle, and we shall all miss him, old and young, in this place.'

'But the sloop,' said I, 'why is she anchored out there, where nothing has anchored before?'

'Well, sir, Lloyd's has sent her down to pick up the pieces. When a ship went down in my time, she was gone, and there was an end of her; but now, if she has not sunk in very deep water, and what is known to have been in her makes it worth while, they send down a craft like that with divers in her.'

'Divers!' cried I joyfully; and in a moment I forgot restless nights and foodless days, and snatching up the spare oars by my side, began to aid the boatman. How fortunate it seemed that I had remained at Hershell now! There was surely a hope, and a good hope, of wresting from the sullen sea its secret yet.

'You see, sir,' went on the old man, 'the Indiaman had treasure on board; they do say fifty thousand pounds in gold; and luckily the weather has been calm, just as if wind and wave had wore themselves out with that last gale; so that, though they have wasted precious time, there is a chance of getting something worth having out of Davy's Locker. They 're setting to work already, you see.'

But although, with my head turned half-round, I was watching the sloop earnestly with every oar-stroke, I could see nothing save a bright gleam of the winter sun suddenly strike, as it seemed, the vessel's side, and then become quenched in the waves.

'That was the diver's helmet, Mr Marmaduke. He has just gone under.'

In a few minutes or two, then, that man, whom I had just seen disappear beneath the sea, would visit the wreck, would doubtless go on board of it—if one might so speak of what was under the water—would perhaps even see the very Thing of which I was in search, and which I would have given ten years of my life to stand face to face with! I could hear my heart beat between the pulses of the oars.

We were received, though not very willingly, on board the sloop; the number of visitors had somewhat interfered with the operations: half the inhabitants of the little hamlet were standing on her deck, looking on with wonder at the mechanical contrivances, or watching at the ship's side for the return of the diver, with scarcely less of awe than those who, by the Pool of Bethesda, awaited the angel's advent. On the platform beside the air-pumps stood the men whose mission it was to minister to the wants of their comrade beneath, to attend to his slightest signal, to give their undivided care of eye and hand to him, and to him only. They were forbidden to interchange a word even with one another, lest their attention should be diverted for that instant, which might perchance be a fatal one to the adventurer below. For my part, I could not keep my eyes off the rounds of the little ladder, which, fixed to the ship's side, led down it to the depth below, and had its foot resting on the very bottom of the sea. I could count, through the clear blue water, no less than eight of these rounds, after which nothing was to be seen; yet the man who had just left his fellows in air and sunlight, to explore the unknown floor of ocean, had to descend fifty feet lower than our sight could reach. The *Star of the West* had gone down in ten-fathom water.

We had in reality scarce a quarter of an hour to wait, though to me it seemed a weary time ere bubbles of air began to make their appearance on the surface, and then a bright, round, luminous mass pushed through it, which was the helmet of the diver. It was a frightful sight, that exaggerated likeness of a human head, with its huge goggle-eyes of glass, coming up from the depths of the sea; while the metal collar round his neck, and the leads about his shoulders, and the gray dripping garments that clothed his lower limbs, were almost equally striking. A dagger was stuck in the belt about his loins, and his great shoes were soled with lead. It took several minutes, and more than one *valet de chambre*—each a grinning seaman—to disencumber this marine monster of his upper clothing, and transform him into a creature of the land. Then his face shewed an honest fellow enough, with nothing of peculiarity about it except a certain air of gravity and determination, that redeemed the commonplaceness of the features. He went down the cabin-stairs to make his report to some official, and then we Hershell folks were informed that we had had our treat, and must now depart, for that our presence interfered with business. There were coils of gutta-percha looking tubes, and things more delicate than are usually found on shipboard, strewed all about the deck, and perhaps it was feared some damage might be done. But while the rest of the visitors obeyed, and took to their boats, I spoke a few words with one in authority, and added thereto a golden reason for my remaining where I was; and the old fisherman, having also explained that I was a young

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gentleman of distinction, and the proprietor of the mansion in the foreground, I was presently made welcome enough by the skipper himself.

It seemed, by the report of the diver, that the Indiaman stood really almost upright and fast between certain rocks, but had been so beaten about by the fury of the storm, that it would be difficult to effect an entrance; and for this purpose, when he took his second trip, he carried an axe with him, which rendered his appearance still more formidable. I had made this man also my friend, by adding another metallic substance to the various weights with which he was furnished, and had given him to understand that a true narration of all that he found on board the sunk ship would be well remunerated. On this occasion, he remained under water for a considerable time, and when his helmet was removed, appeared greatly exhausted. He had entered the Indiaman, but had been unable to make his way to the strong room, the reasons for which he gave at length to his superior. When I pressed him for details upon other points, he said that was not the time for spinning yarns; and when the others asked him how he had fared, he replied surlily that it was altogether an Ugly Job. It seemed that he was a good deal put out by having to undertake the adventure alone—a mate who had promised to work with him having broken faith at the last moment. Having made a third trip, as fruitless as the other two, he resisted all solicitation to make another that day, and the weather still holding calm, it was arranged that the next descent was to be made at sunrise.

'I am going ashore, young sir, for the night,' said he, 'for I am a landsman when I am not under water; and if you choose to come and stand a pot and a pipe at the inn, I can then tell you my story.'

'Nay,' said I, 'you shall lodge at my house yonder, and be welcome to all that it affords.' For, indeed, there was no other human being whom I was just then so inclined to greet as guest as the man who had explored that sunken ship, and doubtless come face to face with its drowned company.

So, within an hour or two, John Dewsnap, this new amphibious acquaintance of mine, was sitting with me after dinner in the study at the Point, with one of those cheroots between his lips which master and man had been wont to prize so highly, but which neither was to smoke again. Curiously enough, now that I was free to ask any questions I pleased regarding that matter which was so near to my heart that for the present it almost ousted loving regret itself, I felt averse to the subject; or perhaps rather, I feared to put the inquiry direct, an answer to which in the negative would have crushed all my hopes at once. I preferred to encourage my companion to talk of his experiences elsewhere than on Hershell Reef; and certainly they were strange enough, and would, under ordinary circumstances, have interested me deeply. My eyes were fixed earnestly upon the speaker; I scanned with the deepest concern those bluff and honest features, upon which perhaps the filmy eyes of the dead Hindu had so late been fixed, and he doubtless imagined me a wrapt listener. But in truth I scarcely heard him. I remember dimly what he did say, but I mix his various weird adventures up one with the other, so that the whole resembles the recollection of a nightmare. There was one touching story, however, which survives the rest—how on the south coast somewhere, when engaged upon a sunken emigrant ship, which had struck a rock at night in smooth water, and gone down when all the passengers were sleeping, he had found a young woman lying peacefully in her berth with her long dishevelled hair floating like seaweed; and how he had told of this until the rumour reached her betrothed, a young officer of the line, who had come down and put her photograph into his hand, and said: 'Is that the girl you saw?' And when he answered 'Yes,' the young man besought him to cut off a lock, and bring it up to him, as the last token of his dead love, and to take from her finger the ring which he had given her as the sign of their betrothal.

'And did you do it?' inquired I.

'Well, sir, I cut the lock off; but to despoil the dead, even though it was no robbery, I dared not. You don't know what it is to see folks lying beneath the sea, not motionless, as on a death-bed—ah, sir;' and a shudder ended the sentence, and Mr Dewsnap took his whisky and water all at a gulp, and helped himself to more. 'No, Mr Drake, mine is an ugly trade enough as it is, having to look upon drowned folks, without meddling with them. I don't mind breaking into the strong rooms and getting out the gold for my employers; but for nobody on earth have I ever touched a drowned fellow-creature, except that once, to please that poor young fellow, and no money would have tempted me to do that.'

'But, surely,' urged I, 'if there be anything, such as important papers, for instance, which may be even more valuable than gold, and of vital consequence to the living, a diver would not hesitate to recover it, even though it were upon the person of a drowned man?'

'Some divers maybe would not,' answered my companion coldly; 'but Jack Dewsnap would, if I know him. No, sir, it's bad enough to go about one's work with axe and rope, while such company are looking on, without having anything to do with *them*.'

'Are there any—any poor drowned folks,' asked I with a hesitation that my companion took for fear, 'in the ship you went down into to-day?'

The diver nodded. 'Yes, plenty. It's an Ugly Job, as I told you. The poor souls were under hatches, you see. The passengers, both fore and aft, are down below.'

How terrible it seemed to know that less than half a mile away there were swaying beneath the waves, in the very places built for them to live in, dead men and women, more numerous, probably, than all the inhabitants of Hershell village. But it was not only awe that seized me: I was devoured with the thought, that probably within the reach of this man's hand lay the secret of my life. And, oh, if I could but persuade him to bring it back to me from the depth of the sea!

CHAPTER XVIII.—IN ARMOUR.

'Did you happen to notice, Mr Dewsnap, any drowned persons in particular in either of the cabins? Forgive me, if I give you annoyance in asking such a question; it is not mere curiosity which prompts me, but something very far from that.'

'Well, sir, I honestly tell you I don't like to

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talk of such things. It seems to me like telling something I ought not to tell—the secret of the Sea—as can at any moment—by the giving way of a valve, or the bursting of a tube, or the inattention of them fellows above—*be my death*, you understand. It may be a superstition, but I suppose I have a right to my own views;' and my companion puffed away at his cheroot in a manner which I had known in Tannajee to mean high displeasure.

'I am very sorry,' said I, 'to press you to speak on such a distasteful matter. But you once, as you told me yourself, did a very kind action to oblige a fellow-creature, and I cannot but think you will do another. Just answer me this, then—I cannot say—for I do not know myself—how much depends on your reply: Is there, or is there not, among the rest of the drowned persons in that Indiaman, a Hindu?'

My companion smoked like a furnace; then, after a pause, during which my brain seemed on fire, and all the objects in the room became indistinct, he nodded, and answered surlily: 'Yes; in the fore-cabin.'

'Then, if I were to give you twenty-five pounds,' said I, taking out my purse with the money with which Mr Glendell had supplied me for this very purpose, though under circumstances of which he had little dreamed, 'would you not take out of that man's waist-belt, to morrow morning, a pocket-book of sealskin which you will find there, and bring it to me?'

'No, sir,' answered my companion resolutely; 'nor yet for twenty-five hundred pounds. And let me add, though I am a poor diver, and you are a young gentleman, that you are doing wrong to tempt me.'

'It cannot be wrong,' urged I, 'to ask you to recover what is my own property.'

'Well, I can't do it, sir. If my mate were here now, he would no more mind such a piece of work than eating his bread and cheese. Men are not all made alike, you see. But besides that, and even if I could bring myself to do what you ask, I took an oath, when I cut the lock of hair from that poor girl (I seem to see her now looking up at me, as though to ask who is this that robs the dead!), that I would never more touch a drowned creature; and I am not going to break my oath; so there 's an end.'

'Is there any chance of your mate joining you?'

'Well, yes, I daresay he 'll come when he 's had his big drink out, for that 's what 's keeping him, *I* know. But when he does come, it 's ten to one the weather will have broken up, and perhaps the ship with it. I 'm sorry that I can't oblige you, sir, and I thank you for your entertainment; and now, since my work begins at sunrise, I must get to bed.'

'One minute,' said I earnestly. 'I am not about to ask you to do violence to your feelings, and far less to break your oath. But I see one way still wherein it lies in your power to help me.'

'Well, then, sir, you may consider that your request is granted,' said my companion cheerfully, 'for I should greatly like to be of service to you.'

'I thank you warmly, Mr Dewsnap; but beside my gratitude, I will gladly give you this same sum of twenty-five pounds if you will only let me put on your mate's apparel, and go down with you to-morrow under the sea.'

'Go down with me!' ejaculated my companion. 'Why, you don't know what you ask! I do not speak of the danger, for I could look after you as to that, but of the fear of the danger. The first walk under the water is no light matter, I can tell you, even to rough fellows like myself; but a delicate young gentleman such as you—why, you might swoon with terror; and as for going aboard that ship, and seeing the sights as I saw yesterday, why, it would kill you outright.'

'It will kill me outright,' said I solemnly, 'if you refuse this request of mine, my good friend. If I look, as you say, delicate, I did not do so a week ago, but was as strong as you are. It is the loss of that little packet of which I speak that has done it all. I can neither sleep nor eat for thinking of it. It contains all I have in the world. And as for fear, I cannot possibly be so much afraid of anything as of losing what it contains. Come, Mr Dewsnap; you have passed your promise, and I think you are not the man to go back from your word.'

'No; you are right there, sir; although, if I had known what you were about to ask, I should not have been so ready with my "yes." But unfortunately—or rather fortunately for you—the matter does not lie in my hands at all. The skipper would not permit your attempting such an adventure, even if I consented to be your companion. Otherwise, since you wish it so much, and feel such confidence in your own pluck, and offer so handsome a sum, I would have done it to oblige you, I would indeed.'

'If I have any knowledge of a man by his looks,' said I, 'the skipper is not one to get up at sunrise to see you over the ship's side; and as you know, he sleeps ashore at the *Rainbow*. Let us reach the sloop a little before daylight; so that I shall not be recognised, and do you clap my helmet on for me in the cabin. Then who can tell I am not your expected mate, arrived last night?'

Mr John Dewsnap exhaled his tobacco-smoke very slowly, gave a wistful glance at the bank-notes and gold which I had placed upon the table, and scratched his head with uncommon violence.

'Well, that certainly *is* a knowing dodge!' exclaimed he with undisguised admiration. 'When once the helmet 's on, as you say, there is no knowing one of us magnified tadpoles from another. Yet, if anything was to happen to you—and it *might*, you know—I should be tried for manslaughter.'

'You would be tried for nothing of the kind, my good friend,' returned I smiling. 'I go by my own urgent wish; so that, if anything were to happen, it would be suicide. I take that risk on my own shoulders.—Just put that money in your pocket, and go off to bed.'

'No, no, sir; I never receive my pay beforehand; and besides, if you didn't come back safe and sound, it would be like taking blood-money. But there; Jack Dewsnap's word has been passed, and so I 'll risk it.'

I wrung my companion's hand, and wished him a cordial good-night. As for me, though I was not afraid of oversleeping myself, I did not go to bed at all. Without the least apprehension that I was not legally competent to do so, for I was as ignorant of such matters as a child, I made my will, leaving all I had in the world to Rosa—that is, the future proceeds from the sale of the Point—with the exception of a legacy to each of the two servants, and something to dear Mrs Blunt, to shew her I had not forgotten her kindness. This document

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my guest was to witness before I started on my perilous errand. Then I wrote a long letter to my darling, telling her how irresistibly I was impelled to undertake the coming adventure, and exonerating the diver all I could. I entreated her not to fret for long, even though she should never see me again, and wished her, with all my heart, a worthier lover. All this took me a long time, and longer because the fever of my blood made me unfit for writing of any sort. My anxiety was such that it seemed to me now that I had really not exaggerated matters when I told the diver that it would kill me if I were to lose what I had so set my heart upon—the recovery of the lost secret. Thus the night crept away; and one hour and a half before dawn I went to my companion's room, and awoke him.

'What!' cried he with amazement; 'and are you really in the same mind this morning, sir, that you were in last night? I did not think that it would have been so, I assure you. Well, you're a good-plucked one, at all events, so that I have the less fear of you when you and I shall be among the fishes.'

Seeing that I was still bent upon the undertaking, Mr Dewsnap very wisely did his best to keep my spirits up, and while we sat at our early meal, began to speak of the affair before us in quite a jocular vein. He made me eat in spite of myself, and after the meal he recommended a glass of brandy, which seemed to do me good. Then, as I led the way through the darkness to the beach, he impressed upon me a few matters to be observed during the task before us; all which I listened to most attentively at the time, but whereof I can recall little now, except that four pulls at the air-pipe meant 'Haul up,' which he reiterated again and again. 'Whatever you forget when the sea is rolling fathoms over you, be sure you remember *that*.'

The idea thus presented so often to my notice was not a pleasant one, but I was still firm of purpose. Once only, as we pulled across the cold dark bay for the sloop's light, I had it on the tip of my tongue to ask: 'Is there any chance, Mr Dewsnap, of your mate's turning up this morning?' but I did not put the question. I felt that it would unhinge me to discuss that matter. I was wound up to the very last turn of my mental machinery; nor, indeed, need this be wondered at. What were all the most trying *débuts* of youth compared with my case! The first tooth out; the first going to school; the first fight! Or even, to speak of the ordeals of later life, the first competitive examination; the first dining with a lord—tremendous essay for English middle-class adolescence—or the popping the question to the first Angelina! How all these pulse-hastening experiences fade to nothing before that adventure that was awaiting *me*—a descent into the unknown Deep, to meet the company of the unsheeted Dead.

There was no watch kept on board the sloop, and we clambered up into her unobserved, and went directly to my companion's cabin, the door of which he made fast. 'For,' said he, 'the hat you are going to wear is a heavy one, and you must not put it on until you are obliged.' Then once more he gave me my instructions, which I repeated after him word for word. Over my ordinary clothes, I pulled on many woollen garments ere I stepped into the gray india-rubber dress, all in one piece, which is the diver's uniform: this was tightly fastened around my neck; and about my wrists, to keep my sleeves secure, were placed tight india-rubber rings. Already I seemed to feel by anticipation the oppression of the superincumbent water; yet this part of my apparel was light and easy as a boating-dress by comparison with what was to come. Further operations were, however, for the present suspended, all being ready now for assuming my disguise at a moment's notice. The gray streak of morning had been stealing into the little cabin for some time before we heard any one stirring aboard the sloop; and 'The longer we wait the better,' said my companion, 'for the more light we shall have for our work, and the warmer will be the water.' But all this suspense was terrible to me, and I was glad enough to swallow another dram, drunk, as Mr Dewsnap cheerily said, 'to the success of our expedition,' but of which he doubtless perceived I had need. And yet I had only to think of the Secret now almost within my clutch to feel as resolved as ever to do or die.

'Is not it time to be starting?' said I at last.

'I will go on deck and see,' returned my companion. 'But it's no use your making your appearance there until all is prepared.'

'Will not my voice be recognised?' inquired I doubtfully; not that I feared that any Hershell men would be on board at that early hour; but I was conscious that it was rather a thin and tremulous voice, not so much like that of a professional diver as of a landsman who goes under the sea for the first time, and hardly expects to come up again.

'Whatever there is to fear, you need not be afraid of *that*,' answered Mr Dewsnap smiling. 'All folks as work under water talk alike, bless you; and lest any one should look in while I am away, by-the-bye, here's your hat;' and first having placed over my head a sort of woollen night-cap, he put on my helmet.—'Now, how does that fit, young gentleman?'

'It seems very large,' returned I, in tones that not even my darling Rosa could possibly have known for mine. Indeed, like Fear in Collins's *Ode to the Passions*, I started at the sound myself had made.

'There, did I not tell you,' cried my companion, 'that all folks as work under water talk alike!'

'I understand now,' returned I in mumbling grumbling tones, which had a prolonged echo.

Then left alone, I went to the little looking-glass nailed to the cabin's side, and surveyed myself through my huge glass spectacles, each like the bull's-eye of a policeman's lantern.

Certainly, no man could have identified me in such a costume, even if I were taken for a human being at all. My limbs, swathed in surplus clothing, looked double their usual size, and of the most ungainly formation; on my shoulders was a sort of breastplate of shining tin edged with copper, into which was fitted by screws a leathern jerkin, enclosing both chest and back. So far, I was cased, as it were, in villein's armour, the trappings of a common foot-soldier of the middle ages, except for the india-rubber and the leaden soles to my shoes, which weighed ten pounds apiece. But the knightly part of my garb, the helmet, with its monstrous vizor, was the most striking; its goggle-eyes and huge dimensions were alarming even to the wearer. As to the stories of divers thus appareled being attacked by sharks, I did not believe one word of them. No fish that swims, thought I, would venture to tackle

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such an apparition, or wag a fin at it, except in swift retreat. Could any sight that I was presently fated to behold be possibly more formidable than my own appearance? Yet a long knife hung in a copper sheath by my side, as though there were really enemies to be dreaded. My thoughts were cut short by a shudder. Even what I now saw before me was not so horrible as what my imagination had of late conceived and my present fears anticipated. How merely grotesque was that masquerade of mine, in comparison with the dread realities of horror that awaited me; and with that idea for my sole companion, had I been left for long, I do not know but that my determination might have given way at the last moment; but, fortunately, the cabin-door opened at this moment, and Mr Dewsnap brought me the welcome news that all was prepared. He had put on his own uniform when he had attired me, so that there was no need of delay. 'Only one word more,' said he, 'while we are yet above sea. No one yet, Mr Drake, has ever come to harm while clad in this dress under English waters, and it is not likely that you will be the first victim, with a man who knows his business like Jack Dewsnap to take care of you.'

I clasped my companion's hand, and thanked him warmly for the good intention which had prompted this remark; but it was not worth while to tell him that I did not fear the going beneath the sea at all in comparison with the sights that I might meet there.

Then we two went up on deck.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

Professor Phillips's visit to Vesuvius, which we mentioned last spring, has just shewn a good result in an interesting book on Vesuvius in particular, and volcanoes in general. As a scientific work, it is instructive and suggestive, and we observe that Professor Phillips makes out a periodicity in volcanic outbursts, thus corroborating the conclusions of other geologists. But the Vesuvian region, he says, has recently been much more disturbed, than in many years previously, and he is of opinion that we are now passing through a period of very severe struggle with the imprisoned energy of fire. If this opinion be well founded, we shall perhaps hear during the present year of earthquakes and eruptions as alarming as those which happened in different parts of the world in 1868. Professor Phillips's book is well worth reading; but we cannot say the same of an argument, published in Australia by a speculative geologist, to prove that the time is not distant when Rome will be swallowed by an earthquake.

In a paper read at the Geographical Society, another example has been given that rainfall is diminished by the cutting down of forests. It occurred in the province of Coorg, Southern India, where for some years large clearings of the dense forest were made for coffee-plantations. Less rain fell in consequence, and it is recommended that large belts of jungle be preserved to retain the moisture.

Most readers are now aware that ether-spray is used to produce insensibility in any part of the body during surgical operations. Much ingenuity has been brought into exercise in the construction of instruments to administer the spray, and it is now blown from a tube in a shower so fine that it may be called liquid dust. It has the advantage over chloroform that it does not deaden the whole body, but only the part to be operated on. Another use has been lately found for the instrument—namely, in applying washes, lotions, and gargles to the eyes, nostrils, or throat. And in this there is great advantage, for the fine shower can be confined to the affected part exclusively, and can be made to reach parts not accessible by ordinary means. But the greatest benefit may perhaps be looked for in the application of gargles: the patient will no longer have to fill his mouth with a nauseous draught, and go through the disagreeable operation of gurgling it in his gullet, but the shower of gargle will be directed to the inflamed part of his throat only, and its strength may be increased if needful without risk to the other parts of his mouth.

Dr Budd of Bristol has published an account of his method for preventing the spread of scarlet fever, which ought to find a place in every school and dwelling-house throughout the country. For nearly twenty years, the doctor has practised the method, and with entire success: his experience may therefore be trusted; and we find that the Registrar-general has published his approval thereof. He sets forth clearly all the precautions that ought to be used to prevent the spread of infection, and shews that if these are attended to, the disease may be cured in a comparatively short time, and without harm to the other inmates of the house. To counteract the diffusion of the poison in the dry scurf from the skin, he anoints the whole body, including the scalp, with olive-oil twice a day, beginning when the white dry eruption appears, commonly about the fourth day.

In the last volume of *Transactions of the Royal Society of Victoria*, published at Melbourne, there was an account of Dr Halford's interesting researches into the nature of the change produced in the blood by the poison of snake-bites. The doctor worked with the microscope, satisfied himself that there was a change, and described it, and has since had an opportunity of testing his theory and his antidote. A man working on a railway was bitten by a snake: ere long, drowsiness came on; medical assistance was obtained, but by the time it arrived, the man was comatose, and his lower extremities were paralysed. Dr Halford was then summoned by telegraph: he made an incision in a vein, inserted the point of a syringe, injected ammonia diluted with water; and the effect produced is described as 'marvellous and immediate.' The man became conscious, steadily recovered, and became quite well. Henceforth, let all people who live in districts infested by poisonous snakes remember that *ammonia injected into a vein is the remedy for a bite.*

How to build houses for labourers and poor folk, without incurring loss, has been a question much debated of late years. Mr B. Nicoll, known as an inventor, has recently shewn how, in some cottages built at New Hampton, near Twickenham. He compresses straw into slabs, soaks them in a solution of flint, to render them fireproof, coats the two sides with a kind of cement or concrete; and of these slabs the cottages are built. By ingenious contrivances, the quantity of joiners' work is much reduced, and the chimney is so constructed as to secure warmth with the smallest consumption of

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fuel, and at the same time to heat a drying-closet. The cost of a single cottage of this description, combining 'all the requirements of health, decency, and comfort,' is eighty-five pounds. The Commissioners on the Employment of Children, Young Persons, and Women in Agriculture, report favourably of these cottages. To us, however, the cost appears too high, for thirty years ago we saw cottages of four rooms built of brick, with slate roofs, comfortably fitted inside, and respectably finished outside, which cost not more than ninety pounds apiece.

The explorers at Jerusalem have made further discoveries of underground structures—part of the ancient city—which have for generations been hidden by accumulations of rubbish and modern buildings. They have opened a vaulted passage, one side of which is massive masonry, the other perpendicular rock, and this rock is supposed to be the platform on which the Temple was built. Should this supposition prove true, the long-debated question as to the dimensions of the Temple may perhaps be settled; and the archæologists who hold that the extent of the building was not greater than appears in Josephus, may find their views confirmed. From this it will be seen that the exploration becomes more and more interesting; but it is unfortunate that, in order to lay open old Jerusalem, a large part of modern Jerusalem must be endangered or destroyed. Nevertheless, if we can succeed in getting a definite notion of what Jerusalem was like in the days of Herod, all the money, labour, and enthusiasm expended in obtaining that result will have been well bestowed.

News has been received also from the Sinai surveying-party, who are prospering in their task, laborious though it be. They had almost finished the great mountain-range, Jebel Musa, and were in expectation of soon beginning upon Mount Serbal. To carry on such a task in a region so barren, rugged, and precipitous, requires no small amount of strength and perseverance; but the observers were all in excellent spirits, and considered themselves repaid at times by the wide prospects opened to them, and the glorious effects of colour presented by landscapes bare and arid almost beyond imagination. They take photographs of the scenery, make regular meteorological observations, collect facts in geology, natural history, and archæology; and Mr Palmer, the orientalist of the party, is copying all the ancient inscriptions he meets with. Out of all this we shall surely get something like a competent knowledge of a land rich in sacred and historical associations; and the thousands of readers who take interest in the discovery of Scriptural illustrations will no doubt be abundantly gratified.

The danger and inconvenience attending the use of gunpowder for blasting in coal-mines are so great, that repeated attempts have been made to construct a machine that should break out the coal by mechanical means only. This, as we learn from a paper read at the Institution of Civil Engineers, has now been accomplished, and tried with satisfactory results in a colliery at Harecastle. The machine comprises a hydraulic press of twelve tons power, with bars and wedges, which, being brought to bear on the coal, one wedge is forced in after another, until a huge mass of coal weighing three or four tons breaks off, and falls. The advantage of this machine is thus apparent: the coal is 'got' without the danger of a blast, and in unusually large pieces, and there is no time lost in waiting for the smoke to clear away.

[By a letter from the office of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam-navigation Company, we are informed that the lecturer on a daily mail route to India (mentioned in the December *Month*) should have stated *about one-half* instead of 'one-fifth of the time required at present;' and that the average duration of the voyage to Bombay is twenty-two days, and not fifty, as the statement referred to implied.]

NEVERMORE.

The artless plans of childhood—the rambles through the wild wood—
The stories told by muses, or gleaned from fairy lore—
Of chieftain or of rover—too soon for us are over;
They charmed us in that pleasant time, but charm us—nevermore.

The youth's fond aspiration—to rise above his station
By deeds of early daring, or a prize from learning's store;
Too oft the light has faded, or shines upon us jaded,
As we resign the struggle, to combat—nevermore.

Or, after painful trouble, we find fame but a bubble,
And worn by disappointment, would seek some peaceful shore,
Lost is the better feeling that might bring sound heart-healing—
Repulsed each loving spirit, to come back—nevermore.

And sinking into old age, the future seems a cold page,
That we avert our eyes from, as fruitless to explore;
The dreary acts are ended, all energy expended;
The lamp of life is failing, to brighten—nevermore.

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BABIES BY THE DAY.

VERY few persons visit *crèches* or public nurseries, and very few persons care to do so; for the thing that is most like one is the Parrot Room at the Zoological Gardens. There is just such a din in it; just such a chatter; just such a hurly-burly, whirligig, confusing, hazy, topsy-turvy noise and aspect; and just such a swift sensation imbibed, that the best thing is to make short work of our stay there, and rush out in a trice. Some of us may know that one baby can produce such noise as is distraction; let one baby be multiplied by twenty, and let a fervid imagination conjure up the squall and squabble, and even then it will fall far short of the result. For in a public nursery a baby's cries are not hushed by the warmth and solace of a mother's breast. How could they be? A nurse or matron, and her assistant, are the staff of an institution of the kind; and that gives but four arms and two laps to the whole of the little inmates. These are made use of, though, most ingeniously and economically. We went to several of these places a short time since, and one matron we saw—an upright, wide, silver-haired Lupa of sixty, born, seemingly, to fit her name and office—was holding one baby in her left arm, close up to her bosom; she had another, to kick out and stretch, spread on her copious knees; she was keeping a third soothingly swinging with her right hand in an iron cot; and she was rocking a fourth to sweet silence, if not to sleep, with a touch of her right foot on its basket bassinette. Her eyes, and her voice, and her smiles were busy on other little personages even then. She was 'ketcherkoo'-ing one white-faced little trot relapsing into a whine; she was crying 'U-up again, then! u-up again!' to a small soul who had tumbled exasperatingly down; she was leaving off her left hand's labour for a moment to toss a plaything, or shake a rattle; and she was drying the tears of some discontented little totterer, and encouraging it to run away and pick up another toy.

But the hubbub, and wail, and racket of a nursery are, in spite of all these efforts, impossible to be quelled. 'Waa!' is the melody from one corner; 'Wa-a-aa!' more passionately, and in a tone lower, is the melody from another; and 'Wa-a-a-aaa!' sounds from the middle, and the sides, and left and right, lowly, loudly, from a weak hoot to a shrill scream, till there is every variety of *forte* and *piano*, *largo* and *affettuoso*, and there is occupation of every note in the scale. Feeding-bottles are an incalculable boon. Before the invention of the india-rubber tubes to attach to these, must surely have been before the invention of babies' day-boarding too. It is impossible to suppose the one thing without the other. In each iron nursery cot, in each snug bassinette (laid, for better warmth and watching, on the ground, and close round the large wide fire), wherever there is a little round soft head, with eyes that look up gravely when their quiet is disturbed, there also is a wee, wet, mobile mouth, busy at the *embouchure* of a feeding-bottle, sucking in liquid satisfaction. Conceive if no pillow and coverlet could be substituted for a bosom, and if each poor babe had to lie and scream with hunger and discomfort till there was opportunity to administer its meal! What would be the difficulties, then, if the matrons of these institutions are not without difficulties now? Said one matron: 'When you're a-walking with one baby'—she was in a nursery where some of the babies are boarded monthly and quarterly, and she had five with her always all night—'when you're a-walking with one baby, suppose another screams. Well, then, it wakes all the rest; and suppose their bottles have got sucked empty, how are you to fill 'em?' How, indeed! And how can these hard-worked matrons bear the screams, when they are not from their *own* babies, and no maternity works its magic on them, to make them think the sounds rich melody, and the little beings who are uttering them the most precious armfuls in the world?

O dear! it must be hard work when a baby *will* be restless and peal out its cry, if its flesh and blood are alien to us, and its poor eyes bring back no

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memory, and its little smile inspires no hope. And what if it is in our care only as a customer, and the price of it is but twopence daily, and the child's clothes are not too clean or too often changed, and the mother that leaves it with us is less cleanly and seductive still? Even this twopence, too, has to be struck for. Women will bring only three-halfpence of it; or a penny; or perhaps a promise that it shall all come at night, when they have done their work, and earned their money. The matrons are forced to be very strict. If they give a few pence' credit, the probability is that the mother will never bring her child again; for if she did, she would have to pay her debt! But all this has, honourably and mercifully, no effect upon the child. In all the nurseries from which this account is taken, all the little creatures were treated perfectly alike. It was a matter even of necessity, one matron's experience had taught her, that it should be so. If a mother, coming to take away her baby, saw a matron kissing and fondling one, and taking no heed of hers, she would be as hot-blooded and sore as a wounded tigress. *Her* child is as precious as any other's; as choice; as comely; why should *they* be nursed and crooned over, and hers be neglectedly laid by? And yet there are some babies one's heart goes right out to instantly, and others so blank and pictureless there is no wish to look upon them twice! But this 'selection' must not be made a 'principle' (although, as Lupa Secunda said, 'it comes hard at times, for some children I could *heat*, and others I couldn't kiss, if it was ever so!'), or the popularity of the nursery goes, and no amount of voluntary subscriptions, or efforts of ladies' committees, will make it any more hold up its head.

A public nursery is generally up-stairs, over a suite of rooms used for cheap schools or other works of charity; and it is always beautifully clean and airy, and as cheery and sun-lit as crowded streets in a crowded quarter will allow. It has always the row of iron cots—some of them to swing, some stiff and still—for short-coated babies, and the reserve of snug basket-bassinettes for those absolute 'infants' only yet just emancipated from their 'month.' For more spaciousness and air, the door of the room is not kept shut, but the entrance is guarded by a half-door or palisaded gate. Little mottled legs crawl or toddle sometimes much greater distances than a nurse can calculate; and lest there should be a bump, bump, bump down a steep stair, and then a dead hush, and a little heap of white and flaccid limbs, the tiny investigators are put on one plain level, and locked securely in. Round this safeguard some of the little creatures throng curiously. Blue eyes, that look like a piece of heaven, peep through it for a glimpse of men and manners that holds them tranced; black eyes, with a flash and sparkle harmonising thoroughly with the bright crow that is the other evidence of quick delight, dart there for a short moment of brilliant fun; and when the concealed lock is touched that lets the gate go, there is a laughing scatter of such of these wee folks as are agile enough to run, or a flat and sounding sit upon the ground of the others who are not so nimble, or not so brisk-brained as to discover instantly what is going on. Little hearts are rent then, with pain or indignation, and little lungs utter a lusty cry; but there are things about for speedy consolation. The floor of the nursery is strewn with treasure; and dimpled hands, or poor white wasting ones, are soon stretched out to pick portions of it up. There is a bald doll, for instance, battered out of all likeness save that to be recognised in a column topped by a dilapidated globe; and it is raised in a pair of little arms immediately, and lulled to a mimic rest. There are some soft fluff balls, rolled, and tossed, and nursed into tints that defy description; and these are snatched at, and cuddled and sung to with a determination that of itself brings forgetfulness, and smiles all grief away. Then there is a magnificent wool bow-wow, that squeaked once, though it will squeak no more, and that is nothing but a legless, faceless, tangled mass; but it gives its solace swiftly; as do the wicker rattles, and the tin-sealed boxes with lively stones in them, and the dinted tea-trays, and the other well-worn objects that do duty for better things, and that might be chosen, perhaps, through baby caprice or tried affection, even in presence of all the rich novelties of a gorgeous bazaar.

There is a little group of small children here now, in a contest loud and clear. The *casus belli* is a tiny basket-perambulator; and the combatants (three years old, perhaps; their united ages—there are three of them—amounting, as the *Times* is often comically calculating, to nine years)—the combatants clutch at the wheels, and the sides, and the handle, and the little hood, with a vehemence (and a running fugue of screams) that might settle the ownership of the whole by the passionate tearing of it into bits. They are as eager, these little folks, in their strife, as if they were real big people; but one saucy young mite, by sheer strength and pertinacity, makes herself at last victorious, and escaping from the others triumphantly, curvets and dashes her prized vehicle about—concentratedly, all for her individual amusement—in a distant and safe corner of the room. And, as a companion-picture to her, there is not wanting an illustration of the opposite side of human nature. She is War and Victory, but here is Peace; here in a broken-down disused bassinette (full-sized), that has been drawn up for tidiness and convenience under a table without a cloth on it, and with light thin legs. It is no grand environment, but a small Damon and Pythias have ensconced themselves therein, and to them it might be a gondola, a Cleopatra's barge, a golden galley, they are so content with it; and in it they are living a life of love, one amicably at each end, without a note of discord. They are very lazy—which is perhaps the only way to be very serene; they are doing absolutely nothing; unless much account be taken of the mental exertion of considering themselves the aristocracy of the little assembly, and in occupation of a position that is unapproachably grand. They have a slight ruffle on their suave surface; pretenders come to dispute their tranquil holding, and they are obliged to be perpetually on the watch; but they beat all their assailants vigorously off—whether they are plump young toddlers, strong enough to return them push for push, or little whining creatures, receiving their rebuff resignedly, and walking off mutely when it has been administered to them, in search of some other melancholy joy; and they remain, as they think themselves, the true *nous autres*, the properly inheriting *crème de la crème*.

Occupying a prominent place in a public nursery is a railed-off spot some six feet square, floored with a soft wool-mattress covered with a gay

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patchwork quilt. This is called, in some places, comically, the 'pound;' and in others, prettily, and in tender memory, the 'fold.' Its use is described aptly by its double name. If a robust three or four year-older be too freakish or frayful, he can be plucked out bodily from the little skirmish he is creating, and the pound can be his prison, and his mischief limited to what can be accomplished within its closely trellised pales. His small antagonists, over whom he has been tyrannising, can see his clenched fists and little fiery cheeks, but they can brave his fury, since they have but to keep their distance, and, let his rage and indignation scream his loudest—they are beyond all fear. And if a wee chubby crawler be not in its cot or its little tabled-chair, but is proceeding from one side of the room to the other on a voyage of gay discovery, and the scamperings of the big Brobdingnags are bringing peril to its Liliputian limbs, it can be put in this place of safety, which is then a fold indeed, and gives peace and shelter to a little helpless lamb. It can crow there, and make the circuit of its comfortable enclosure; and it can coo at a red piece of patchwork; and when it has confessed its love to that, be quite as confidential to a streak of lemon colour or a star of blue; and it is all the time where no harm can come to it, and where the matron can have it entirely off her mind. It is true, a Brobdingnag might rush up with a toy, and aim it at the little tender head; it is true there was a Billy with a highly developed acrobatic tendency at one of the nurseries, whose delight was to clamber over the fold-fence, and let himself out again with his head on the mattress and his legs curiously in the air; and he *might* have deposited himself plump on the tiny thing, or have used its round fat body as a convenient stepping-stone to aid him in his feat; but then Billy was an exception as an inmate; he was five years old, perhaps, and of lanky growth; and, as a rule, children are very kind to babies, and are proud to shew they can give them their protection as a shield.

It is no bad thing to take in a bag of cakes to these little ones, or a handful of penny toys. Tiny fingers clutch at a cracknel eagerly, and it is not long before it is in a moist mouth. 'Savoys' are too savoury to be kept a moment in the hand; 'Readings,' 'wines,' and slim 'ladies' fingers' tempt only too vigorously to swift and sweet dispatch; while a Scotch scone hides little eyes, and nose, and mouth, and all, and does duty, in its size and satisfaction, for a whole and seldom-equalled meal. The toys are little less contentment. The sight of them is the signal for the old ones to be instantly discarded; and when a magnificent speckled duck that squeaks finds a delighted owner, it is carried off to a cot, and put to bed, and swung and sung to with all the powers of heart and brain. A baa-lamb is a treasure; a wooden monkey, who slides his impertinent head up to the top of his own pole, and then slides right over it, and down again, is more valuable than gold; a little white-ash woman, working at a churn, and spinning complacently round an elevated pigeon-house, at the pulling of a string, is ecstasy; and monstrous cock-a-doodle-does, that are unpainted everywhere except at a very coral comb, are choice possessions indeed. Of course, cakes and toys should abound in a nursery; and so, for another thing, should good juicy fruit. It is a capital *dictum* of Herbert Spencer's that every child's diet-list should contain one absolute *meal* of fruit a day. He judges, by the evidence of a child's delight at the sight of it, and the avidity with which, when any is offered, it will hold out its hand, that Nature is clearly proved to have sent fruit as a food—as the relief of a positive necessity—and not merely as a *bonne bouche*. But if ever so much faith is pinned to such a verdict in a public nursery, it will have to end in the pinning. The funds on which they exist are too slender (even after the most earnest and insinuating begging) to find anything beyond the accommodation and the nurses; and what can be done with the small twopence that is the price for each child a day? In the largest nursery visited, there were only twenty-five children; in the smallest, there were but three—the 'takings,' consequently, do nothing. As long as the numbers of the children are so small, the institutions must continue to be charities, and much that is known to be good by the managers of them can only be thought of longingly.

This twopence mentioned as the nursery payment does not, of course, include *any* food. Food can be provided by the institutions; but then the price is double—fourpence; and a further alteration is made in the charge where there are two or more children from the same family—twopence is then reduced to three-halfpence, and fourpence to threepence; a very liberal percentage, considering numbers by no means lessen inconvenience, and it has never yet been found that, because two boys happen to be brothers, they eat a spoonful less than two boys who are no kith or kin. For this fourpence, food is given that is suitable; but where the meals are brought by the mother, they are a very sorry supply. A baby's public nursery-day lasts from seven in the morning till seven, and sometimes eight, at night. Take such a day, in a well-managed home, of a child of, say, three years old. During its twelve hours there would be given, perhaps, a breakfast of bread and milk alternated with oatmeal porridge; a dinner of meat and bread, and light farinaceous pudding; a tea, in which there would be milk again, and the coveted sugar, besides good butter, and the best of fresh-cut bread; and then there would be, most likely, a little hand filled with fruit from mamma's own plate, when the time came for a kiss and a last bye-bye. Well; what does the public-nursery child eat, to support *its* wear and tear? What fuel goes into *its* little furnace, to keep the metal at proper glow? Bread and butter! Bread and butter cut at early morning, and getting drier and drier every hour of the day—no matter whether the little spirit it is to nourish is flagged and fainting, or whether excited appetite is yearning for rich and savoury food. Ah! is it *much* wonder there should be immense mortality among infants? Is it *much* wonder the tiny dead among them should number about as two to three? Surely, the wonder would be if little soul and body *could* be kept together on such repeated diet. Surely, the wonder would be if blood could be made, and muscle strengthen, and bones solidify, with nothing more than such material to do it. Of course, the little ones pine and whimper, and are fractious or submissive, and have red eyes and watery humours, and are so pale and puny, the sight of them brings an aching to the heart. This little brother and sister through whom the thoughts of this feeding came, are very fair specimens of their class. They may be taken as a type. They are pretty-featured,

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poor souls! but they are under-sized and feeble; the little arms (of the younger especially) hang loose and aimless; he is pale-eyed, pale-haired, and he utters a low complaining cry, that makes his Lupa take him on her knee and pet him, though she knows it is beef-tea, and sago-pudding, and warm clothing he is wanting, and these are all out of her power to give.

It is price, too, for the most part, that prevents public nurseries being so much used as would be good. They are not used, of course, by the wives of prosperous working-men. These know that the seven or eight shillings a week their 'bit' of ironing, or washing, or charring would bring in, are just so many shillings wasted; for they could save as much in care and management (and double or treble the amount in comfort) by staying industriously at home. The women who send their children to public nurseries are mostly widows, on whose toil their *all* depends; or they are the wives of labourers who can, at the best, earn but little, or who are weak-brained, or 'unlucky,' or indolent, and so, very frequently, have nothing to do at all. Then women *must* work. Then women *must* leave the sphere that civilisation has assigned them; and must be the bread-winners, and must also let their homes and families sink out of the rank, a whole century behind. It would be a good thing, perhaps, if, for the sake of these, public nurseries could be opened free. A ticket shewn by them of a proper day's work done, should be the sole certificate required for title to the proper care and food of a baby for the whole of the following day. There would be little likelihood of abuse. Only hard-pressed, hard-worked women would come. It is found that thoroughly sluttish slattern women never approach a nursery, for the reason, that all children must be taken to them *clean*. And it is so much easier, when they *are* going out to work, to wrap their baby in an old shawl, and pop it into the bed of a neighbour who is going to stay at home. It is an accommodation any one will return to another, for it is an accommodation that all may require in turn. And there, in a foul cluster, may the women and babes be seen; the house-steps thick with them, the windows a lazy lounge; and then cries are quieted with something not so harmless as bread and butter, and then—somehow—the city festers, and the names heard loudest are disease and crime.

Are children ever taken to a public nursery, and left there, as an easy means of riddance, without much reasonable chance of parentage being known? No; never. One Lupa (Lupa Secunda, it was) was very much alarmed once. She had two children—one three, the other five years old—for whom the mother did not come at night. She waited and waited—all the night; the next day; its night; a third day; and the night of that; a fourth day; and then, at dusk—deep dusk—she heard a step that was slow and hesitating, and a voice she knew. She looked up, and saw a head bent shamefully; and going nearer, she saw the face that looked so shy, and that kept so resolutely in the shade, was all bruised and swollen; and with the help of evasive answers given to her inquiries, she made out the whole tale. The woman had let her ire and violence run over, and had had a fight, and had been locked up. Poor little children, to be claimed by such a mother! Lupa believed, however, in her general well-doing. She dealt with the class who are given to an outburst of savageness and dissipation; and a sharp backsliding did not destroy her faith in the power of picking up again, and proceeding in the right path once more. Her belief, though, was far too good for the facts. Before the year was out, the mother was missing again; and again, with a face bruised, she returned, and equivocated, and was mute, and shuffled, to hide as much as she could of the bareness of her shame. After which, of course, the children were not allowed entrance into the nursery. Their little history was over, as far as present record is concerned.

It is not for children of such a mother as this that public nurseries exist; and, beyond doubt, they should not. Abuse is intended to be avoided by them, not fostered; and, happily, this woman presents an extreme case. Another came to one of the nurseries to give her five-weeks' old baby its mid-day meal, and she shall be cited as a favourable specimen. She was bony and haggard, poor thing; worked into the aspect of having lived half a century, though ten years might be hewn out of this, and be nearer the proper computation; but she was clean, and brisk, and tidy; and she took her babe and suckled it, and set it on her knee, and patted its little arching back; and then she kissed it, and put it back into its bassinette, and with a nod and a smile, was down the stairs and gone. She was a laundress, and had left her tub to come; and she was off to it again, and would once more leave it, to reascend the stairs, and renurse her baby, with yet another return to finish off her scrubbing, before it would be time to come finally and carry her child away. And this is how the thing works; and it would be hard to tell of any more useful, or less harmful working.

A PERFECT TREASURE.

CHAPTER XIX.—THE SUNK SHIP.

'BETTER late than never,' was the observation addressed to me by the skipper, as I came on deck; and I grumbled through my vizor such an assent as any tardy diver who has no excuse for his delay might be supposed to give. 'If Dewsnap had chanced upon the Indiaman's strong room yesterday, you would have missed your wage, young man,' added he severely.

'There, don't fash him!' exclaimed my supposed mate. 'If he was late for yesterday, he 's in time for to-day.'

At this moment, I felt what were two enormous hands laid upon me on chest and back, and began to struggle against what I thought was some practical joke, imposed upon me by way of punishment.

'Be quiet, mate,' cried Dewsnap angrily; 'and don't play the fool, now you are come.'

Then I remembered that they were but hanging about my shoulders those huge weights of lead which I had seen placed upon the diver on the previous day, to make him sink, and I determined for the future to remain silent and sullen, like one who was offended, so as to run no further risk of self-betrayal. This resolve, however, was quite unnecessary, for at this moment somebody clapped a sort of glass box over the mouthpiece of my helmet, and screwed it tightly on, so that I could neither hear nor speak. Moreover, I was almost ceasing to breathe, when the air-pump began to work, and supply me with the vital fluid. These

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practical details, although thus unpleasantly forcing themselves upon my notice, were not unwelcome, for they prevented my thoughts from dwelling on the ordeal before me. Otherwise, at this supreme moment, my courage, like that of Bob Acres, might have oozed out at my finger-ends, which was the only means of egress left for it. My hands alone were in contact with the atmosphere; the rest of my person was swathed and pent in like a mummy—weighted, too, as no mummy ever was, so that, when they signed to me to approach the ladder that led beneath the sea, I stood motionless for a second, and then could hardly move one leg before the other. However, my companion, similarly accoutred, was preceding me, so that I was not much noticed. He had luckily remembered to volunteer to carry the axe, or, I am sure, with all my natural activity, I could not have made the descent at all. Besides my air-pipe, I had a string, which was to guide me to the rope-ladder, in case I lost my way in the sea; but of course it was not my intention to part from my companion for an instant.

So long as I was in the air, although I only felt it on my hands, my descent was comparatively easy; but as soon as my limbs entered the water, they began, notwithstanding I was so heavily weighted, and the sea was calm, to sway about, and to be impelled upwards in a surprising manner.—I have of late read M. Esquiros' book on English Divers, and am bound to say that the narrative of his own experience in this matter is most accurate, and in no way exaggerated; but he did not descend by some fathoms so deep as I; and although we were both favoured with calm, my adventure was in winter-time, which has never such entirely smooth seas as summer. However, the experiment is sufficiently trying to the nerves under any circumstances, and how severely so, may be guessed from my laying any stress upon such matters, who had so far more terrible things in immediate expectation. Indeed, nervously apprehensive of the latter as I was, I thought not of them for the space of a full minute, when first I got beneath the surface, and saw the sunlit water weltering above my head. The impulse, at that juncture, to return to my own native atmosphere, and become, as it were, a man again, was stronger than I can describe. Nature herself seemed battling within me against my audacious and perhaps impious project. There was a whirlpool in my brain, that only did not deafen me because I was deaf already. I had voluntarily resigned my powers of speech and hearing, and had now cut my other senses off from communication with all my kind, save that one man, himself more like a monster, who awaited me at the foot of the ladder. I could still see, although, as I descended, the light became more and more obscure, till it was little better than twilight. All, too, seemed insecure and uncertain; the rope-ladder moved as I moved, and even when I at last set my feet upon the solid sea-bottom, they were pushed this way and that way by the movement of the water. But here, to my intense relief, I found my trusty companion: he nodded his vast head, as though he were some dreadful gnome, who had been commissioned by his marine lord to bid me welcome to that weird region, and patted me approvingly on the shoulders. He could not take my hand, because I was clutching hold of the rope-ladder with all my might with both; and there he suffered me to remain for a minute or two, until I got somewhat accustomed to the situation.

I peered around, and presently things grew a little more distinct. I saw fishes swimming slowly by, not at all alarmed, but seemingly a good deal interested in our appearance. I saw the sloop above my head, and the air-tubes hanging down from it to my companion and me. I beheld the long-leaved seaweeds swaying and curling like serpents beneath my feet. Presently, I again felt a tap on my shoulder, and knew that it was time—that all I had hitherto undergone was as nothing to the experience that was about to present itself. Then the present difficulties at once began to decrease. I let go the ladder, and took one of my companion's hands, by help of which I managed to shuffle along for a few paces, when a huge dark object began to loom before us through the solid mist. It seemed to approach us like some monstrous whale, but in reality we were approaching it. It had indeed once moved through the waters swiftly enough, but it would never do so more. It seemed but a shapeless mass, so terribly had it been dealt with by wind and wave; but I knew at once that it was the Wreck.

There was a breach almost in the centre, which we ascended into with the utmost caution. The great peril of the diver's trade was now imminent. In exploring sunken ships, there is always danger of the air-tube getting twisted round something, or broken by a sudden turn. Once on what had been the deck, but what was now a mere congeries of broken planks and splinters, one could make out the parts of the vessel; the head could be distinguished from the stern at least, and in the place where the mainmast had been, stood its fractured stump. Short as was the time since the catastrophe occurred, sand had intruded itself almost everywhere. I noticed all these things mechanically, but did not give them any real attention, and almost forgot that I was under the sea at all, so overwhelming was the idea that I was about to be in the presence of the unhappy man upon whom, in his perfidy, Death had fallen unawares—although, Heaven knows, my heart had forgiven him.

'Our way lies here to the right,' signed my companion, pointing to the fore-cabin stairs.

These were not broken to pieces, like the more exposed portions of the vessel, and besides, they were edged with some metal; but the hand-rails on both sides had been torn away, perhaps by human fingers in their last agony; the skylight above was also destroyed, both wood and glass, so that, as we descended, we could see almost as distinctly as on deck. The cabin, large as it was, seemed crowded with inmates, some on the sofas, sitting tranquilly enough, poor souls! others at full length. A few were lying on the floor; and one, a woman, with a child in her arms, knelt in front of us beseechingly, as though we had come to save them. So different was all around from what I had expected, so real and lifelike, that it was not terror which seized me so much as yearning pity. There was nothing absolutely terrible about the scene, because there was nothing to remind you that all these fellow-creatures were dead. Each figure had a slight but perceptible motion of its own, produced by the moving of the water, so that it was easy to imagine they breathed. In some cases, indeed, it was only by observing that they were maintained by the same element in a position that they could not have kept in the upper air, that the truth could be

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discovered. It must be remembered, too, that the general obscurity, as well as the thickness of the glass through which we beheld them, forbade any very accurate inspection, even if we had wished to use it. But my companion was as solicitous as myself to see as little as he could. He made his way along the floor, still holding my hand in his, towards the upper end of this apartment, each shrinking mechanically from those who involuntarily touched us upon our way. Then I suddenly felt my guide's finger shift from my hand to my wrist, and I knew that we had reached the thing I sought.

The Hindu was standing almost upright—the only inmate of the cabin who so stood—clutching with his nails a beam of the ceiling, above which there was a great fissure right through to the deck. Perhaps the poor wretch had taken up that position to get air, for the cabin, before the diver had broken into it, had been fast closed; or, perhaps, with some despairing hope of escape. Heaven only knows. His face was turned towards me, with the eyes wide open, but with what expression I am thankful to say I cannot tell. All the terrors that had filled my dreams and troubled my waking thoughts were as nothing to the horrors of that moment, during which, even my companion, as he afterwards told me, shut fast his eyes. Still I kept repeating to myself: 'It will be over in a moment, and it was my dear Uncle Theo's wish.' If it had not been that he had left me his express injunction, I am sure that I should have left my task unfinished even at that last moment. But I set my teeth, and gathered myself together. I reached forth my hand to the folds of the linen, in which, by way of pocket, the Hindu had always placed his portable treasures — his box of opium; his money, when he had any; and a watch, which his master had given to him. They were all there, and besides them the Sealskin Packet, to recover which I had undergone so much. My expectations had been well founded. I had reflected that he would not destroy it, nor its contents, since he was ignorant of their exact nature, and only knew that they were of value from their being kept in my uncle's secret drawer. I was only taking back my own, yet, as I did so, there seemed, to my fevered brain, to come into the dead man's face a look of reproach; and whether by my touch, or stirred by the displacement of the water by our presence, I know not, but he lost his hold of the beam, and sank slowly down upon the floor, ere I could turn my horror-stricken but fascinated gaze away.

Indeed, I know not how long I might have stood, as if riveted to that fatal spot, had not my companion griped me like a vice, and dragged me to the cabin-stairs, and this time as fast as my apparel permitted me to move. He told me afterwards that he did not expect to get me to the upper air alive. Indeed, how, in my miserably weak condition from want of food and sleep, I ever went through with the adventure at all, surprises me even now, and especially how, when I had gained the object for which I had striven so vastly beyond my strength, I did not give in at once; but thanks to my faithful guide, I somehow or other arrived at the foot of the ladder. There, hands and feet refused their office altogether, and my senses so forsook me that I even forgot the so often enjoined signal for those above to 'Haul up.' The last thing I remember was the transferring of the precious packet from my hand, in which I had hitherto tightly clasped it, to my waist-belt, after which all was blank.

CHAPTER XX.—THE SECRET.

When I first opened my eyes again, or, at all events, remember doing so, it seemed to me that I was still beneath the sea; the light about me was not that of day, and there was still a murmur in my ears like the whisper of the moaning waves. But presently the objects about me grew distinct—I was lying in a bed-chamber, that I recognised as the same in which I had slept, or tried to sleep, at Mr Glendell's. The window-curtains were closely drawn, but they could not altogether exclude the noonday sunbeams, which danced upon the wall beside me. How bright and joyous they seemed to me after that dark journey!

At a table by the fireplace sat the surgeon, apparently engaged on some accounts. It appeared strange even to myself that I was not surprised to see him, nor at my being where I was, nor interested in whatsoever might have happened to me of late. It was sufficient for me, through my half-closed eyes, to watch the sunbeams. What was nearest to me, and gave me the least trouble to observe, alone drew my attention. On the coverlet in front of me lay a white and almost transparent human hand. Did this belong, thought I, to one of those poor drowned women whom I had seen in the cabin down yonder, and whose hands were like it? At this idea I shuddered in every limb, whereby I perceived that I was looking at my own hand. It was all bone and whiteness, and little more than the shadow of its former self, yet it felt very heavy as I lifted it to my face, and felt how pointed was my chin, and placed my fingers in the hollows about my eyes and in my sunken cheeks. Then a spoon was put to my mouth, and I swallowed, though with difficulty, something warm and grateful to my palate.

The little doctor was standing by my side with a kind smile, but his finger at his lips, and I tried to smile at him in return. 'You must not speak, Marmy,' said he softly; 'you must lie quite still and quiet until you grow stronger.'

I looked at my shrunken hand, and then at him inquiringly.

'Yes, you have been very ill, my dear lad; but you will get well now. It's a long story, and you must not hear it yet.'

My eyes still asked some question, and this time eagerly, passionately; the noises in my brain began to increase.

'Quiet, quiet!' said he soothingly. 'What you are thinking of is quite safe: it is under your pillow;' and he took out the sealskin packet from where it lay, and once more placed it beneath my head.

Then, with an indescribable feeling of security and release from all earthly trouble, I fell asleep.

On my second waking, all things about me were the same; but I no longer disregarded them; my eyes took in everything that was to be seen. My thoughts had become submissive to control, and when Mr Glendell came to my bedside, he did not this time say: 'Hush,' but whispered kindly: 'What is it, Marmy?' Then I murmured 'Rosa;' and my darling came.

She sat by me for an hour, talking of her late journey to town, of my own illness, and of Mrs Blunt's solicitude on my account; but not a word

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upon the subject which had monopolised my mind so long. I quite understood that the topic was forbidden until my strength returned, and dutifully acquiesced in that arrangement, the more so, because, whenever my fingers stole towards the packet, and touched it, there came again that roaring in my ears.

At last my patience was rewarded, only there was this drawback, that when Rosa began to listen to the narration of my late adventure, Mr Glendell was always in the room with us; and when I felt the colour rise ever so little in my cheeks, or a light burn in my eyes, he would interfere with: 'That will do for to-day, Marmy.' For what they were afraid of was that the fever, which had wasted me to skin and bone, and fired my brain for many a day and night, should return, like some man-eating beast, and devour the miserable remains of me. Thanks, however, to the unremitting care of my host and his sweet daughter, it did not return; and after a weary time of languor and uselessness, I was got down-stairs, and pronounced convalescent.

Then it was that I asked leave—for my word was pledged not to touch it without the surgeon's permission—to open the sealskin packet, and read what it contained to Mr Glendell and Rosa.

'And so you shall,' said the surgeon good-humouredly, 'when you have heard what the Secret is, from us. Not that we have peeped into that sacred packet of yours, believe me, for while you were alive we felt that it would be wrong to do so; but logic and sagacity supply the place of mere foolhardiness, my friend.—Yes, Rosa, you may frown; but I really cannot compliment him on that marine adventure. Mrs Eleanor Blunt and myself—for I grant she helped me considerably in the matter—did not require to put on diving apparel, and explore the bottom of the sea for a secret which we had already guessed by the help of our own wits on dry land.'

'You had already guessed?' said I in astonishment.

'Yes, before I started for London; nay, upon the very night when the wreck took place, I was in possession of the main fact which that paper will disclose. However, I must say I had some premises to go upon, which you were not possessed of. Let me begin at the beginning. On the day you went to Daisyport, not knowing how long you might be absent, I commenced the task you had intrusted to me, of setting your poor uncle's house in order. In his study I found two books—the one that Table of Annuities which he had long given over consulting; and the other, this volume upon Precious Stones. As I carelessly turned this latter over, it opened, as if from frequent use, at a certain page, which seemed to me of great significance, since every printed word of it was underlined. I compared with what I read in it the various hints dropped by its late owner to yourself and others regarding the Hindu, and felt convinced that I held the clue of the secret in my hand. When you came home that afternoon with Mr Moulden, and told me that the man we sought was somewhere on board of that ill-fated ship, I felt that there was not a moment to be lost if what I suspected were indeed the case. But I wished to *fortify* my conclusion by the opinion of another. It was impossible for me to confide in you. Even at that time, I felt apprehensive for you. I was well persuaded that you were already too much wrapped up in the very subject in question to permit of my exciting you further, and I think the event has proved that I was right.'

'Not so, Mr Glendell,' sighed I: 'if you had but told me what you guessed, I might have spared myself, it seems, that visit to the sunken ship, which you tell me, and I may well believe, has been so nearly my death-warrant.'

'Well, no, not exactly,' returned the doctor, somewhat less confidently. 'I am bound to say that that diving affair of yours was well conceived enough. If I had taken you away, for instance, to town, as I intended, we should have obtained neither secret nor'——

'Nor what?' inquired I excitedly.

'Never you mind what, at present,' replied the little doctor with an affectation of surliness.—'And don't *you* tell him, Miss Rosa, neither. Let me narrate matters my own way. Interrupt me again, and I'll order him to bed and water-gruel.—Well, on that night of storm, when you lay at our house here, I rode over—as the next morning I by accident betrayed to you—to Seaview Cottage, where Mrs Blunt and the lawyer and I laid our three heads together. What we had got to go upon was my late discovery, supplemented by all those slighter indications of the matter, which had now a new significance. You remember how your poor uncle used to call that poor unhappy Hindu *A Perfect Treasure*—how he said he would rather lose ten thousand pounds than Sangaree Tannajee; and how his true value would only be discovered after his death. Those mysterious words now became intelligible. Again, do you remember that poor whity-brown fellow's habit of patting himself in a meaning manner when angry with his master, and that that absurd action always produced its effect upon your uncle?'

'I do.'

'Well, even this became of vital importance in our investigations; as likewise a circumstance which had come under my own notice, and was apparently wholly unimportant—namely, that the Hindu had suffered dreadfully from dyspepsia, worse, even, than his habits of opium-eating and laudanum-drinking and consumption of all sorts of spirituous liquors had deserved. He was more like a man who had some foreign body within him, to which his system could not assimilate itself.'

'Oh, I think I see it!' cried I suddenly.

'The devil you do!' said the little doctor, looking about him. 'Where?'

'I mean the secret.'

'So did Mr Moulden: he expressed his opinion that it was something on the liver; and he was wrong. "To judge by the poor fellow's behaviour then," said he, "it ought to have been the spleen that was affected;" but it was not that.—"Now, Mrs Eleanor Blunt," said I, "do *you* guess; and let me see whether you are the genius I have heard you described. What was the matter with the Hindu, do you imagine, and why should his value only be discovered after death?" "Perhaps," said she, "although ugly, he bears, like the toad, a precious jewel in his"—— "Yes, in his inside, ma'am," exclaimed I. "You're right;" and I felt as if I could have hugged that sagacious woman to my breast. Fancy, Marmy; without the clue that I held, she had actually guessed the secret!'

I was about to express my doubts of this, but Rosa signed to me to be silent. She saw that her father, who was by no means a great reader,

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had not understood Mrs Blunt's remark to be a quotation, and was giving her credit for an almost preternatural sagacity. Of course I remained silent; indeed, for my part, I thought it just as well that my future father-in-law (as I hoped he would be) should entertain so high a respect for one who had a genuine regard for me.

'Well, this was what was printed on the page of your uncle's book, and underlined and finger-marked, as though some constant reference had been made to it by the owner, doubtless to reassure himself, by the consideration of a parallel case, that such a thing could be'——

'But I never saw that book in my life,' interrupted I, pointing to the volume from which Mr Glendell was about to read.

'I daresay not, though your uncle looked into it often enough, I'll answer for it. It was always kept in his desk.—Now, listen to this.—"The Sancy Diamond (53½ carats) was found on the body of the Duke of Burgundy after the battle in which he was slain, and bought in 1749 by the king of Portugal. In 1789, it was sold to the Baron de Sancy, from whom it derives its name. Sancy sent it as a present to the king of France, *by the hands of a servant, who, being attacked by robbers, swallowed the stone, which, after death, was found many years afterwards in his body.*"—The light breaks in upon us now, I think,' observed the doctor exultingly. 'Even Mr Moulden guessed what had happened when we had got so far. No wonder that unfortunate Hindu was dyspeptic, and patted himself when displeased, as much as to say, if you don't put up with all my whims and tempers, I'm off with this jewel of yours, which I am carrying about with me *just here.*'

'And how do you know it was just there?' inquired I.

'Oh, well, I suppose it was,' replied Mr Glendell looking very confused. 'I am an anatomist by trade, you know, and that's the only place where he could have carried it. If it had lodged in the trachea, it would have made him much more uncomfortable.'

'But how on earth came he to swallow it at all?' mused I.

'Well, I confess that is beyond my powers to arrive at,' said the surgeon, rubbing his hands. 'I think we did pretty well, Mrs Blunt and I, in arriving at the conclusion we did, and which I'll go bail that lawyer fellow, sharp as he thinks himself, would never have hit upon. No, for that part of the story we look to you, Marmy, and to what lies under that sealskin cover.'

'But why did you not tell me this before?' said I. 'For then you would have spared me what, with all its horror, has now turned out to be a bootless errand.—By-the-bye,' said I abruptly, with as much carelessness as I could assume, though my fingers trembled so with agitation that they could scarcely retain their hold upon the packet, 'I suppose that sloop with the divers has long left the bay?'

Mr Glendell and Rosa interchanged a meaning look, as the former replied: 'Yes, indeed; weeks ago, its task was completed; the wreck broke up about three days after you visited it. The men were, however, very successful, and recovered the whole of the treasure.—You are very pale, Marmy.—Rosa, dear, leave us alone for a little, until I give you a call.'

The young girl left the room with her usual obedience, but not, I thought, without a reproachful look at her father.

Then the surgeon poured me out a glass of wine, which I swallowed greedily, and drawing his chair close to mine, he took my hand.

'I am not going to torture you any more, lad; I have got good news for you, the best of news, though Rosa does not know it. She has been telegraphing to me a dozen times not to pursue a subject which she deems must be to you one of unmitigated pain and disappointment. Of course you feel it to be so. When you asked that question as to whether the divers were still here, it was easy to see what you had got in your mind. Well, endeavour to dismiss all your anxiety, and to trust to the word of an honest man when he says "all 's well that ends well." Good. Then, if you will be kind enough to read what your poor uncle left behind him—which is no Secret now—I will finish my story afterwards. Then all things will be in their right sequence.'

I unfastened the string that was about the packet, which had still the impression of my uncle's seal upon it unbroken. Within it was a little scroll of yellow parchment, on which were written, in his handwriting, the following words:

CHUDDLEPORE, *January* 4. (Here followed a date of thirty years back.) *It is now a fortnight ago since we came in safe across the frontier from Bundelbad. We had to cut our way through Her Highness's troopers. I had intrusted Sangaree Tannajee with all my jewels, including the large diamond called Light of the Crown, which the Begum gave me on our marriage. This alone was missing. He at first said it was lost; but on my seizing him, and taxing him with the theft, he acknowledged to having swallowed it. This is to certify that that jewel is my property. I have spared the Hindu's life upon his solemn promise never to leave my service, nor marry, nor in any way to alienate this possession from myself and my heirs.*

Then followed in less pale ink a recent date, and the words: *I give and bequeath* [my poor uncle had as crude notions of will-making as I had myself] *the diamond called Light of the Crown, after the death of its present unlawful possessor, to my dear nephew, Marmaduke Drake.*

THEOPHILUS BRAYDON.

'And do you mean to say, Mr Glendell,' inquired I with a beating heart, 'that this jewel is not lost to me and mine for ever?'

'I mean to say that it is here,' exclaimed my companion triumphantly; and he produced from his pocket one of those jewellers' boxes, lined with satin, that are the cradles of all dainty jewels, and in which reposed a magnificent diamond, which he made to sparkle as he turned it this way and that way in the sun.

'Now for my part of the story,' said the doctor importantly, while I sat staring at the living gem, not certain whether I was awake or dreaming. 'The reason why I did not tell you of our discovery of your uncle's secret was simply because I thought it would have driven you mad. You had already evinced signs enough of the illness that was impending over you, and which any further anxiety of mind would have precipitated at once. If you had been told, for instance, that any day the sea might throw up on this very shore, not only the secret on which you were so passionately set, but even the wealth which your uncle had

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promised you should one day possess, it would have set your very brain on fire. Even I myself was greatly excited, and at once (though I accounted otherwise for it to you) placed such a reward on the finding of the Hindu's body as would insure its being taken care of, and yet not awaken any suspicion of its great value. Then, when all hope of the bodies from the lost ship being cast ashore had failed, I strove—in hopes to avert that very calamity which afterwards befell you—to persuade you to leave the neighbourhood. At that time, of course, I knew nothing of the diving operations which were so soon to take place, but I left Hershell fully expecting to be recalled to doctor you; and so far my judgment was correct. When the summons arrived, Rosa and I at once came home, and have tended you ever since; and I may now say that you have had the very narrowest shave. But there, you are getting on famously now, thank Heaven; so we 'll say no more of that.'

I squeezed the good surgeon's hand, for well I knew that I had to thank him, next to Heaven, for my life.

'We heard, of course,' continued Mr Glendell, 'of your foolhardy expedition, Marmy, into Davy's Locker; and, indeed your companion the diver told us all about it himself. You could not have had a more anxious inquirer during your illness than he; while the way in which he eulogised what he called your "pluck" was forcible beyond my power to render. It was to this true friend of yours that I confided that it was most important to your interests that the body of the Hindu should be recovered from the wreck; and although he refused to oblige me in that respect himself, on account of some superstitious scruple which he entertained against meddling with the drowned, he got his mate (who had arrived in the meantime on board the sloop) to undertake the matter, for a consideration, ample indeed, yet not one-half per cent. of your gain. To him and the rest we gave out, as before, that you wished to place the Hindu's remains beside those of his master. And, eventually, this was done. Only you see, Marmy'—and here the surgeon winked in a very sagacious manner—'I did not feel quite satisfied in my mind as *to the cause of death*. I am the last man in my profession to approve of anything like body-snatching; but the scientific investigation of physical phenomena is quite another thing.—Well, I see you do not sympathise with my views, though I do assure you the case was of the greatest and most peculiar interest, quite independent of —— There, there; take another glass of wine.—Well, *I got the diamond;* and nobody is any the wiser.'

'What! Do you mean to say that nobody knows of it?'

'Hush! Not a soul—of course not. I had no sort of business to anatomise the poor fellow, and I should get into a most unpleasant row if it were discovered. It was for your sake, my young friend, remember; so you must keep it quiet too.'

'Yes, indeed,' said I warmly; 'and I shall never forget the obligation.—But do you mean to say that you have said nothing of my good-fortune even to Rosa?'

The surgeon looked very grave. 'No, Marmaduke; I have not. This diamond of yours is very, very valuable. When your uncle hinted he would not lose it for ten thousand pounds, he did not exaggerate its worth. Those accounts over which you saw me poring the other day were the estimates of the different jewellers to whom it was submitted for valuation, for I thought I would save you all that trouble.'

'But not to tell dear Rosa!' reiterated I—'that seems so cruel.'

'Well, you see, Marmy,' said the doctor hesitatingly, 'I like you much, and have always had a good opinion of you; but circumstances have great power, and often change folk's views. To a poor man, as you used to be, a match with my daughter might have seemed to you an agreeable prospect enough; but now that you are a man of fortune'——

'Mr Glendell,' cried I reproachfully, as I strove to rise from my chair, but fell back again through utter weakness, 'you surely never thought that of me?'

'No, Marmy,' said he kindly; 'I did not think it: but still such a change was within the bounds of possibility, and I did not wish Rosa to—to perhaps suffer a disappointment. We might have made up a little story together, and contrived a separation, and a coldness, and gradually disentangled her affections (which are more closely knit in you, Marmy, as I have found since your illness, than I had the least idea of); but to know that you had become rich, and therefore deserted her, would, I verily believe, have broken my darling's heart.—There, now; don't excite yourself; I see you are far from strong yet; and I 'll just send you in something nice and comforting to soothe you.'

Then, as I sat alone in a golden haze of wonder, yet full of bliss and gratitude, the good doctor brought me in the prescription very neatly made up, and looking very likely to do me good—for it was Rosa herself.

CHAPTER XXI.—LAST WORDS.

After the maiden of our love is won, the remainder of life is said to be a bathos. If it had been so with us, Fate would have dealt hard measure indeed, since we were, even yet, scarcely more than boy and girl. But, indeed, life had but just begun. I can truly say, that bright as my boyhood was, my manhood was brighter still, since Rosa shone upon it. As years went on, Hershell Point was no longer lonely, but echoed to the laugh of those little ones, without whom to lisp in our glad ears the name of Father, existence is indeed incomplete. Mrs Eleanor Blunt was godmother to our first-born—Theo; but the number of her days was almost filled. She did not live long enough to allow of his loving her for her own sake; although I trust he cherishes the memory of her who was so excellent a friend to both his parents. When she departed, I obeyed her wish, that I should see the world; and although we always spend the summer at the Point, in the winter we live in the Great Babylon. I have made many ventures in literature since the days of *Brigadoon*, and, without much fear of the charge of self-conceit, I may add more fortunate ones; but no other has ever filled me with half the pride and joy of that first essay. I look back upon the period of my existence when all my world was not more numerous than Noah's, as upon another life, a previous state of being, from which my present days stand wholly apart, except for that unseen bridge which Memory builds up out

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of Love, and Gratitude, and Regret, to stand all shocks of Time. What a little round of life it was, and yet how perfect! The circle has expanded widely enough since then, and yet I move less freely. As for the romance of the world, I have had my share of what is called such; but for excitement, and anxiety, and peril, nothing I have since experienced has approached that great adventure of my early manhood, when I went down beneath the sea to pluck the secret from a dead man's breast, and found him in truth what well-beloved Uncle Theo had always said he was, A PERFECT TREASURE.

THE END.

'WALRUS-SIA.'

WHEN the United States' government decided on the purchase of that distant and little-known portion of the earth—then called Russian America, but henceforth to be known as 'Alaska'—the resolution was strongly opposed by political dissentients, severely criticised by outsiders, and largely quizzed by the humorous people who have a surprising faculty for the conferring of apt nicknames warranted *to stick*. Mr Seward, with whom the speculation originated, was vehemently vituperated by serious, and extensively ridiculed by comic opinion; expensively ridiculed, too, as the wags actually inserted advertisements in the daily papers in all the great cities, offering the highest price for 'waste lands and worn-out colonies,' for 'submerged and undiscovered islands' (the Irish element is strong in American journalism, both in jest and in earnest), for icebergs, polar bears, volcanoes, and earthquakes, 'provided they should not shake the confidence of the State Department.' People exploded their fury and poked their fun at the acquisition made by the Great Republic; it was made a party question in Congress, and the territory was described by the one party as an Elysian field, not at all cold, only 'bracing;' and by the other, as a dismal Dantesque realm of desolation, and wittily entitled 'Walrus-sia.' The truth was, that nobody in America, or here, knew anything at all about it; the play of imagination on both sides was perfectly unfettered and legitimate, and we should have remained as ignorant up to this moment, had not Mr Whymper accompanied the subsequently abandoned Telegraph Expedition from Vancouver's Island, and recorded his experiences of the far north in a very charming volume.* This book is interesting in a double point of view—as affording us reliable data on which to estimate the chances of the United States making an exceedingly good thing out of Mr Seward's 'sporting' speculation, and giving us a picture of travel in an entirely new region. There may be persons who do not enjoy such a book; it may be 'no treat' to them, but to such people we have nothing to say, beyond applying to them the archbishop's valediction to Gil Blas: 'We wish you all sorts of prosperity and better taste.' Some may be found to maintain that there is no real novelty in the theme, that one frozen river is much the same as another, and that one set of skin-clad savages offer no distinctive features, beyond, perhaps, a greater facility in procuring, and a more unbounded stomach for devouring, blubber, than their brethren of the frigid zone. Such people are totally mistaken, and they have only to read, to recognise their error. Mr Whymper's book is not at all like other books recording arctic travel; the Yukon is an unparalleled river, and the tribes which are scattered about the awe-inspiring region far beyond Siberia—far beyond the extreme outposts of Russian civilisation, in a clime to which Archangel represents itself as the sunny south—have many distinguishing traits and customs. They are not like Hall's Esquimaux, though their actual lives are nearly as rigorous; and the perusal of Mr Whymper's researches among them leaves by no means the same sense of wondering sadness as that created by the narrative of the enthusiastic American explorer. Much of the difference between the kinds of impression made by two narratives which necessarily have many characteristics in common, arises from the sense, that in the one instance there is a great deal to be done, much money to be made, many of the boldest enterprises of civilisation to be undertaken, and that there are men ready to do these things; while in the other, there is awful isolation, and hopeless barrenness. None will go to the country of the Innuit, and they will die out, and leave no sign; but the land in the midst of which lies, in a yearly trance, an icebound sleep, the magnificent Yukon, for a course of two thousand miles, is continental, *exploitable*, and about to be made the most of.

The romance and enterprise of the expedition would make it delightful to think about, even if one did not care to know what are the advantages which the United States are likely to reap from a 'deal' which is regarded by many as preliminary to an American occupation of the entire continent. Candid minds, who do not adopt the 'every schoolboy' jargon of assuming that everybody knows everything about the most unlikely subjects, will ask: How do you get to Alaska? and what is it like, when you do get there? Mr Whymper is very lucid on these points, but the impression he creates at the first, is, familiarly put, that you 'get there' (on the map) by going as far north as you have ever imagined, and then a great deal further. The expedition went from Vancouver's Island, but, in reading the book with a map, it is more comprehensible to take the overland route through Russia, and begin, as the real interest of his book begins, at Sitka, or New Archangel, the capital of Alaska, the most northern harbour on the Pacific shores of America.

Concerning the interior of the desolate region to which they were bound, only the traders of the Russian-American Fur Company had any information, and they had not imparted it. Zagoskin, of the Russian navy, had explored it indeed, and written about it, but in Russ; and a German translation of his work, though made, was never printed. No doubt the present possessors of this grim domain of the north will have it thoroughly investigated. The expedition commenced its tortuous voyage among the islands, sailing from Sitka, in June, for Behring's Sea. With their arrival in Plower Bay, the absolutely novel interest of the narrative begins, and we are immediately introduced to the Tchuktchis, a tribe who live on a little 'spit' of utterly barren land, in tents ingeniously constructed of skins, stretched on roofs

* *Travel and Adventure in the Territory of Alaska, formerly Russian America—now ceded to the United States—and in various other parts of the North Pacific.* By Frederick Whymper. London: Murray.

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and walls formed of the large bones of whales and walrus. These people, who are amazingly strong—it is a common thing for one of them to carry unaided a ship-carpenter's chest weighing two hundred pounds—are exposed to the most frightful cold and wind, yet there they live, never seeking the mainland. They live by fishing, and on the fish they take; wood they have none; blubber-lamps are their only fire and light. Their canoes are made of skins stretched on bones, like their houses. They are a good-humoured people, who sew their children up in reindeer-skin clothing, so that they look like walking bags, and tumble about with the utmost impunity. 'It is said,' writes our author, with commendable caution, 'that the Tchuktchis murder the old and feeble, but only with the victims' consent! They do not indulge in any unnecessary cruelty, but stupefy the aged sacrifice before letting a vein, by putting some substance up the nostrils.' This interesting trait of manners was imparted to Mr Whymper by one 'Nan-kum,' an unusually sharp and original 'native' of those parts. This personage, being taken into the engine-room of the steamer *Wright*, exhibited much intelligent curiosity, examined machinery closely, shook his head, and said solemnly: 'Too muchee wheel, makee man too muchee think.' How many civilised visitors to exhibitions of machinery have been of Nan-kum's opinion!

At Norton's Sound, the expedition made its first winter-camp, and the preparations for the sleigh-journey to the far interior were begun. These included the selection of sledges, dogs, harness, and skin-clothing, and the division of stores. Late in October, they started, by the shortest known route from the coast, to the Yukon river. A wondrous feeling it must have been, when the little party were fairly off, and the unknown, unmapped tracts of the great north lay before them, the snow-clad solitudes, and the glorious Northern Lights. The tone of Mr Whymper's narrative is that of exhilaration throughout; he responds with the readiness of the artistic temperament to the inspiriting influence of the temperature, and the wildness and daring of the journey, and one never has a chance of sympathetic shivering in reading his book. He makes light even of the snow-shoes, which are five feet long, and are occasionally used in an extemporary fashion as sledges, but which must be horribly fatiguing and troublesome. They had one hundred and seventy miles to go, and all started in good heart and 'form.' The dogs, always interesting in such narratives, were not satisfactory, in, so to speak, a moral point of view. They had too much of the wolf in them, and though they *did* their work, and not badly, they did not like it, or make friends with their masters. The party comprised nine persons, and their 'track' was the frozen surface of the Umlachleet river. They travelled all day, and slept at night on beds of firbrush made on the ice, closely packed together, and covered by a large deerskin robe. In two days they came to an Indian summer village, where they found curious underground dwellings, and harmless, kind people, very dirty, and good-natured, with whom they 'traded' away small articles in cutlery for food for the party and their dogs. Feeding the dogs is the most serious and frequent difficulty in these laborious journeys. It is impossible to carry large quantities of provisions; and if the villages are not reached in time to prevent the animals becoming unmanageable from hunger, or are found destitute of the dried fish used or feeding them, the dogs desert, after eating everything within their reach, including their own harness.

Mr Whymper gives the Indian tribes, the Makalute and Co-Yukon people, a singularly good character for honesty, in which they are truly admirable, when the rigorous conditions of their own lives are duly considered. 'On leaving Versola Sofka,' he says, 'we found the loads too great for our dogs, and raised an erection of poles, in which we deposited some bags. I may here say once for all, that our men often left goods, consisting of tea, flour, molasses, bacon, and all kinds of miscellaneous items, scattered in this way over the country, and that they remained untouched by the Indians, who frequently travelled past them.' One naturally looks for some record of physical suffering from cold during this journey, but finds it only on one occasion, which gives rise to some curious and unexpected information respecting the climate. 'Our coldest day occurred in December, when the thermometer fell to *ninety degrees below freezing*. But the weather was lovely, no wind blew or snow fell, and we did not feel the cold so much as at other times. The effect on the stores in our magazine was a very interesting study: our dried apples were a mass of rock, and had to be smashed up with an axe; our molasses formed a thick black paste; and no knife we had would cut a slice of ham from the bone.' This was long after they had reached the Yukon, and 'made things comfortable' for coming and going on their exploring trips.

Their first sight of the great river of the desolate north was after this wise. 'About noon, from a slight eminence, we could see a faint streak of blue over the trees; we travelled hard to reach it, and at sundown broke from the woods, shot down a steep bank, and stood on an immense snow-clad field of ice—the mighty Yukon! Hardly a patch of clear ice was to be seen; all was covered by a wintry mantle. Let the reader think of a river two thousand miles long, and, anywhere on this part of its course, from one to four or five miles wide, one unbroken mass of snow-covered ice, from its source to its mouth, and he will then have pictured to himself the Yukon in winter. I had been prepared to see a large stream, but had formed no conception of the reality. Neither pen nor pencil can give any idea of the dreary grandeur, the vast monotony, or the unlimited expanse we saw before us.'

At Nulato, the expedition established its head-quarters, and found life very pleasant, especially when the fish-traps set in the ice were well supplied with the fine fish of the great river. It is a strange kind of life to contemplate, especially when we remember how large a portion of it was passed in darkness.

On the 21st December, the sun rose at 10.40 A.M., and set soon after 12.30 P.M. How many Englishmen have seen that sight, or its converse, when, on the 21st June, the sun set a few minutes after 11, and rose at a quarter to 12? 'How near we were to the arctic circle,' says Mr Whymper, 'I leave to those who understand the subject; suffice it to say the sun was absent from our gaze not over forty-five minutes.' Christmas-day in the midst of the awful ice-kingdom was observed with as much propriety as possible, and with quite an extraordinary amount of jollity; and on the 27th

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they beheld a sight so wonderful, so beautiful, that to read of it makes one feel that the journey would have been worth making, had it only resulted in that one spectacle of the sublimity of the heavens. 'Just as we were turning in for the night, a fine auroral display in the north-west was announced, and we all rushed out to witness it. It was not the conventional arch, but a graceful, undulating, ever-changing "snake" of electric light; evanescent colours, pale as those of a lunar rainbow, ever and again flitting through it; and long streamers and scintillations moving upwards to the bright stars, which distinctly shone through its hazy, ethereal form.'

The country is very thinly inhabited; but the natives are harmless and intelligent, and have been hitherto so sparingly exposed to the contamination of the white man, that they are infinitely less vicious and more healthy than any of the coast tribes. They have some old customs, but they are not revolting. They do not inter the dead, but put them in oblong boxes, raised on posts, and decorated with strips of skin; in fact, into four-post coffins. They have certain superstitions with regard to the bones of animals, which they will neither throw in the fire nor to the dogs. When they saw the strangers careless in such matters, they said it would prevent them from catching or shooting successfully. Also, they will not throw away their hair or nails, just cut short, but save them, sometimes hanging them in packages to the trees. The expedition made numerous and extensive explorations, and had planned out a large extent of the telegraph route, when they learned the successful laying of the Atlantic cable, and subsequent abandonment of the telegraph scheme; intelligence which they naturally received with much vexation. They came in contact with many of the tribes who thinly populate the semi-mystical land of the far north, and found them uniformly kind, harmless, and pathetically absurd. The Fur Companies trade with all these tribes, of whom the original mountain-men are the most primitive. An active English missionary, Mr Macdonald, is labouring hard among them, and with good hope of success, if he can but keep them from contact with his countrymen.

The summer comes suddenly in this wonderful region, and when it came the explorers navigated the river in their birch canoes, seeing much that was beautiful, curious, and interesting, and experiencing on one occasion the very odd sensation—*a shock of earthquake on the water!* During these expeditions, the Indians who accompanied them frequently killed the moose-deer in the river. Monotony pervaded the commissariat department. They had nothing but boiled moose-meat to eat, and they got very tired of it. The members of the expedition enjoyed excellent health. They had broken up into parties, and gone different ways, the nine among whom Mr Whymper was included keeping together; and when they all met and encamped at Plower Bay, while waiting for the arrival of the ship in which they were to embark, they mustered a hundred and twenty men, who had wintered at places as widely apart as the Anadyr, Plower Bay itself, and Russian America. Of those who had encountered the hardships of that arctic clime, only one had died; while another, captivated by the charms of some lovely squaw, had determined to remain—a voluntary exile in Eastern Siberia!

No less interesting is the narrative of the telegraph explorations on the Asiatic side of this boundless and desolate territory, in the course of which negotiations were carried on with the Tunguse, a very superior and crafty tribe, and all the locomotion and baggage-carrying was done by means of the reindeer. Riding a reindeer sounds very ludicrous, and the effect is heightened by the author's grave remark that it requires considerable dexterity to mount a reindeer without the assistance of stirrups! It is earnestly to be hoped that one of the gentlemen engaged in the Asiatic exploration will give us as much information as Mr Whymper has afforded us, and do it as pleasantly.

That the extreme northern division of its newly acquired territory may remain permanently valueless to the United States' government, Mr Whymper regards as possible; but that, on the whole, Russian America is well worth having, he entertains no doubt whatever.

RATHER AN ADVENTURE—FOR AN UNDERGRADUATE.

'For Heaven's sake, take me over!'

So cried a pale panting man to William Egerton, who was sculling easily down the reedy river Cam. Egerton looked up in the direction of the cry, and saw a sight which gave him a shock, and made him 'hold up' his boat immediately. The man who had called out so piteously clambered down the bank to the very edge of the water, where he stood with blood pouring from his nose, his face like that of a ghost, his dress disordered, his neckerchief awry, his hat pressed tightly over his head, his long hair hanging about like a bundle of snakes, and his hands clasped imploringly before him as he repeated his cry: 'For Heaven's sake, sir, take me over! Do, for Heaven's sake, put me across!'

'Why can't you go over the ferry?' asked Egerton discontentedly. 'This isn't a ferry-boat.'

'For Heaven's sake, put me across!' repeated the man, stretching out his hands as if to catch hold of Egerton's boat. 'Do put me across—the devils are after me!'

'What devils?' asked Egerton.

'The bailiffs—the bailiffs! Oh, put me across!'

'I doubt whether my boat will hold both of us,' grumbled Egerton. 'Here, catch the end of my scull, and pull the boat in. Gently, gently, or you'll capsize me.'

For the man had eagerly seized the scull, and very nearly upset the boat, which, though it was not canvas-covered, and though it was called at Cambridge a tub, was in reality a very light skiff, such as many a mother would think it dangerous for her darling son to trust himself in alone. However, the miserable man was able, and apparently delighted to get into even so frail a craft.

Egerton pushed off very carefully, and just as he had dipped his sculls for the first stroke, he heard a hoarse, dull, confused roaring in the distance, and the wretched passenger cried: 'Quicker—quicker; they're a-coming: can't ye hear 'em?'

Egerton was on the point of making an angry rejoinder, for he didn't at all like the man's tone; but young men of twenty sympathise with those who are escaping from the bailiffs, and he merely replied coolly: 'All right, my friend; as soon as I get settled to my work, I'll take you across like a shot. I don't know whether you care about your

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trousers and things, but the blood from your nose is dropping all over them.'

The man only shook his head carelessly, and kept his eyes fixed on the opposite bank.

Egerton gave way with a will, and as he had to steer for himself, he was obliged occasionally to turn his head to see where he was going. Once as he faced about again, and looked towards his passenger, he saw the latter watching a number of circles in the water astern of the boat. As the passenger twisted his head back to its former position, the boat gave a lurch, and Egerton said angrily: 'You'd better sit still, my friend; what the deuce were you looking at?'

'Nothing.'

'You were looking at something, I'm sure, for I saw the circles in the water myself; I suppose a fish jumped.'

'Yes, that were it, master,' said the passenger dreamily; 'a fish jumped—I see it.'

By this time they had reached the opposite bank, for the Cam is a narrow river; and the man, having got ashore, ran up the steep path which led down to the river as fast as his legs would carry him, without speaking a word or looking behind him.

'Well,' thought Egerton, as he pulled away, 'he might have said "Thank'ee" at anyrate; but I suppose he is in too great a funk to be civil.'

As he rowed along leisurely towards the favourite inn on the river's bank, he heard the voices of the pursuers getting plainer and plainer as they came nearer and nearer, and it sounded as if they were shouting 'Murder! murder!' He laughed as he thought of the dodge the bailiffs must have used to get a crowd to assist them in the pursuit of a poor runaway, whose only crime was probably shortness of work, which was necessarily followed by arrears of rent; and he chuckled as he thought of the start he must have helped the fugitive to get; for the bridge was half a mile off, and the nearest ferry was close at hand certainly, but had nobody in attendance, as the young gentlemen at college, who were the chief patrons of the ferries, were nearly all of them away for the long vacation. Egerton was one of the few still left at Cambridge, where he was supposed to be reading for his next examination. He could now distinctly hear voices calling upon him to stop, but he only quickened his stroke, and knew he should be at *The Plough* almost as soon as any of them could get across to the towing-path, which was on the other side of the river, and which was by far the nearest way for foot-passengers. At the inn he would undoubtedly find other boats like his own, and who should say in which the fugitive debtor had been helped across the river? Besides, the bailiffs couldn't do anything—beyond abusing him, if they cared or dared to abuse him—even if they knew to whom they owed the spoiling of the chase. So he 'spurted' cheerfully down to *The Plough*, put up his boat amongst several others like his own, and sauntered into the smoking-room, where he was soon engaged in a game of bagatelle with one of the many young gentlemen who were there, and who were supposed, as he was, to be spending their vacation at the University for the purpose of studying ancient languages or mathematics. He was not half through his first game when there was heard from the towing-path a tremendous shouting, and a hoarse cry of 'Boat! boat!'

He rushed out with the rest, and stood on the lawn whilst a boat went across to the towing-path and brought over about a dozen persons, among whom there were two men who evidently were in authority, for they ordered the rest about in a high and mighty manner, and one of the two, turning to the lad in charge of the moored skiffs, asked with the air of one who had a right to ask: 'Which of these boats came in last, pray?'

The boat-keeper without hesitation pointed to Egerton's.

'And which of you young gentlemen,' continued the questioner, 'rowed down in this boat?'

He was answered by a careless laugh from the knot of young men in flannel garments and straw hats, and by a scornful inquiry: 'What the dickens has it to do with you?'

The two men who assumed so much authority consulted together in a whisper, carefully examined Egerton's boat, and then one of them having apparently taken the measure of the young oarsmen, said civilly: 'If you young gentlemen will come with us into a private room, I think I can make it plain to you what the dickens it *has* to do with us.'

The young oarsmen interchanged looks of inquiry; and when Egerton exclaimed: 'Oh! come along; let us hear what they have to say,' a general move was made towards the inn; and the two men in authority and the young oarsmen locked themselves in a private room, everybody else being left outside.

One of the two men immediately opened the proceedings by saying in a severe tone of voice: 'This is a very serious business, gentlemen. I hold a warrant for the apprehension of a man, and here is the warrant. We tracked the man; found out the house where he was, and we had almost reached his hiding-place, when somehow or other he got wind of it, and bolted towards the river. He had a goodish start of us, though he did come down a cropper (and hurt himself, I should say) jumping a low wall; but we kept him in sight all across the common, and we saw him landed on the other side of the river by somebody in one of these skiffs you young gentlemen use, and dressed, as far as we could see, exactly as you are dressed. If it was one of you, we depend on you to tell us which it was.'

There was a short silence, and then one of the young oarsmen asked: 'What had the man been doing?'

'He is suspected,' answered the officer solemnly, 'of doing murder.'

There was a start and exclamation of horror amongst the young oarsmen, and all eyes were turned expectantly towards Egerton, who, pale as a sheet, and horror-stricken at the notion of having aided a murderer, could scarcely find voice enough to say: '*I* put him across: he said the bailiffs were after him.'

'I daresay he did,' remarked the officer drily; 'and now you have thrown us off the scent. I suppose you didn't see which way he went?'

'I couldn't,' answered Egerton disconsolately; 'he was hidden directly by the wood; and when he got to the top of the cart-lane, there were five roads for him to choose from.'

'Exactly,' rejoined the officer bitterly. 'I knew that: and the people were knocked up, and my mate and I couldn't go all five ways. You've made a pretty mess, young gentleman.'

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'Is there nothing I can do?' asked Egerton anxiously.

'Should you know the man again?' inquired the officer.

'Anywhere and in any disguise, I think,' answered Egerton, 'for I watched him carefully all the time I sat opposite to him, and I noticed amongst other things that he had lost two front teeth, and that he had an anchor tattooed on his left wrist.'

'Did he throw anything into the river?' asked the officer.

Egerton started, as a sudden recollection flashed across him, and he replied: 'I didn't see him drop anything in the river, but I remember well that he nearly capsized the boat by suddenly turning round and back again, and that afterwards I saw several circles in the water, as if a fish had jumped, or something had been dropped in the river. He said a fish had jumped, but your question makes me think it was not so.'

'Could you point out the spot?' inquired the officer.

'Yes,' answered Egerton, 'within a yard or so.'

'And now, sir,' continued the officer, 'I must ask for your name and address.'

Both were readily given, and taken down.

The two officers then muttering discontentedly that they had 'lost time enough already,' prepared to depart. Egerton went part of the way with them, and by earnest entreaty obtained from the principal, Sergeant Gumps, a promise that they would let him know from time to time how they succeeded in their search.

The river was dragged, under proper superintendence, at the spot indicated by Egerton, and amongst many strange articles fished up, there was a life-preserver, which was taken possession of by the authorities.

Egerton grew so restless and sleepless with thinking of what he had done, that when a week had elapsed, during which he had received no satisfactory intelligence, he determined to set out for Y——, from which seaport Sergeant Gumps had dated his last letter. He went to the lodgings of the sergeant, who was evidently very pleased to see him.

'How *are* you, Mr Egerton?' exclaimed the sergeant cheerfully. 'I am delighted to see you, sir; you 've come in the nick of time. I was just going to write to you, to ask you if you could make it convenient to come over here. There 's news to tell you, sir.'

'Well,' said Egerton, 'come over to my hotel in half-an-hour and dine with me, and then you can tell me all about it. I 'm staying at *The Albion*.'

'I 'll be there, sir, without fail,' said the sergeant.

He was as good as his word; and when the meats of *The Albion* had been removed, and the wines of *The Albion* were sparkling on the table between him and Egerton, he unfolded his tale and emptied his glass at his leisure.

'I 'll begin at the beginning, sir,' he said. 'Of course you recollect that about a month ago there was a story in the papers about a man that kept a pike in Suffolk. The man had living with him his wife, and his wife's mother, an old woman over seventy. One evening, the man and his wife went out to a merry-making, some miles off, leaving the old woman to take the pike-money and open the gate, and all that. They 'd done the same thing often enough before, and no harm came of it, as most of the people that went backwards and forwards on that road were friendly with the pike-keeper, and his wife and her mother; and many of the foot-passengers used to go into the toll-house, and sit a bit, and have a talk. Amongst these was a tramp called Jack Andrews. Nobody knew any harm of him: he was a handy chap, and was always tramping about the country doing odd jobs here and there. Well, the very evening the pike-man and his wife went out to the merry-making, Jack Andrews happened to go into the toll-house, and heard them talking about it, and saying they shouldn't be home very likely before morning. Well, they didn't get home until one in the morning, and when they got home they found the door of the toll-house open, and when they went in they saw the poor old woman dead on the ground, with her skull beaten in; and the money that was ready for the collector, who was expected to call next day, was gone. It was a tidy sum, and all in coin. There was an inquest, of course; and it came out in evidence that Jack Andrews had known about the money and where it was put; and a stranger, who drove through the toll-gate between twelve at night and one, when there was generally little or no traffic on that road, said the gate was opened to him by a man, who, by the description, must have been Jack Andrews, though he ought by that time to have been a good six hours' tramp away from the place. The verdict was an open one; you know what that is, sir: "Murder against some person or persons unknown." However, I got a warrant for the apprehension of Jack Andrews.

'I never saw him, and I don't know anything more of him by sight than the glimpse I got as we chevied him (for I 've no doubt, from my information, it *was* him) the other day, when you came and spoiled the business (excuse me, sir) with your boat. From inquiries we have made, we 've every reason to believe that the man you took over in your boat is now in this town, and thinks he is going to sail the day after to-morrow for Australia. But *I* think we shall spoil his little game. If you can swear he is the man you put across the river, *I* can swear the man you put across is the man we chased; and I have evidence to prove that the man we chased is Jack Andrews. Whether he committed the murder or not, is another question. The man I speak of goes every night to a public-house in this town: I keep it well watched, and I 've sufficient force at hand for all emergencies. If you 've no objection, we 'll go to-night, where you can see him without being seen yourself, and I can then decide what is to be done.'

'I 'll go at once, if you like,' cried Egerton, springing up excitedly.

'It ain't time yet, sir,' said the officer, looking coolly at his watch; 'it isn't nine o'clock yet, and our man seldom goes to the public before ten, and never leaves until it closes.'

So coffee and cigars were enjoyed; and afterwards, Egerton and the officer sauntered to *The Angler*. A nod of understanding was exchanged between the officer and the barmaid, and Egerton and the former were admitted within the bar, from which, through a little circular window, they could command a full view of the taproom and its occupants.

The officer arranged matters so that he and Egerton could, by changing places, see every part of the taproom without being themselves seen; and he cautioned Egerton simply to watch and

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observe, and not to make any remark about what he saw.

He himself narrowly scanned his companion's behaviour, and smiled grimly when he once saw him half-rise from his chair, open his mouth, and point with his finger, and then sink down again, and shake his head as if he had made a mistake.

This was enough for Sergeant Gumps, who proposed just one more glass of grog and then departure.

Egerton agreed, and as he sipped his grog, looked ever and anon in a certain direction. At last he sprang up, with a cry upon his lips; but the other pulled him down, and made signals for silence. After a few compliments to the barmaid, Sergeant Gumps (who had, of course, been all this time in plain clothes) suggested that it was time to go. Egerton assented; and as the two strolled towards Egerton's hotel, the sergeant and he were full of question and answer.

'Well, sir,' said the sergeant, 'did you see anything or anybody in particular?'

'Well,' answered Egerton, 'I saw an awful lot of ruffians, and the worst to look at was a brute with a knobby stick in his hand, and a patch over one eye.'

'Ha, ha!' laughed the sergeant; 'that was one of my mates. He *does* make up beautiful; he's been taken on suspicion himself.'

'I don't wonder at it,' growled Egerton; 'but I didn't see the man we were looking for.'

'Are you sure?' asked the sergeant slily. 'What made you jump up, and nearly cry out, eh?'

'Because I fancied I *did* see him,' answered Egerton; 'but, though I thought I could swear to the man's general look and expression, it couldn't have been he.'

'Why not?' inquired the sergeant. 'I rather believe in general expression myself.'

'Why, the man I rowed over the river was a white-faced man, whereas this was as brown as'——

'A great deal can be done with walnut-juice,' interrupted the sergeant quietly.

'The man I rowed over the river,' said Egerton, 'had long snake-like hair, whereas this man's hair was'——

'There are plenty of barbers,' interrupted the sergeant again, 'who can cut and dye, and do all sorts of things to the hair.'

'The man I rowed over the river,' continued Egerton angrily, 'had lost two front teeth, and had an anchor tattooed on his left wrist, whereas this had all his front teeth to shew, and'——

'A great piece of sticking-plaster on his left wrist,' once more interrupted the sergeant: 'you didn't see that, Mr Egerton, did you?—I did, sir; and let me tell you, I have heard of a dentist in this town who lately put in two front teeth for a common-looking man.'

'I was going to say I couldn't get a good look at his left wrist,' said Egerton pettishly, 'but you interrupted me.'

'I beg your pardon, sir,' rejoined the sergeant.

'Then you think,' said Egerton snappishly, 'the man I was so much struck with was *the* man?'

'Oh, I don't think anything at all about it, sir,' said the sergeant. 'All I want to know is, whether you saw anybody you could swear to as being, or being very like, the man you rowed over the Cam.'

Egerton was silent for a moment or two, and then he said: 'It would be a frightful thing to take the wrong man.'

'Certainly,' assented the sergeant.

'And to-morrow is the last chance?' asked Egerton with vexation.

'You heard him say yourself, sir,' answered the sergeant in a tone of remonstrance, 'that he would give his farewell supper to his mates to-morrow night, and start the next morning for Australia.'

Egerton reflected a little, and then said in a determined voice: 'Look here, Sergeant Gumps; I will go into *The Angler* to-morrow night, and into the taproom at the time this man gives his supper, and I warrant I'll find out whether he is or is not the man I rowed across the Cam.—What do you say to that?'

'It will be a dangerous job, sir,' answered the sergeant quietly. 'It's a desperate set of villains he is going to stand supper to; but he has invited my mate, who, of course, will be on your side, and I shall be in the bar, and there'll be several more of us within hail; so I think, if you don't mind walking into the taproom when supper's over, and grog is on, you might make things tolerably certain. If it *is* the man I think, *he'll* know *you*, and shew it, whether you can recognise him or not.'

'Very well; I'll be there at ten o'clock,' said Egerton; 'and you may depend upon it I'll find out whether it is our man or not.'

The next night, at a little before ten, Egerton walked into the taproom at *The Angler*. The man he wanted to see was there, ladling out punch to five as ugly-looking ruffians (including the police-officer) as Egerton had ever seen. There were two or three other customers scattered singly about the room.

As Egerton, who had put on his boating-clothes, not only as being best suited to the place he intended to visit, but also as being most likely to lead to his early recognition by the man he had rowed over the Cam, entered the room, he heard one of the punch-drinkers say: 'Friends, a toast. I ain't much of a chap to jaw, so I'll give it short and sweet—"Luck to Bob Jeffreys, the giver o' the feast, and may he have a good time in Australia."'

The toast was duly honoured; and as the man called Bob Jeffreys prepared to return thanks, and looked about him in search of ideas, he caught Egerton's eye, dropped his lower jaw, and stared with all his might.

'How are you?' said Egerton, nodding in a friendly way. 'I think I've seen you somewhere before.'

'Servant, sir,' growled Bob Jeffreys, 'though I can't say as *I* know *you*.'

'P'raps the gen'lman 'll jine us, if he's a friend o' yourn, Bob,' said one of the ruffians, making room.

Egerton advanced to the table with alacrity, and the police-officer with the knobby stick managed to interpose himself between Jeffreys and Egerton: at the same time two of the men scattered singly about the room moved so as to be between the punch-drinkers and the door.

'I 'm sure you must recollect me,' said Egerton blandly: 'didn't I put you across the Cam in my boat?'

Bob Jeffreys looked as black as thunder, but after a moment's hesitation, he replied: 'I don't know nothing about no Cam, nor no boats, nor nothing o' the kind. If you'll take a glass o' punch, you're welcome; but you ain't the gen'lman I took you for.'

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'Then I must be mistaken,' said Egerton resignedly.

'Yes, you are,' growled Bob Jeffreys.

'And being mistaken,' continued Egerton, 'I think that instead of drinking your punch, I ought to stand a bowl.'

All the ruffians swore a frightful oath that Egerton spoke like a gentleman, and even Bob Jeffreys smiled grimly as he said: 'You couldn't say no fairer, young gen'lman: take a glass o' this with us, and then you shall stand the next bowl.'

So Bob Jeffreys returned thanks in a brief speech for the toast that had been proposed, and a second bowl of punch was soon produced at Egerton's expense.

As they were drinking it, Egerton suddenly asked Jeffreys: 'What's the matter with your wrist?'

'What the devil is that to you?' was the fierce rejoinder.

'Oh, nothing!' answered Egerton quietly; 'but I don't see why you should take offence.'

'No offence, sir, no offence,' returned Jeffreys, softening down; 'but I get riled at everybody's asking me the same thing: it's a little bit of a wound I got; it isn't much.' And he concealed his left hand under the table.

'Perhaps you are not aware that the plaster is working off,' remarked Egerton: 'I suppose the wound is nearly healed?'

Jeffreys looked at his wrist, glanced suspiciously at Egerton, and then re-arranged the plaster, which had been worked up by his shirt-sleeve, until a sharp eye could see the curved part of an anchor.

'Yes,' he growled in some confusion; 'it's very near well.'

Egerton now said it was time for him to go, nodded to the party, and with a general 'good-night,' sauntered out.

In the bar he found Sergeant Gumps, to whom he whispered: 'I can swear to the man: he has two false front teeth, and there is the anchor on his left wrist. Besides, I've heard his voice, and watched his face, and I can't make any mistake.'

Sergeant Gumps smiled, and whispering: 'Follow me,' walked into the taproom, the door of which was immediately leaned against by the two men who had been sitting close by it.

As soon as Bob Jeffreys saw Egerton return with Sergeant Gumps, he seemed to have some misgiving; and when the latter walked up and said: 'I'm a police-sergeant, and I want you,' Jeffreys attempted to leap over the table, but was dragged down by the man with the knobby stick.

'You're another of 'em, I suppose,' he muttered, seeing how matters stood.—'Come, lend a hand here, mates.'

His mates were preparing for a rescue, when Sergeant Gumps remarked calmly: 'It's a charge of murder;' whereupon they held aloof, and looked helplessly at one another.

Jeffreys now made a desperate resistance, howled and shrieked, cursed his mates, and uttered the most fearful threats against Egerton; but Sergeant Gumps soon produced a pair of handcuffs, in which, notwithstanding Jeffreys' piteous allusions to his wound, his hands were secured, the sergeant having previously taken the liberty of tearing off the plaster, and exposing to view no wound worse than a tattooed anchor of long standing.

It will easily be understood that Bob Jeffreys was proved to be no other than Jack Andrews, in whose chest was found a suit of clothes, some of which were stained with blood. Egerton certainly could and did state in evidence that the clothes, which were proved to have been those worn by Jack Andrews when he was rowed across the Cam by Egerton, were considerably stained with blood from the wearer's own nose. However, the life-preserver which was fished up from the river was sworn to as being exactly like one which Jack Andrews was in the habit of carrying before the murder, and which he never was known to have in his possession after he had been rowed by Egerton across the Cam; and the life-preserver was just the sort of instrument to inflict the injuries from which the old woman at the pike died. Moreover, a man, who could not well have been anybody except Jack Andrews, had opened the turnpike gate at the very moment that the old woman must have been breathing her last; and after the murder, Jack Andrews had appeared to be as unaccountably familiar with cash as he had before been accountably unfamiliar. In fact, two and two were put together by legal gentlemen in so convincing a manner, that a jury returned a verdict of wilful murder against Jack Andrews; and Jack Andrews was hanged by the neck until he was dead. And Egerton, both in court and in the newspapers, received a severe reprimand for having very nearly enabled a criminal to escape from justice; and young gentlemen were warned to take to heart his example, and, if they would not assist, to at any-rate abstain from obstructing the law, even when its officers were believed to appear in the unpopular form of bailiffs.

A HUSBAND'S VALENTINE.

THE days are long and dull, dear,
For I am far from thee;
Though nature smiles, and skies are clear,
And bursting leaf, and budding tree,
And flowers scattered o'er the lea,
And all things tell that spring is here;
Yet spring is not like spring, dear,
When thou art not with me.

The air is full of song, dear;
I sit here 'neath a tree,
While loud and low, and far and near,
The lark's glad lay, the hum of bee,
And all the changeful melody
Of happy spring invites my ear;
But sweetest songs are sad, dear,
For thou art far from me.

My friend is still the same, dear,
His heart as true to me;
We love with love that scorneth fear;
We think aloud; our speech is free—
Jonathan I, and David he—
Two hearts can scarcely be more near;
Yet still I sigh and pine, dear,
For thou art far from me.

Oh, come, for all things sought, dear,
Will come along with thee;
The skies will be a clearer clear,
And song of bird, and budding tree,
And lambkins pranking on the lea,
And all things sweet will sweet appear:
Then come; my heart sighs come, dear,
And bring the spring to me.

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DRAWN FROM THE LIFE.

UNDER this title, perhaps it may be permitted to one who has lived long and seen much to narrate certain experiences of Life, not indeed personal, but all well authenticated, and which only do not deserve the name of romances, because they happen to be matters of Fact. The age is sceptical, and whereas at one time Legend, in course of years, was wont to be believed in as Truth, so Truth, at present, in less than a generation, is often regarded as Fiction. It is indeed probable that some of that section of my readers, which, when I belonged to it, was called 'young people,' but which would now resent such a term as an impertinence, may be inclined to question my statements, and in that case I shall be happy to furnish them with names and dates; since, whatever I shall here set down, I promise shall have actually occurred, and that within living memory, and will owe to me only its narrative form. The incidents, however, will be by no means selected on account of their strangeness, but solely by reason of their human interest; they may be terrible, or humorous, or simply curious; the only attribute common to them all will be that they are True.

THE TOLLBAR.

Upon the road of real life, there was, at one time, no object so familiar as the turnpike, although it is an institution that is passing away from many districts, and in London (save at the bridges) has altogether disappeared. According (if we remember aright) to Mr Samuel Weller, a turnpike-man was, or should have been, a misanthrope, living in solitude, and taking delight, on wet and snowy days, in seeing the passengers through his Bar disengage themselves from their warm wraps, and fumble in their pockets with numbed hands for the ticket or the money. Certainly, many toll-gates were placed in lonely spots enough, and apparently set as far from other human habitations as possible; and such a one was Alford Gate, on the Great North Road, and near the Border. It was near nothing else: placed in the centre of a bleak and treeless moor, and visible on both sides for miles to the occupant of the box-seat as the coach came spanking along with its four bays or grays; or to the postboys, as they spurred their horses to the gallop, for the occupants of the chaise behind them were often in a hurry in that locality, it being but a stage or two from Gretna Green. Except for such swift-passing company as these, the turnpike saw few visitors; and in winter-time, even on such a highway, the traffic dwindled to small proportions, and sometimes, when the snow was deep, even ceased for a day or two, so far as wheels were concerned, altogether. But still the horn would be heard sounding cheerily over the white waste of snow, and the guard of the mail, in his scarlet coat, would go *riding* by with the letter-bags as quickly as the 'balling' snow would permit him. The coach had been obliged to stop at the wayside inn on the other side of the moor; or perhaps, even less fortunate, was, with its three remaining horses, stuck fast upon the road.

In such seasons, Alford Gate would be lonesome indeed; and the two ancient women who kept it (for there was no man) found their position anything but agreeable. They had, it is true, a good store of provisions always laid up against such occasions, and plenty of money accrued to them at the same period, for they could not go to the country-town to lodge it in the bank. This last circumstance was a source of well-founded apprehension to them. Mrs Alison, the widow of the late toll-keeper, and who had, at his decease, succeeded to 'the trust,' and her sister, Ellen Bates, were both somewhat ancient dames, and, of course, could not have defended their little mansion against the attacks of even a single robber; while their nearest protector, Jacob Wright, the blacksmith, dwelt at least two miles away across the moor. Often and often, had he and his wife, over a dish of tea at the toll-gate, sympathised with these good ladies, and done their best to comfort them after their several fashions: the wife, by acknowledging the reasonableness of their apprehension, and dwelling upon its special points of horror—the murder of both hostesses (for instance), that would probably precede

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the spoliation of their dwelling—the husband, by treating their fears as chimerical, and even demonstrating to them how all risk of loss might be avoided by intrusting what money they took in the house by day to the guard of the evening-mail for deposit at Wellborough, the nearest country-town.

On a certain afternoon in early winter, when Mr and Mrs Wright were thus partaking of the hospitality of the sisters, the conversation had especially run in this particular groove; the snow, although not deep, had already fallen in sufficient quantities to keep from travelling all who were not compelled to do so by necessity; and the two poor women felt that their lonesome season had set in, and were depressed in spirits accordingly. There was a good deal of money in the old tin case, which was their strong-box, for the cold and searching winds that had lately swept the moor had kept both the good ladies from going into Wellborough, and they now bewailed this accumulation of wealth—wealth, however, which was not their own, of course, but that of the Turnpike Trust—as likely to prove their destruction. Some ill-looking fellows had slouched by the gate that very morning, and one of them, under pretence of wanting a glass of water, had made his way into their little dwelling.

'Then, send on the money, as I have advised you fifty times before,' quoth honest Jacob, 'by the next coach, and then you will be easy in your mind.'

'Ay, ay,' said Mrs Alison in her quavering voice, 'that is all very well, if we could persuade wicked people that this had been done. But when robbers are disappointed of booty, they are more bloodily inclined than at any other time.'

'And, of course,' observed Ellen Bates, 'we had much rather lose our money—and especially the Commissioners' money—than our lives.'

'Yes, indeed,' assented well-meaning Mrs Wright, 'though it is not even losing one's life which may be the worst of it; for did you not read in the newspaper only last winter that some men with masks broke into a lonely tollhouse, just such as this might be, and put the poor tollkeeper on the fire, and held him there, because he would not tell them where the money was; and they did not believe what was the genuine truth, that it had been sent away for safety.'

'Gad a' mercy, Mrs Wright, you make my flesh creep,' shuddered Ellen Bates; 'and I do greatly wish—only I would never leave my sister here alone—that I was going home with you and your good husband to-night.'

'Come home with us both of you, by all means,' exclaimed the blacksmith, with a good-humoured laugh, 'and leave the tollbar to take care of itself.'

'Nay, that would be a pretty thing indeed,' said the widow, gravely shaking her head: 'if we must be murdered, then we must—or at least *I* must, for Ellen of course is free to go if she chooses—but I will do my duty by my employers, let what will come of it.'

'You're an honest woman,' observed the blacksmith approvingly; 'and I hope you will never suffer for sticking to your duty.'

'Ah, she's a martyr to it, as I am always telling her,' remarked Ellen Bates. 'The times and times she gets up in the middle of the night to put that gate open, and let folks pass; and perhaps only to take a ticket from the last gate: and then, after all, to be robbed by burglars—for that's what 'll be the end of it all, I feel sure.'

'And I must say I've got a feeling of the same sort,' added Mrs Alison solemnly: 'I'm not a superstitious person, but that idea has struck me of late, so as I have turned icy cold with it a dozen times.'

'And yet you have been here a many years, ma'am,' said the blacksmith cheerily—'you and your poor husband as was—without being molested in any way, and far less put upon the fire yonder instead of the kettle.'

'Me and my husband has, but not me and Ellen,' answered the widow gloomily.—'Ah, Mrs Wright, that's the great blessing of a husband, believe me, and may you never come to want it: he's such a preservative against thieves. Oh, the many, many times as I've roused up my poor William, and sent him all about our little house here at night to look for 'em, which, thank Heaven, they never did come! But now—why, whenever we hears a noise—Ellen and me—we can only hide our heads under the blankets, and pray to Heaven that nothing may come of it. As for firing my poor dear William's pistol yonder, I could not do it, even if it was loaded, which it has not been ever since his death.'

'But I see your doors and windows are very well guarded,' said the blacksmith, still doing his best to reassure his hostess; 'and before any villain could make his way through so much wood and iron, there is no knowing what help may not come along the road.'

'Ah, but it's only our door and lower windows that are safe, Mr Wright,' broke in Ellen Bates; 'and any wretch has but to take the chicken-ladder from the yard, and set it up against our bedroom window, and he's in the house in two minutes.'

'To be sure the villain might do *that*,' said the blacksmith, in the tone of one convinced against his will.

'Well, I do pity you both,' observed Mrs Wright, in a tone of genuine commiseration.—'But it's getting near dusk, Jacob, and high time for you and me to be going.—And thanks, I am sure, to you, Mrs Alison, and to you, Miss Bates, for a most cheerful and pleasant afternoon.' For the two sisters were understood to bear the expenses of the household, and consequently of any occasion of hospitality, in equal shares.

When the bluff blacksmith and his kindly wife had taken their leave, the tenants of the little tollhouse found themselves (as well they might) more dispirited and apprehensive than ever. Their fears, indeed, grew to such a pitch as to become the very presentiments which they had hitherto perhaps only imagined them to be.

'Something will surely happen to us this very night, Mary,' whispered Ellen, in melodramatic accents; and 'I shouldn't wonder if it did, Ellen,' was the widow's discouraging reply. In short, the two old ladies, who had as yet no experience, as unprotected females, of a tollgate winter, were fairly panic-stricken.

It was not actually snowing; but the wind moaned with icy breath across the sheeted moor, and shook the fast-closed door and windows menacingly, as though it was going to make a

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tempestuous night of it; and each sister was privately thinking how, as the night drew on, those gusts would seem as though human fingers were trying to unhinge the shutters, or unbar the door. It was quite a relief to them when, about six o'clock, they heard the cry of 'Gate,' and the sound of wheels, for they did not fear that robbers would come otherwise than on foot, and every honest face was welcome to them at such a time. What was their joy, then, to find in the present passer-by an old and trusted friend, Mark Palmer, a travelling pedler, but who in this season used a cart to carry his wares, which were of a somewhat costly nature. He threw a rug over his mare, and fastened her to the gate, while he got out to have a crack and a glass of spirits with the sisters. He was a short but resolute-looking fellow, of middle age, whose calling in those times exposed him to more danger than we have any idea of now-a-days; and he carried with him, for protection, an enormous mastiff, who remained in his cart on guard while he entered the house. He could not fail to remark the downcast appearance of the two women, who were eager enough to communicate to him the cause. 'Well, in my opinion,' observed he, when he had heard their woes, 'this alarm of yours is all moonshine. You 're terrifying yourselves about nothing. Why, there's the coach at eleven; and the horse patrol at any time in the night; and you 've strong doors and windows, as your friend the blacksmith has told you: while, I daresay, you have not one-tenth of the money's worth in your cash-box that I have in my cart yonder, and yet I have never been robbed yet—and don't intend to be.'

'We 've more than forty pounds there,' said the widow, pointing to the cupboard, which contained this treasure, as well as her little store of tea and marmalade, 'for it was Wellborough market the day before yesterday, when scores and scores ride through the Bar, and we 've not been able to cross the moor since.'

'Forty pounds is a good deal of money,' said the pedler thoughtfully; 'and affords the greater temptation because it 's all in coin.'

'That is so, indeed, Mr Palmer,' pleaded Ellen Bates, clasping her hands; 'and oh, if you would be so kind, just for this one night—for it 's sure to happen to-night—to stay and protect us: we 've got a stall for the mare; and we could give you a nice little supper, and make you quite comfortable down in the warm kitchen here.'

'It would be a great kindness if you would,' added the widow impressively; 'for, otherwise, I feel certain we shall come to harm.'

'Pooh, pooh, Mrs Alison, you will come to nothing of the kind. I am surprised at you—who are so used to tollkeeping—being so foolishly nervous. It is out of the question that I can stop here. But I tell you *what* I 'll do. I have only to get to Wellborough to-night, and do not apprehend any mischief between here and there; so I 'll leave you my dog Towzer, to keep guard. He 's as good as any constable in the world; and to-morrow—when your unlucky night has passed—I 'll call for him again. But when I 'm gone, just hitch the tollgate back, and don't open door or window again to-night, or the dog may run out, and be after me.'

The two sisters, overwhelmed their friend with thanks, as he strode to the door and whistled to his dog, who at once sprang into the kitchen, which seemed to shrink in its proportions at his presence—he was such a very large dog; half mastiff and half St Bernard; with shoulders as broad as those of a prize-fighter, and hanging jaw, and terrible teeth; and with a growl that was as assuring to its master, when danger threatened, as it was depressing to his antagonist.

'There he is, ladies,' said the pedler, introducing this formidable animal to their notice; 'a dog as has not his equal in the north for courage, and who, when he lays hold of an enemy, has never yet been known to let go, except at his master's voice.—Have you, Towzer?'

Whereupon Towzer brought up from his capacious chest some canine monosyllable, that seemed to sound like 'no,' and which echoed gloomily through the little house, and died away upon the moor outside.

It was likely enough that the mastiff might be all that his master had said of him, yet his presence failed to inspire the two women with confidence, when the rumbling of the friendly wheels upon the hard road had ceased, and they were once more left without human companionship. The wind rose higher and higher, and whirled the frozen snow against the panes, as though pebbles were being thrown at them: and now it shook the doors and shutters as though it were indeed about to burst in, in visible shape, while the lesser gusts sounded like dreadful whisperings of felonious men, who made their plans in concert before attack. When the night-mail went by at a hand gallop—a mere passing vision of winged steeds and wrapped-up figures—matters became still worse, for the tenants of the little tollhouse felt that no well-disposed human creature could now be expected until morning. They retired to their bedroom on the upper floor, taking the dog with them; but they did not undress—for it seemed to their unbalanced minds a matter of certainty that the night would not pass by without some catastrophe. They lay down together on the bed and listened, while the mastiff couched upon the floor, his huge jowl half-hidden in his paws, and wholly undisturbed by the elemental strife without. Once only, when a pane of glass—which, however, they knew had been previously loosened—fell with a crash on the kitchen-floor below, he raised his monstrous head and muttered thunder. Two candles were kept burning, and well lit up the little room. It was about one o'clock that a short lull took place in the tempest, and Mrs Alison distinctly heard the sound of footsteps in the back-yard. Her sister, who had fallen asleep for a few moments, in spite of herself, had not heard the noise, and as usual in such cases, affirmed she had been broad awake, and must have been conscious of the incident, had it occurred. The widow did not waste words in argument, but whispered, in trembling accents: 'Look at the dog.' It was evident enough that Towzer had heard something which required an explanation, for he opened his great eyes, and lifted his ears, although remaining otherwise unmoved. 'They have gone to get the chicken-ladder,' continued the widow in tones of calm despair: 'that is what I always said they would do.' And indeed, in a few minutes, there was a dull thud against the window-sill without, such as would be produced by placing the ends of a ladder upon it. It was not a dark night when the swift-flying clouds permitted, as now, the moon to shew herself; yet neither of the women dared look through the pane. They kept their

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eyes fixed on the dog, in whom their sole hope now rested. The appearance of that magnificent creature was indeed (if they had been in a condition to appreciate it artistically) almost sublime. He had risen in an instant, but without sound, and placed himself close under the threatened spot—the window; every hair in his body appeared alive with excitement; his eyes grew bloodshot, and wore an expression of concentrated fury; but his teeth remained, as yet, in their sheaths, except their white points, which shewed under the wrinkled upper lip.

The heavy shuffling step of some man upon the rounds of the ladder could now be heard—the fall of the knee as well as that of the foot, because the ladder was boarded—and then a hand was placed upon the fragile fastening of the casement.

Then, for the first time, the dog gave audible token of his presence: a hoarse and terrible menace broke from his now open jaws. It was not a growl, and still less like a bark. The man without evidently heard it, for the noise at the window ceased, but he did not seem to recognise it as the thing it was.

'He is sure to have pistols, and will shoot the dog,' whispered Ellen Bates through chattering teeth. She was a lady who always 'speculated for the Fall.'

The widow did not speak, and perhaps could not. She fancied she could hear the very breathing of the man without. After a short pause, the window was slowly lifted to its full height, and a man, whose features were concealed by a piece of black crape, pushed his head and shoulders into the room. The next moment, he uttered a shrill cry of terror, as the huge mastiff sprang at his throat, before he could put up his hands to save it, and bore him headlong to the floor. To see him battling with so terrible a foe, at such a disadvantage, his body half without and half within the room, would, under any other circumstances, have aroused the good women's compassion, but horror and alarm so wholly possessed them that they had no room for pity. They fled from the room, and out of the house, passing close beside the ladder, on the top of which so frightful a combat was proceeding, and dashed across the moor towards the blacksmith's house. The horrid growlings of the dog and the shrieks of the man which filled their ears before they could undo the fastenings of the door, seemed to pursue them across the Waste.

Bareheaded and uncloaked as they were, they heeded not the bitter wind, nor were they conscious of fatigue, nor did they spend the precious breath in speech, but pushed on at their utmost speed. To their great joy, as they drew near the cottage, they beheld a light at the upper window, and congratulated themselves that they would be let in at once, and find shelter and protection from that friendly household. They beat frantically at the door; and presently a quavering voice, through the keyhole, demanded who they were, and what was wanted. They hardly recognised the voice of the blacksmith's wife, and she, on her part, had never heard the accents of her friends so shrill and piteous. The fact was that her goodman was out, and she was almost as frightened at such an unseasonable visit as they were themselves. Then the widow and her sister remembered for the first time how honest Jacob had told them in the afternoon that he should have business in Wellborough that evening; but neither they nor Mrs Wright had had any idea that it would delay him so late, and the fact now seemed deplorable enough to all of them. 'They 've beguiled him to drink at the public-house,' cried Mrs Wright, in injured tones, 'until he thought he might just as well stay where he was till morning; and it ain't the first time, nor yet the second, Mrs Alison. And I am right glad of this—that what has happened to-night (for the fugitives had told their tale) will be a lesson to him not to leave me lonesome here again as long as he lives.' To this sanguine view of man's reformation, it is probable that, under less thrilling circumstances, the experienced widow might have taken exception; but she could think and speak of nothing now save that which she had so lately 'gone through,' and the horrible scene that was perhaps even still being enacted at the tollhouse.

'Nay, but if the dog be anything of a mastiff,' reasoned Mrs Wright, whose father had chanced to be connected with the canine 'fancy,' and who therefore was an authority in the matter, 'he has either killed the man by this time, or the man has killed him, and made off with the toll-money. Unless he shot him, bless you, or could have got at him to cut his throat, you may depend on 't he 's a dead man.'

'Dearey me, I wonder how it has turned out!' ejaculated Ellen Bates.

'I wonder too!' echoed the widow. 'If, as you say, there can now be no danger, Mrs Wright'——

'Lord a' mercy! you ain't thinking of going back again?' interrupted Ellen.

'I will go, if Mrs Wright will go,' answered the widow resolutely; 'that is, when the daylight comes.'

And rather than be left alone, Ellen Bates agreed to accompany the other two.

Accordingly, at the first gray streaks of dawn, the three women, though with beating hearts, crossed the moor to the tollhouse, against the upper window of which the ladder was still reared. With fearful steps, they ventured into the kitchen, where all things seemed undisturbed, and were about to go up-stairs, concluding that both dog and man had fled, when Ellen Bates pointed to the ceiling, on the white surface of which appeared a huge red stain, which had evidently soaked through from the floor above. At the same moment, a noise from the same direction seemed to freeze their blood. It was the sound of some heavy body being dragged over the boards, accompanied by a low and savage growling.

'The dog has killed the wretched man, and is worrying the body,' said Mrs Wright in a hoarse whisper: 'it is just what they do with vermin.'

'This is too horrible!' ejaculated the widow, with her foot on the stairs. 'The mastiff will not hurt me, and, at all events, I will do my best to stop it.'

It was in vain that the others tried to dissuade her. She overcame her terrors sufficiently to enable her to reach the open chamber-door, where a frightful spectacle presented itself. The burglar, a large and powerfully built man, was on the floor, quite dead; while the mastiff, with his teeth still fast in the throat of his foe, and growling savagely, was dragging the mangled corpse hither and thither over the floor. The body of the dog was interposed between his victim, so that his face, from which the black crape had been torn, was at first invisible, but the next movement of the animal

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revealed it. As it did so, a terrible shriek burst from the lips of Mrs Wright, who had followed close upon the widow's footsteps, and she fell heavily upon the floor in a swoon; for the would-be thief that lay dead before her was no other than her own husband, the Blacksmith!

THE DOMESTICATION OF THE OSTRICH.

The late M. Isidore Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, in his remarkable work, *The Acclimatisation and Domestication of Useful Animals*, mentions the ostrich, the nandow, the cassowary, the emeu, as deserving of attention, on account of their excellent flesh, their enormous eggs, and their valuable feathers. Because of their alimentary qualities, he applies to them the new term of butcher-meat birds. The resemblance of the ostrich to the ruminating quadrupeds was observed by the ancients. Aristotle asserted that it was partly bird and partly quadruped, and Pliny thought that it might almost be regarded as belonging to the class of beasts.

Though the ostrich and the cassowary be natives of warm climates, their acclimatisation presents no peculiar difficulties; and that the nandow and the emeu can reproduce in Europe has been demonstrated. The emeu has bred in France, Belgium, England, and elsewhere, and exhibited an extraordinary power of resisting cold. At Paris, one lived for several years in the open air, refusing the shelter provided for it, and sleeping in winter half-covered with snow, protected by its impenetrable fleece of feathers. Its flesh, according to M. Florent Prévost, may be compared to that of the ox, and would be valuable as butcher-meat, seeing that the thigh of an emeu may weigh more than twenty-two pounds; the flesh of a young one, of from fifteen to eighteen months, when it is full grown, is highly esteemed, the taste being something intermediate between that of turkey and pork. Its eggs, one of which is equal to a dozen hen-eggs, are very delicate, and of an exquisite flavour. Its skin, covered with abundance of down, serves for the making of valuable carpets, and its pliant and graceful plumes are used for ornament. A further idea of the value of this bird will be formed, when we add that for its domestication the Imperial Acclimatisation Society has offered a medal of fifteen hundred francs. There is a special reason why persevering attempts should be made in order that it may be domesticated in Europe: it is one of the five species of wingless birds still existing, but destined to speedy extinction, unless efforts be made to introduce them into countries to which they are not natives.

While the acclimatisation of a bird so hardy as the emeu seemed to present no serious obstacles, that of the ostrich was hardly to be expected without long delay and much pains; and yet this apparently hopeless experiment is already so far advanced as to justify the belief that ere long the ostrich will be domesticated in Europe. It has been much promoted by the zeal of two members of the Imperial Society of Acclimatisation—M. Gosse, a learned physician and physiologist at Geneva; and M. Chagot, a Parisian merchant. The latter gentleman, observing that the ostrich was becoming scarce, and being desirous to prevent the extermination of a bird whose feathers are an important branch of commerce, generously founded a prize of two thousand francs for the multiplication and domestication of the ostrich in France, Algeria, or Senegal.

Unsuccessful attempts at ostrich-rearing have been made both at Marseille and Paris; but better fortune has marked those at Florence and Algiers. In 1857, M. Hardy of Algiers was on the point of succeeding in his experiment: a pair of ostriches began to sit upon their eggs, but soon forsook them, in consequence of the nest being drenched with rain. To prevent the recurrence of such an accident, he raised a hillock of sand where the nest had been, in the hope that a second deposit of eggs would be made in it. About the middle of May, a new nest was scraped in the top of the hillock; in the end of June, the birds began to sit a few hours daily; on the 2d July, they took to sitting with greater regularity; and on 2d September, a young one (a female) was seen walking about. This was the first authentic instance of an ostrich born in captivity. It throve so well, that when ten months old it was as big as its parents.

In 1858, the same pair of birds hatched nine out of twelve eggs; and, during subsequent years, M. Hardy was equally fortunate in rearing young ostriches from others in his possession. In ten years (1857 to 1867), forty-two couples laid 875 eggs, and hatched 162 young ones, of which, at the end of three months, 103 survived. M. Hardy gives interesting details of the profit on his flock of twenty-one adult male and female ostriches in 1866. The total was 5918 francs, 20 cents; or 281 francs, 80 cents per head. These birds consume daily five hundred grammes of barley and grass, and, failing this, *opuntia* cut into pieces. This food, including attendance, does not exceed twenty cents each per day, or seventy-three francs a year. The feathers furnish the greater part of the profit: they are sold by public auction, and according to weight. Fifty wing-feathers, selected for the Universal Exhibition, were valued at 199 francs, 50 cents. When ostriches are so abundant as to be sold in the meat-market, there will, of course, be a new item of profit from the sale of the flesh.

The acclimatisation of the ostrich has been prosecuted with like success in the Zoological Garden of San Donato at Florence, at the instance of Prince Demidoff. From the interesting account which the prince has given of two hatchings, we learn that the first incubation was conducted solely by the male; the female only coming near the eggs when he retired to eat, and turning them over carefully, after which she retired. The second hatching was carried on by the male and the female in turn, the greater part of the toil, however, being left to him. On one occasion, during a torrent of rain, when one could not have preserved the nest, they both sat on it. The second hatching also exhibited this

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pleasing feature, indicative of domestication—the birds were tamer, and permitted the approach of strangers.

On account of its comparatively high northern latitude, 45 degrees, its height above the sea, 645 feet, and its average temperature, 53 degrees Fahrenheit, Grenoble must be regarded as furnishing the most interesting instance of ostrich-rearing. In April 1864, in the Acclimatisation Garden of the Zoological Society of the Alps, a male ostrich had scraped out a hole a foot and a half deep, and more than three feet broad, for the reception of the eggs, whose coming his instinct had taught him to expect. The laying began in May; two eggs being produced at an interval of six days, but both were broken and eaten by the female. A second laying commenced 15th May, and proceeded regularly, at an interval of two days, up to 6th June, when she had produced eleven well-formed eggs. A third laying produced only two small and deformed eggs, which was an evidence that the laying was over. The laying took place with remarkable regularity every second day, at three o'clock afternoon, without a variation of ten minutes before or after. From 25th May, the male wished to hatch, and sometimes sat on the eggs; but after 30th May, he only left the nest in order to allow the female to lay. After the last egg was laid, the female sat on the eggs for a few minutes in the middle of the day; but the male always sat at least twenty hours a day.

This curious incubation proceeded thus. Every morning at seven o'clock the ostriches were turned out of their enclosed lodge, in order to have a gambol before breakfast, which generally consisted of bread, barley, and grass. The repast being terminated, at the order of the woman in charge of them, they returned to the nest, from which they were not to stir for the next twenty-four hours. They were as easily managed as Cochin fowls, and never once rebelled.

Of the eleven eggs, two were broken before incubation commenced. On the forty-fourth day after regular sitting began, a young one was seen at the edge of the nest. Impatient to see what the nest contained, M. Bouteille obliged the ostriches to leave it. It had two young ones not yet free of the shell. Of the seven remaining eggs, three were ascertained to be barren, and taken away, and four doubtful were left. As soon as permitted, the male resumed his place on the nest, as if it had not been touched. At the end of four days, the eggs were broken, and found to contain embryos dead at different ages.

The day after they were born, the young ones slipped from below the male, and began to peck sand as well as a paste of hard eggs, bread, and lettuce, which was prepared for their parents, so that there was no anxiety as to what to feed them on. At first, these young ostriches were about the size of a female wild-duck, which they also resembled in form; but in a fortnight, they had nearly doubled in size, and accompanied their parents everywhere, pecking at the sand, and running under their legs when they heard them eating. The female, which paid such little heed to her eggs, was a most anxious mother, keeping her young ones constantly in sight, and instantly running to them in answer to their call, which resembles that of a young turkey when frightened.

These semi-domesticated ostriches therefore do not deserve to be charged with lack of natural affection, an accusation which Old Testament writers prefer against the ostrich of the wilderness; neither are they so stupid as that is said to be. They were shy, but as capable of becoming attached as most of our domesticated animals: thus, at Grenoble, the woman who had charge of them took the young ones into her arms without the parents shewing displeasure, whereas, at the sight of a strange man or animal, they got into a fury.

M. Bouteille thus concludes his account of them: 'I believe this experiment of importance, because of its practical interest. It is, in fact, a hatching and rearing in a courtyard which I have been describing, and in this respect it is new; and I do not believe that such a result has been obtained in any latitude so far north as ours.'

The same gentleman relates the continuation of the experiment up to 1867, and from his account we gather the following particulars.

In 1865, ostrich-rearing at Grenoble up to the tenth month was successful; but then three young ones, as big as their parents, died, in consequence of a singular accident, the cause and the remedy of which are alike unknown. Frightful fractures and dislocations occurred even when the animals were not in violent motion; in one instance, while a workman was at hand, and heard not the slightest noise. Thinking that this extreme fragility of bone might be due to want of calcareous material in their food, that was supplied, but not in time to prevent the last accident. This fragility has likewise been noticed at Madrid, but apparently not to the same extent.

But though these experiments be not all *couleur de rose*, M. Bouteille thinks there is no reason to be discouraged. 'I have,' he observes, 'now become convinced that the reproduction of the domesticated ostrich is a completely settled fact; this domestication is not only interesting to science, but also to those who occupy themselves in finding out new alimentary and industrial resources. M. Saint-Hilaire thought that the ostrich might become a butcher-meat bird. Our too frequent accidents have enabled us to know this from experience. The flesh of the ostrich is abundant, substantial, well tasted, and something like the flavour of the hare. It may be prepared like that of the ox or the hare, stewed or jugged; as a roast, which is the test of good meats, it leaves nothing to be desired. All of the many who have eaten it at Grenoble found it excellent. The flesh of the ostrich is not the only edible product of the animal; the three layings in 1866, gave us 45 eggs, weighing in all 154 pounds. Prepared in different ways, they have always been found very good. An ostrich-egg on a dish looks very appetising, from the whiteness of its albumen, in the middle of which the yolk shines like an eye of the brightest yellow. As an omelet, this egg in no respect differs from that of a fowl, but its yellow is incomparable for the preparation of creams.

'After the alimentary products come the feathers, which are not less important. The plumes of our adult ostriches, after moult, were sold for 300 francs (L.11, 18s. 1d.). I shall end this letter with some figures which, I hope, will prove that the rearing of the ostrich may be profitable, even in France. In our enclosure where the animals are liberally fed, the annual cost of food is from 80 to 90 francs each. Taking 1866, which was the least productive of the three years of our experiment, the plumes produced 300 francs, and the 45 eggs

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180 francs, which is a low price, as the shells alone sell for 3 francs each. From this gain of 480 francs, deducting 200 francs for food and keep, we have a gain of 280 francs (L.11, 2s. 3d.) on two adult ostriches. But taking the average of three years, and reckoning the young ones sold, the profit amounts to 560 francs (L.22, 4s. 6d.).'

These details of the profits of ostrich-rearing, even under the disadvantage of a European climate, are sufficient to excite attention. No notice is taken of the industrial value of this huge bird: as it can carry a man with more than the speed of a swift horse, we do not see why, in 'the good time coming,' the people of sundry localities should not have their letters conveyed by ostrich-post; or why a morning ride on the bird should not be the means of acquiring an appetite big enough to make a sensible impression on an omelet *à l'autruche* of the respectable weight of some three or four pounds.

But while such results are possible in Europe, they are likely to be exceeded in Africa, the native country of the ostrich. We shall therefore conclude this notice with a brief allusion to its domestication at the Cape of Good Hope.

If the attempts of the French in Algiers to prosecute ostrich-rearing merit attention, we are more specially concerned to know how similar experiments succeed in the southern extremity of the African continent, in our colony at the Cape. Our information is derived from a communication of M. Héritte, French consul at Cape Town.

Although only of recent introduction among a few of the agriculturists at the Cape, the domestication of the ostrich is so zealously prosecuted, that there is a considerable flock of this bird. At the age of from six to eight months, the young ones are left at liberty night and day. They provide for themselves, and only get, now and then, a small quantity of maize, or other food, in order to attach them to the place where they are reared, as without this they would become very wild. They are very fond of the prickly pear, and of the seed of the aloe when the leaves have fallen. The young ones are fed on leaves, cut small, all kinds of vegetables, carrots, lettuce, thistle, and the prickly shrub, *Dubbeljes doorn*. When three days old, they get, besides these plants and vegetables, a little maize or barley. They are kept warm at night on straw, hay, or wool, in a warm room—a kitchen, for instance—are never permitted to go out till the sun is up, and are supplied with food during the whole day.

The ostriches are chiefly valued for their feathers, which are not plucked till they are eighteen months old, and during the months of August and September, corresponding to our February and March. The best ostrich-feathers of commerce come from birds living in the most arid and sandy regions, where there are few prickly shrubs capable of injuring the plumes. The depreciation of those taken from the domesticated animal is reckoned at thirty per cent.; nevertheless, the feathers of tame ostriches are of such value as to claim attention. Last year, one person received in London L.98, 14s. 2d. for the feathers of eighteen young ostriches, though in bad condition, having, from want of experience, been plucked at an improper season.

An ostrich-egg is deemed equal to twenty-four hen-eggs, and keeps long, owing to the thickness of the shell. At the Cape, ostrich-eggs are much used in the making of very good and economical cakes.

When we add that, at the Cape, ostrich-rearing is believed to be almost as profitable as keeping merino sheep, we have said enough to demonstrate that this is a species of industry which may be advantageously prosecuted in many portions of the globe, including not a few British possessions.

THE BASTILLE.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

THE idea commonly entertained of the Bastille is that within its precincts it combined all the horrors of our Tower, the Star Chamber, and Newgate; with the additional aggravation, that its dungeons were crowded, and that the greater number of the prisoners were innocent victims of arbitrary power, exercised at the instigation of private individuals, for the gratification of their malice. In short, the word was understood by a past generation to imply all that was odious and horrible in connection with prisons; and when the opposition to the erection of union workhouses was agitating the land from end to end, it was thought that everything evil that could be said of them was comprised in the denomination 'Poor-law Bastilles.'

An examination of the records concerning the Bastille preserved in the French archives shews that this impression, though not far from the truth, was greatly exaggerated in regard to the number of persons who were imprisoned in it.

Previous to the Revolution, the populace had as little reason to care what passed within its walls as the people of London had in what was done in the Tower, when it too was a state prison. The prison the Parisians had more cause to abhor was the Bicêtre, being that in which the commonalty were shut up; and we gather that this was really the case. What the Bastille really was, and the reason why all the proceedings that took place in it were surrounded with such deep mystery, can now be ascertained from the investigations of M. Ravaisson, who has spent a lifetime among the dusty records of past centuries in investigating the history of this fortress.

Most of the dramatic stories that are still current in every European language were manufactured immediately after the taking of the Bastille, and nothing is more easy to conceive than that the more highly coloured these narratives were the better the chance of the book obtaining a large sale; hence the pathetic tales of Pellisson's spider, crushed by the foot of the brutal jailer, according to Delille; the cat of which Madame de Staël wrote; and the rat tamed by the younger Crébillon, who, if he deserved his imprisonment for no other cause, deserved it on account of his writings. As to the discovery of iron cages, of skeletons, and many other horrors, they for the most part existed only in the imaginations of the narrators; and as regards the human remains found on the demolition of the building, and which gave matter for so much sensational writing at the time, it is now shewn that they were in the part of the building

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occupied by the surgeon; there is nothing to prove that they were the bodies of prisoners, and that they had not died from natural causes. So far as this matter is concerned, it was settled by the declaration signed by three competent persons appointed to inquire into it, which was published in the *Moniteur* of the 5th May 1790. The same holds good with respect to the assertions of the discovery of a scaffold, of instruments of torture, and of a torture-chamber in one of the towers where the 'question' was administered. It is now found that no authentic evidence exists of the prisoners in the Bastille having been subjected to the brutal tortures that were undoubtedly administered elsewhere. The 'simple question,' by water and the boot, was occasionally employed, and these were bad enough; but we do not find proof anywhere that we can implicitly rely upon of any individual having been punished in this way, except in the case of a Protestant preacher named Langlois, whose case, as far back as the close of the reign of Louis XIV., is detailed in a work entitled *Two Years' Mission at St Petersburg*, by Count Ferrière Perey.

The first and primary motive for building the Bastille was the defence of Paris. The first stone was laid on the 22d April 1367, and the original design was for a gateway, similar to many that might formerly have been seen in many places in England, and especially on the coast, where some of them still remain in very good condition, notwithstanding the time that has elapsed since they were built. The two towers which composed this gateway were exceedingly strong, and so also were the walls erected to connect these towers with two others built subsequently. Surrounding these towers was a moat twenty-five feet in depth, which at first was considered a sufficient defence against a surprise; but in a few years afterwards, when the dungeons contained in the fortress had become the receptacle for prisoners of mark, this fosse was bordered by citadels, outside of which another ditch was dug, beyond which was the boulevard, and beyond that again another deep excavation; on the completion of which, together with the fortress of Vincennes, Paris was not only well protected against enemies without, but the inhabitants themselves were under the domination of the huge edifices, which thus served to quell the turbulence of those who had previously given the ruling sovereign so much disquietude and humiliation. Within the succeeding two hundred years, it was still further enlarged, until it comprised eight towers; but from 1660 down to the time of its destruction, no change was made in its dimensions.

When civil war in France was at an end, and Paris was no longer in danger from sudden onslaughts, the Bastille was devoted entirely to the purpose of a state prison: the regulations were drawn up which fixed the mode of procedure, and which were adhered to with such unvarying tenacity as added not a little to the dread its very name inspired among that class who were liable to be immured in its dungeons.

The first link in the chain of proceedings was the *lettre-de-cachet*, which was signed by the king's own hand, and countersigned by the minister of Paris; and after the arrest of the individual specified in it, it was endorsed by the governor of the Bastille, and added to the records of the institution. Curiously enough, the privilege, as it was considered, was occasionally granted to the person named in the lettre-de-cachet to carry it with his own hand to the governor; but the usual course was to transmit it to the lieutenant-general of police, who nominated the officers on whom the duty was devolved of actually performing the arrest, their grade varying according to the rank of the prisoner. When arrested, the criminal was placed in a carriage, the principal officer concerned in his arrest taking his place by his side. On arriving at the precincts of the prison, the carriage stopped at the entrance of what had very much the appearance of a blind alley. The sentinel stationed at this point challenged the party, and on receiving a satisfactory reply, he raised the bayonet he had lowered to bar their advance, which was the signal to the cavalcade to proceed past the half-dozen shops, the barracks, and stables to a gate situated at the end of a drawbridge, usually kept raised. The rattling of the chains which accompanied the lowering of this bridge must have driven the blood from many a cheek which would not have paled on a battle-field. As soon as it had been lowered to its place, the prisoner and those who accompanied him descended, and proceeded on foot to a second drawbridge, situated before the great gate of the fortress. This obstacle passed, the party arrived at a last drawbridge, also defended by a guard of soldiers, one of whom constantly paraded backward and forward between two portcullises or gates, which formed a kind of cage. Passing through these, the prisoner and his guard found themselves in a large open space, where the inferior class of prisoners were permitted to take exercise.

Facing the entrance was a massive tower, flanked by two courts, and divided as to the basement by a passage, of which a fair idea may be formed by the passage which runs through the Horse Guards' building in Whitehall, only that it was narrower and even more gloomy than that dungeon-like tunnel. The windows of this tower, as we must call them in default of any other name, were mere slits in the wall. The ground floor contained the kitchens and other domestic offices, and above these were apartments usually occupied by prisoners of no importance; though they were not always so occupied, for the Cardinal de Rohan, the same who was mixed up in the mysterious affair of the queen's necklace, was confined therein. On the second floor lived the king's lieutenant, whose principal occupation was the watchful observation of the two courts above mentioned. The remainder of the repulsive-looking edifice was devoted to apartments in which were stored the records, and the property the prisoners happened to have about them when brought in; those in which they underwent examination; and others connected with the performance of the duties of the law officers. Indeed, the work done within its walls was in keeping with the dismal effect produced by the first sight of it on the minds of those who passed through the gates; the only relief to the otherwise blank aspect of the structure being the clock, though even this was surrounded by emblems not by any means calculated to lessen the sinister appearance of the tower itself, being supported by two figures loaded with chains, beneath which were the rings which assisted in supporting the

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scaffold on which the Marshal de Biron was executed.

It may easily be imagined that the unfortunate —whose arrival was announced by the doleful sound of a deep-toned bell—did not require many seconds to notice the peculiar features of this dreaded prison. The procession to the gate was swelled by the governor himself, or the major, followed by a body of jailers, according to the rank of the criminal. The only sounds heard as this procession moved along were the jingling of the keys and arms. Everything was done according to system; the march was slow and solemn, as though it were attending a funeral. Before the gate was opened, an inspection was made of the new occupant, whose personal appearance was carefully compared with the description that had been given to the king's lieutenant. Then the receipt for the delivery was signed; the few questions that had to be put having been asked in a low voice, the whole party proceeded to the residence of the governor. Here the prisoner had to enter his name in a register. If he was a man of rank, the king's lieutenant himself despoiled him of everything he had in his pockets or about his person; an operation that was performed with far less gentleness by a sergeant or a jailer in the case of prisoners of an inferior grade. The articles of which the prisoners were relieved were, together with their clothes and papers, if they happened to have any, entered in a book with the most scrupulous minuteness, and deposited in the store devoted to their reception; unless the prisoner was to undergo an immediate examination, in which case they were provisionally placed in a box, which was then fastened and sealed. Three times in the course of his life did the Duke de Richelieu endure this process, and another prisoner, Lenglet-Dufresnoy, no less than six times. When this formality had been completed, the prisoner was led away to the apartment to which he was consigned. To some favoured individuals, rooms in the governor's residence, or on the first stories of the towers, were assigned; to the least favoured, a dungeon.

The total number of chambers for the reception of prisoners was forty-two—thirty-seven in the towers, and the rest in the walls that connected them with each other. In the foundation of the towers were the dungeons, and of a most horrible description these were. Wet, dark, and foul, the only opening for the admission of light and air being a narrow slit in the immensely thick walls opening on the ditch, and tenanted by crowds of rats, the miserable wretch who was doomed to confinement in one of these having to fight incessantly for his life with the hungry and ferocious creatures about him. The records of the Bastille contain several petitions from the prisoners confined in these dreary dungeons. Between these latter horrible abodes and the apartments in which the great state prisoners like Richelieu were confined, there were others of an intermediate character, in which the prisoners were exposed to the rigours of the cold in winter, and the heat of summer endured under circumstances which made it almost suffocating.

So far from a large number of prisoners having been found in the Bastille when it was captured, a careful inquiry proved that only seven were found, and of these there were some who, like those confined in Newgate, as spoken of by Dickens in his account of the breaking open of that prison, had become so habituated to their quarters, that they complained of being disturbed by their liberators; the smallness of the number considerably staggering the insurgents, who expected to find hundreds rotting in dungeons, and who consequently began to doubt whether their liberation had not been procured somewhat dearly at the price of eighty dead and seventy-three wounded. In fact, only seven or eight chambers were found furnished. A document has indeed been discovered, signed by M. Breteuil, ordering that eighteen others should be prepared, but there was nothing to prove that this order was carried into effect; yet this absence of proof does not of course establish that the number of persons imprisoned in the Bastille did not exceed the number indicated by the small number of apartments provided, as a bundle of straw or a mattress could as easily have been thrown down as removed, without leaving traces of the chamber having been used.

Other evidence, however, exists on this point, that of Linguet, for example, who says that according to the agreement between the government and the governor of the prison, the former were bound to pay him for provisioning fifteen prisoners, even when there were not so many under his charge; the amount he received being about eight shillings a day of English money. It certainly was not out of this allowance that the governor made the large fortune he usually accumulated during his tenure of office, a fortune very hardly earned, seeing that he was never permitted to leave his post. The source whence he derived this was from prisoners who were able to pay for indulgences in the matter of lodging and treatment, and from supplying them with provisions, which was sanctioned by the regulations, that fixed the tariff at one hundred sous for inferior prisoners, ten livres for the clergy and those of the middle class, fifteen livres for members of the parliament, and from twenty-four to thirty-six livres a day for a lieutenant-general or a field-marshal. Besides, a register found when the prison was taken shewed that in the course of forty-six years only two thousand prisoners were received, giving an average of forty-four a year; and even half this number must have been badly accommodated, for notwithstanding the space occupied by the prison, the walls were extremely thick, and the two courts along which the cells were ranged were very small, the largest being but one hundred and two feet in length by seventy-two in breadth, and the lesser seventy-two in length by forty-two in width. From these cells the prisoners could see but a small patch of sky about the size of a blanket, and it must have been seldom that a current of fresh air made its way into the interior. The hardship of an imprisonment in such dens was somewhat mitigated, in the case of most of the prisoners, by the permission to take exercise in the courts. Comparatively fortunate was the man among them who was lodged in one of the chambers about midway between the basement and the sky of the seven stories comprised in the huge towers. The entrance to the staircases in these was barred by two doors, each having a different lock, and the communication between the several stories was cut off by a strong iron grating. The cells also had two doors to each, varying from two to three inches in thickness. Most of the floors of the cells were also double,

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the space between being carefully filled up, to prevent communication with the prisoners above or below. At the slightest appearance of a crack in the ceiling, the plaster was renewed, and once every week it was the custom to make a careful examination of the cells, in which both sight and sound were exercised with the utmost circumspection. The furniture of these cells, though limited to bare necessity, was sufficient; it consisted of a bed with paillasse and mattress, one or two tables, a like number of chairs, a candlestick, a jug, a fork, a spoon, and a pewter mug. To guard the fortress in which these few prisoners were confined, there was a garrison of about eighty veteran soldiers, which was strengthened in times of trouble.

As regards the supply of food to the prisoners who were not immured in the dungeons, it was abundant; on this head, we have the testimony of Queen Anne of Austria's chamberlain, in addition to other sources of information. Nor were the prisoners prevented from meeting and conversing in the courtyard, so that the garrulous old veteran, Marshal Bassompierre, who, according to his own account, had been a great favourite among the ladies in his time, had the opportunity of continuing to try his fascinating powers on a young lady who was also a prisoner. To be more precise as to the quantity of food allowed to prisoners, we may quote the evidence of Constantin de Renneville, who says they had three meals a day, and at each of these meals several dishes. At dinner, they had an allowance of two bottles of wine, either burgundy or champagne, with an extra allowance on certain days observed as festivals; in short, so liberal was the diet that some of the prisoners, like the Englishman under similar circumstances, proposed to take a part of it in money, and to share it with the governor; a proposition which, if it had been acceded to, would not have been to the taste of the jailers, who were able to feast abundantly on the portions left in the dishes as they carried them down-stairs, and whose slow steps were a subject of jesting to the men they assisted in guarding.

Under the eyes of the guards, prisoners were allowed, during the hours they spent in the courts, to make up little parties at cards, ninepins, chess, billiards, and other games; to join in music and singing; to keep animals of various kinds, birds (not excepting pigeons), until it was discovered that they were used as go-betweens from those within to their friends without the walls. These indulgences, however, which were so freely accorded through a long period after it had ceased to be regarded in any other light than as a prison, were one by one withdrawn, until at last the keeping of any living creature became an illicit indulgence, and the only source of amusement that was never withdrawn was the supply of books from the library. The permission to commit their thoughts to writing was only obtained with difficulty, and the sheets of paper with which they were furnished were carefully numbered and initialed by the king's lieutenant. No opposition was ever made to the free performance of what they regarded as their religious duties.

Nor were the prisoners, at one time, entirely cut off from the sight of the world outside the walls. It is on record that they were allowed to see from the tops of the towers the people passing below, and could therefore exchange signs of friendly greeting; but as to communications between them that was impossible; the jailers were incorruptible; and so ignorant were the prisoners of what passed in the world, that when the overthrow of the Bastille took place, one of those liberated asked if Louis XV. was still alive.

THE LUUR.

I WAS travelling late one summer evening through one of the most lonely and picturesque valleys of the western coast of Norway. It was impassable for all save the sure-footed mountain-pony of that country, so that I preferred often to trudge a few miles on foot, my luggage, rods, &c. being strapped on the pony's back. It was one of those delicious evenings that are to be found, I think, only in northern latitudes; for, though it was close on midnight, the sun still shone on the tops of the mountains that hemmed in either side of the narrow valley; while below was quite light enough to read the smallest print with ease. My guide and pony were about a couple of hundred yards in front of me, for I loitered behind every now and then to admire the grandeur of the scene, or to watch the ever-shifting light on a distant glacier, which looked more like a sea of opal than anything else to which I can compare it. Indeed, every yard I advanced, there was something fresh to wonder at. Now it was a torrent falling perpendicularly downward from the heights above, and losing itself long ere it reached the bottom in masses of feathery spray, affording a wondrous display of aquatic fireworks; now it was a grand waterfall, leaping and dashing down the fjeld side in impetuous haste to reach the river, that fretted and chafed along like an angry serpent at the bottom of the valley. And yet, with all the din and noise of the roaring flood, there was a deathly, oppressive stillness. Not a breath of wind stirred, not a sound of animal life was heard, save here and there the tinkling of a distant cow-bell, the whirring of a goatsucker on the wing, or the splash of a salmon in the river below.

All at once, however, I was startled by hearing a loud though melodious sound far above my head among the rocks. It reminded me more of the Alpine horn than anything I had ever heard.

'What is that?' I inquired as I hastened on to catch up my guide.

'It is a *luur*!' was the reply. A *luur*, I must inform my readers, is a long horn made of birchen bark, which the peasants use to collect their cattle. It struck me at the time as being strange for people to be out at that time of night so late with their cattle; but my attention was soon diverted to other objects, and I daresay I dismissed the strangeness of the incident from my thoughts with the reflection that nothing could in truth be strange in a country where day and night were one.

Before long, I arrived at the farmhouse where I was expected, and where I intended staying a few weeks salmon-fishing. Late though it was, my host was waiting to receive me. He was a middle-aged man, with long flaxen hair flowing down to his shoulders, and was dressed in full national costume. He greeted me in true Norwegian style, and after expressing his fears that I must be weary, led the way into the house, where an ample supper was laid out for me. I had an introduction to him from a friend of his in Christiania, who promised

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me some excellent fishing, if I would consent to put up with a rough life for a few weeks.

Ingebrast—such was the name in which my host rejoiced—was a tall broad-built man. His features were finely chiselled; in fact, he was a person who could not fail to attract attention wherever he might be. He was a widower, but his only daughter, Ingeleiv, lived at home with him, and managed his domestic affairs for him. These two, with some half-dozen farm-servants and their families, who lived in huts close by the farm-house, formed the whole population to be found for a distance of several miles. Ingeleiv was a true specimen of a Norwegian mountain beauty: tall in figure like her father, with the same auburn hair, and blue melting eyes, she presented a picture that an artist would have loved to paint.

'Twas beauty truly blent, whose red and white
Nature's own sweet and cunning hand laid on.

There was a something, too, about her that attracted my attention; perhaps it was her bearing, approaching almost to stateliness, that struck me. At all events, she seemed immeasurably superior to what a Norwegian farmer's daughter usually is.

But before retiring to bed, my host informed me, to my surprise, that he was a lineal descendant of the great Harald Haarfager ('Fair-haired'). His family, he said with an air of conscious dignity, had never mingled with any who were not of royal blood. He was the last of his race, and before he died, he hoped to see his daughter married to a cousin of his, who lived I forget where.

How strange it all seemed to me! There, amid the fastnesses of the mountains, to meet with a man who could trace his descent from kings whose names have left a stamp on the page of history. Turning these things over and over in my mind, I soon fell into a peaceful slumber. How long I slept I know not, but I was awakened by hearing the same plaintive sound of the luur on the mountain side opposite. I sprang out of bed, and throwing the window open, distinctly heard a voice calling or rather singing in a melodious key: 'How *is* ——?' And here followed a word I could not catch; and then another voice at a long distance off took up the strain, and made some reply in the same harmonious key. I listened to hear it repeated, but all was still; so again seeking my couch, I resumed my dream about monstrous salmon and countless herds of reindeer.

Next morning, I was soon down; and as Ingeleiv was laying out breakfast for me in the large kitchen, her father came in from seeing after his farm, and made earnest and polite inquiries about the way in which I had passed the night.

'Famously!' I answered; 'but some of your people were early astir, for I could hear two voices on yonder mountains as if after the cows;' and putting my hands to my mouth I imitated as well as I could the sound I had heard.

'Strange!' he answered, 'for I have no cattle on the mountain this summer.—Did you hear it, Inga?' turning to his daughter.

But Inga's averted face, which was the colour of scarlet, plainly shewed me that she did know something *more* about it than her father knew. So thinking it might be a lover, and that they were obliged to adopt this method of courting, or of 'luring' each other, I quickly turned the subject and spoke of other things. From that day, however, Ingeleiv avoided me, and thus deprived me of any opportunity of finding out the mystery of the luur.

I will not fatigue my reader by dwelling on the sport I had with the salmon, nor yet on the excursions I made after reindeer in company with my host, who was a clever hunter and capital shot; suffice it to say, I thoroughly enjoyed myself. But, alas! it was time for me to think of leaving; and I was the more sorry, because I could see that Inga was evidently unhappy, and wore about her pretty and formerly cheerful face an air which betokened great mental suffering.

It was late in the evening when I bade my kind friends adieu, for I wished again to traverse that mountain valley by night. My *skyts-boy* (they call them all boys in Norway, whether they be old men, or even of the opposite gender), or post-boy, was an intelligent youth of two or three and twenty years. We soon became great friends, and in less than half an hour he had communicated the history of his life to me. 'He had been educated as a schoolmaster,' he said, 'but was now only a labouring servant on an adjacent farm.'

'Everybody seems to fall instead of rise in these parts,' I thought to myself, when he had concluded his tale. Our road lay up a steep rocky path. Carl—such was the lad's name—was leading the pony in front by the bridle, while I as usual was sauntering behind to catch a last long look of the lovely scene, when again I was aroused from my reverie by seeing him place his hands to his mouth, and directing his voice towards the mountains, send forth a plaintive sound. In a few seconds I heard it thrown back from the rocks, and should doubtless have thought it was but the echo, had not the waving of a woman's garment two hundred feet above my head attracted my eye.

'I will find out this mystery before I go,' I said aloud, for, indeed, so engrossed had I been with fishing and shooting, that it had quite escaped my memory. 'Carl,' I said, 'what is that?'

He seemed quite taken aback at the suddenness of the question, but laughed it off by saying he was only calling for amusement.

'But I tell you, some one answered you up yonder; and see, she is waving her hand towards us. I will go and see; do you wait below.'

And in a few moments I had clambered up the hillside to where I had fancied I had seen the woman standing. She was no longer visible; but I observed a low hut built of leafy boughs, a few paces off, nearly hidden behind a rocky ledge.

Carl now caught me up, and tried to dissuade me from entering; but the despair depicted on his face only made me the more resolved to carry out my determination, so, pushing him back, I opened the door and entered the hut.

A strange sight met my eye. On the middle of the floor was a little cradle, in which a rosy-cheeked baby lay sleeping, while kneeling down by its side, as if keeping guard over her child's slumber, was its mother. She raised her head on my approach, and I saw, to my astonishment, that it was none other than the pretty daughter of my host. 'Ingeleiv!' I said, 'you here!' as the whole mystery now lay open before me.

'Oh, tell him, Carl!' she answered, bowing her head down, as if afraid to look me in the face—'tell him! I know he is a kind man, and may help us!'

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Thus solicited, Carl narrated to me the following touching tale.

They had been brought up together, he said, from childhood, and what wonder if they became all in all to each other. He knew he was not worthy of her, and that Ingebræt would never give his daughter to him — a common farming-man. But he would make himself worthy of her; and so he studied hard at his books, and with the help of the good pastor, had hoped to be able to take a post as schoolmaster (an office held in great respect among the peasantry). But it was all in vain; he had no royal blood in his veins; and neither prayers nor entreaties could move the stern old man from his purpose of wedding his daughter to one of the same family with herself. 'Then,' said Carl, 'I was miserable, and thought I had better leave the world as quickly as I could, for there was nothing in it worth living for now. But she came to me, just as I was about to'—— and his voice failed as he came to this part of his story, 'and promised to share weal or woe with me, and in a weak moment I consented. And now—now—she is made as wretched as myself; and I—I alone am her destroyer.'

Words would fail me were I to attempt to describe the scene that followed the conclusion of his simple but touching tale; indeed, I was so moved myself at the distress of the two young people, that it is best to draw a veil over it.

'But where has the child been all this while?' I inquired.

'Here, sir!' answered Carl. 'I built this hut, and Ingeleiv and I take it in turns as we can to be with it.'

'And how far is this from your father's house?' I inquired of Ingeleiv.

'About three miles; but Carl has twice that distance to go;' and the tears rolled fast down her cheek.

'You see, sir,' added Carl, 'as yet during the summer we have been able to manage; but now that the days are becoming shorter and shorter, and winter is coming on, God above only knows what will be the end of it.' And here Carl followed Ingeleiv's example, and cried like a child.

'Well, cheer up, my friends; I'll do what I can to help you; but you must agree to act according to my directions. Let us wait till to-morrow, however; it is too late to think of doing anything at this late hour.' So spreading my rug down on the ground, and making a pillow of my knapsack, and lighting that unfailing source of consolation, a good cigar, I lay down and smoked, thought over the best plan to be adopted to make things smooth, and then fell asleep.

Next morning, we all set out for Ingeleiv's house. I need not say how surprised my old friend was to see me return so quickly.

'What! you couldn't leave the salmon then?' he said.

Meanwhile, Carl had taken the child, and loitered a little behind on the road, while Ingeleiv slipped into the house unobserved.

'Yes,' I said, entering the house; and then after a few commonplace remarks, I led the conversation to a topic on which the old man never wearied of hearing himself or others talk—namely, the old kings of Norway. But I was determined not to humour him to his full bent this time; for when he got on his favourite hobbyhorse, it was difficult to stop him; so I turned the conversation to hard-hearted parents and ill-assorted marriages, and told him about Philip of Spain, D'Agueseau, and others; and then, when I saw I had made some impression—for the old man received any historical fact, especially when it related to the great of the earth, with implicit confidence—and had excited his curiosity, I concocted a little history exactly similar in all respects to that of Ingeleiv and Carl; and when I had concluded, I took down two books from the book-shelf, which gave evident signs of having been well studied.

'Here, Ingebræt,' I said, taking up one—it was his favourite book—the *History of the Kings of Norway*—'here is a book which tells you all about the lives and deaths of royalty; but here is a book' (it was the Bible) 'which teaches us that in God's sight, who is King of all kings, we all are equal. Humility, forgiveness, and love are the lessons it teaches us.' And then running out of the room, and fetching back the infant in a trice, I laid it in his arms, saying: 'And there is your daughter's child, Ingebræt, and it prays through me that you will not repulse your own blood from you; remember, too, that the blood of old Harald Haarfager is flowing in its veins.'

It was a strange way of breaking news, dear reader, you may perhaps say; and you are quite right. But still I think it was the most effective way I could have adopted. That last touch about the child being of royal descent was, I have ever since thought, the most masterly and diplomatic thing I ever did in my life. A death-like paleness came over the old man's face. I felt it was a critical moment, and I did not keep silence. Never, I am sure, did I talk so fast, beg, pray, or entreat so hard as I did then. At last he began to relent; for at first he was all for driving his daughter out from home and hearth. Not that he would have done it, I am sure, for he loved her dearly. But by degrees, when the first shock was over, and when Inga had thrown herself down on the floor, and had embraced his knees, begging for mercy for herself and helpless babe, the rigid muscles of his face began to quiver, and he burst into tears.

'Nothing like a good cry,' I thought to myself, as I hurried out to fetch in Carl; 'it does man and woman good when practised in moderation.'

Carl was not slow to follow Inga's example; and at last, when I fairly saw the baby still in the old man's arms, while Inga and Carl were at his feet, I thought the tableau did not require the addition of myself, so I retreated and had a pipe over it. How fragrant that pipe of tobacco tasted! for had I not made peace—had I not brought joy to two sorrowing hearts?

Going away next day, or the next, or the next to that, was quite out of the question. I was obliged to complete what I had begun; so I spent my time till the wedding-day, fishing and shooting, and otherwise amusing myself, happy in the consciousness that I had at last really done a good thing in my life.

I was Carl's best man! What a wedding-dinner we had!—and what speeches! Of course my health was drunk; and if only Carl had not dwelt too much on my extraordinary virtues, I should have said he had made a most *apropos* speech for a bridegroom.

I often go to see my old Norwegian friends and to fish. The old man has gone to his fathers; but

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Carl and Inga, and a whole tribe of olive-branches, look for my coming regularly when the salmon begin to run up the river.

FROM THE 'WILD COAST.'

In a corner at the north-east of South America, lies a territory full of interest, fabulous, romantic, historical, and actual—a small territory in comparison with the immense tracts which lie above, beneath, and to the westward of it; but richer in mysterious conjecture, in association, and in record of human endeavour, than perhaps any of them. Most curious in the diversities of the race of man, in the ethnological problems it offers, which are apparently hopeless of solution, and in the marvellous revelations of superstition which have been made to travellers who have examined into the condition of its Indian tribes.* This territory is the province of Guiana, divided into British, Dutch, and French possessions—'the mighty, rich, and beautiful empire of Guiana' of Sir Walter Ralegh, 'the Wild Coast' of the Dutch explorers; the land longed for, dreamed of, sought as El Dorado. All that was most beautiful and desirable was to be won in that distant land, at the price of encountering all that was most terrible and revolting. The fabled subterranean kingdom of the *Arabian Nights*, where the treasures of gold and of jewels, of light, wisdom, and immortality, were guarded by dread creatures of preternatural strength and subtlety, found a real counterpart in the country of the Wild Coast, where the great savannahs were the home of monsters, awful to look upon, of great strength and ferocity, who ate human flesh. The beautiful, fanciful fable of the empire of Guiana and its founders the Incas, vanished before the Dutch occupation; but the three centuries and a half which have elapsed since Vasco Nunez discovered it, have not sufficed to reveal the story of its savage inhabitants, the original 'noble savage'—the famous Carib, of continental and island celebrity. Since the time of Sir Walter Ralegh, whose fiction so far outweighed his facts that small reliance can be placed upon his statements, the chief exponents of this wonderful region have been Schomburgk and Humboldt, who differed in their interpretation of those curious remains of antiquity, the sculptures on the rocks in the interior of Guiana, which closely resemble those existing in the islands. However it is to be interpreted, or whether it will ever be, the fact exists, that many inland tribes of the southern continent speak the island languages, while the tribes who occupy the coast, and who would naturally be supposed to have been reached by the islanders, do not. Mr Brett suggests that 'the island Caribs have been an offshoot from a common parent stock, once settled in Guiana, but long since broken up—the same perhaps which carved the sculptures on the rocks in the interior, which hieroglyphics the Caribs, in their migrations, would naturally imitate.',

Of all savage tribes, the Caribs have been the most interesting to speculate about, from the time when, in their discovery, and in the ascertaining of their being cannibals, the Elizabethan people believed they had found the interpretation of the classical legends of the Cyclops, to our own days, when the ingenious Mr Barham suggested, as disposing of personages no longer required, that

> Some got shot, and some got drowned, and some, beyond the seas
> Got scraped to death with oyster-shells, among the Caribbees—

a consummation which recurs forcibly to the memory when one reads Mr Brett's account of the finding of several tumuli far inland, composed of quantities of shells, and human bones, broken in pieces, evidently that the marrow might be conveniently eaten out of them. It is only just to the modern Carib to state, that though still a savage of a low and ferocious type, he is not a cannibal, and he dislikes being convinced of the cannibalism of his ancestors, always endeavouring to make out that it must have been some other tribe who ate the Caribs, even though that theory implies the admission of conquest. It is very pleasant to read about British Guiana, to know that if it does not keep pace with the Dutch settlement, it is at least much more prosperous and important than the French, to which the ugly and opprobrious association of a penal settlement attaches; and the list of natural products is important. It is also pleasant to learn with what patience and perseverance missionary enterprise is being pushed forward in the British territory, whose coast-line is two hundred miles in length, and which extends far into the interior, to the border of Brazil. The success of the missionaries in introducing Christianity does not seem to be very brilliant, but they have introduced clothes, some faint notion of morals, and a few kinds of industry, which sensible people will regard as the best and most promising beginning. Before Mr Brett takes his readers into the interior, among the Caribs, he describes Georgetown, the capital, on the Demerara, and gives them a glimpse of a society, than which there can hardly be any in the world more strangely constituted. In the streets, with canals on either side, and with gardens around the houses, shaded by the cocoa-nut and the cabbage-palm, may be seen busy groups, composed of the native Americans, of Europeans of all countries, but the Portuguese most numerous, of coolies from Calcutta and Madras, and Chinese from the far, far East. There they are, in their various costumes, speaking their different tongues, moving about among the bulk of the population, which is of course Creole. A babel of tongues, even without the addition of the languages of the aborigines; a confusion of nations, the worst practices of heathenism, the prevalence of the Hindu and Mohammedan creeds, together with the eastern

* *The Indian Tribes of Guiana, their Condition and Habits, with Researches into their past History, Superstitions, Legends, Antiquities, Languages, &c.* By the Rev. W. H. Brett. London: Bell and Daldy.

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costumes, give the whole place an oriental character, and makes the field of missionary labour as difficult as it is expansive. But we see all this elsewhere, if less strikingly; the aborigines are what we do not see, and what we want to see; and the way to them, in their wild haunts in the interior, lies through a country which might indeed well inspire the poetic fancy, the gorgeous visions, and the illusive hopes of the dreamers of El Dorado.

The way lies through splendid forests, which commence at the edge of the sea, and stretching across the plains, climb the sides of the rocky mountains of the interior. Magnificent timber-trees—the green-heart and the purple-heart, the stately mora, the locust-tree—rear their grand heads above the smaller kinds, beneath which, again, from a moist carpet of fallen leaves, moss, and fungi, springs humbler vegetation in rank luxuriance. Palms of numerous kinds lend their special beauty to these forests, and beautiful parasites abound in them. As for the animal life, Mr Brett says: 'He who would see the beasts and birds must arise from his hammock with the dawn, and go with the Indian, through the bush dripping with dew. The jaguar, having completed his nightly prowl, is retiring to his lair; the red howling monkey is uttering less terrible cries, beginning to tire of his own noise; the birds and smaller animals are coming forth to feed; and everything teems with life. High overhead, green parrots of various species, numerous and noisy as rooks, are flying to their feeding-places. Macaws, blue and yellow, or blue and crimson, occasionally shew themselves; and in the higher regions is seen the magnificent ara, with plumage of brilliant scarlet, set off with tints of purple and gold. The toucan displays his gorgeous red and yellow bosom, and tosses his enormous beak with fantastic jerks on the top of the highest tree. The hannaqua and duraqua, the marudi and the maam; the stately crested powis, with jet black feathers and yellow beak, and many others may be seen. Least in size, but not in beauty, are the various species of humming-birds, flitting hither and thither like bees, and flashing in the sun like jewels. Insects, beautiful or otherwise, creeping and flying, abound; and the coushi and wood-ants swarm, for ever ingeniously busy. But the heat increases, and the birds seek shelter; the intense stillness of the forest sets in, to be dispelled by the evening, when the world of bird and beast bestirs itself again. Then comes night, and new silence, broken by the croaking of frogs, the cry of nocturnal birds, the chirping of insects, and the sound of the vampire and other bats in their nocturnal flight.'

The tapir, the deer, the bush-hog, the labba—which, being delicious food, is mercilessly hunted—the sloth, the opossum, many kinds of monkeys and ant-eaters, the armadillo, and the coati-mondi, abound in the forests; while in the deepest glades there is always the possibility of meeting the ocelot, the puma, and beautiful spotted jaguar, and even the black variety, the rarest and most feared of all, the animal which has not only real but superstitious terror for the Indian, in whose legends it plays the part of the wehr-wolf of Germany, the loup-garou of France. 'Although,' says Mr Brett, 'the spotted jaguar is a beast of prey, it is impossible to gaze without admiration on his rich glossy skin, as the sunbeams fall on it through the opening in the tall trees caused by the stream. He will not, however, allow you much time for observing the black spots, disposed in rings or rosettes on his tawny hide, as he generally retreats after gazing for a few seconds at the intruding party, often looking round, as he glides off with noiseless step, and bounds carelessly, and without the least apparent effort, over the fallen trees which may lie in his path.' Through these beautiful forests, by mighty rivers, of which the Essequibo is the largest, with their numerous tributaries, and their rushing cataracts and rapids, the traveller journeys in quest of the traditional Caribs, along the shores of lakes which abound in fine fish, but likewise in alligators, and otters so daring that they will follow his canoe, and bite at the steering paddle.

There are no roads through the forest save the foot-track of the Indian; to reach the aborigines, at home in the woodlands, to whom the visitor seems an awkward, bungling, helpless creature, one must ascend the rivers. The Caribs are found at the upper part of the Pomeroon, where they occupy a large tract of rich and beautiful country. The women of this traditionally interesting tribe are exceedingly ugly, and barbarous in appearance. Mr Brett thus describes the first group of them he saw. 'Their dress was merely a narrow strip of blue cloth, and their naked bodies were smeared with the red arnotto, which gave them the appearance of bleeding at every pore. As if this were not sufficiently ornamental, some of them had endeavoured to improve its appearance by blue spots upon their bodies and limbs. They wore round each leg, just below the knee, a tight strap of cotton, painted red, and another above each ankle. These are fastened on while the girl is young, and hinder growth by compression, while the calf, which is unconfined, appears, in consequence, unnaturally large. But the most singular part of their appearance is presented by the lower lip, which they perforate, and wear one, two, or three pins sticking through the hole, with the points outward. Before they procured pins, thorns were worn.' The men, though they also smear their bodies with the arnotto, are not so hideous as the women, and they are certainly a brave and sensible race, skilful and indefatigable hunters, and capable of hard work, which few Indian tribes are. They are of an imaginative and enthusiastic temperament, as was abundantly proved by the readiness with which they fell victims to a remarkable imposture. A person, pretending to be the Deity, went into the interior with several followers, and established himself in the upper part of the Masaruni. From this distant spot he sent emissaries into the neighbourhood of all the missions, calling on the Indians to quit their homes and provision-grounds, and go with him. They were told that they should possess lands which would yield a large crop of cassava from a single stick, and various other absurdities, very alluring to the Indian. These tales, joined to threats of horrible destruction which should come upon all who refused to go, had their influence upon the minds of many, and lured them away,

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several to perish by sickness on the journey, and others to find themselves in a state of destitution on arriving. The Caribs possess strong family and tribal feeling, and though they emulate the external impassiveness which is so highly prized a characteristic of the savage, Mr Brett does not consider them unfeeling or unemotional. The description he gives of the Christian Caribs is eminently satisfactory, and it is evident that the heathens are above their neighbours in intelligence. Of one tribe, the Waraus, he gives a truly deplorable account. They are in the last and lowest category of degraded human nature, and in comparison with the other American tribes, what the Gytch savages are, in comparison with the other tribes of the Nile.

The Caribs suffer much from epidemics, and from several severe and painful forms of skin disease. Like all Indians, they believe sickness to be the result of sorcery, and are at the mercy of their medicine-men. They suffer patiently and haughtily, and it is difficult to induce them to believe in or try any foreign remedies. They have a frightful custom of hereditary revenge, which resembles, in principle, the *vendetta* of Corsica, and in the mode of its carrying out, Thuggee. Slavery and its accompanying vices are thinning their numbers; but it does not appear from Mr Brett's narrative that any of the customary cruelties of European rule have been inflicted upon them by the English, the French, or the Dutch. Their superstitious and social practices are very curious, occasionally suggesting a resemblance to those of the Chinese. Mr Brett has seen a Carib lying in his hammock, and receiving most ludicrous and unpleasant attentions from the women of his tribe, on the occasion of his wife's confinement, while the mother had to exert herself as usual. When the birth of an infant is expected—which, as they are polygamists, is by no means rare—the father must abstain from certain meats, his eating of which would be injurious to the child. The *agouti* is tabooed, lest, like that little animal, the infant should be meagre; the *hamiara* also, lest it should be blind—the outer covering of the eye of that fish being filmy; the *labba*, lest the infant's mouth should protrude like the *labba's*, or be spotted like it, which spots would ultimately become ulcers; the *marudi* is also forbidden, lest the infant be still-born, the screeching of that bird being considered ominous of death. The Indians believe in the immortality of the soul, and in the invisibility of God—in this sense, they are not idolaters—and they have quite exalted notions of the *power* of God, and some idea of His *goodness*, in which they are far superior to the African savages. But, like them, they live in perpetual dread of the agency of evil spirits, and in constant striving to avert calamity by propitiating them. The sorcerer's being the most important and honourable profession within the reach of the Indian, it is not unfair that he should be obliged to endure some pain and unpleasantness to qualify him for it.

Mr Brett's account of the initiation is curious. 'When an Indian,' he says, 'has made up his mind to become a sorcerer, he applies to some professor of that art, who takes him into a small hut prepared for that purpose. After certain preliminaries, including solitude and spare diet, a quantity of water, containing about ten leaves of cured tobacco, is boiled down to about a fourth. This horribly nauseous and emetic dose he must swallow: and in the death-like state of sickness to which it reduces him, his spirit is supposed to leave the body, and to visit and receive power from the Yauhahu, as the dreaded beings are called, under whose influence he is supposed to remain ever after. Meanwhile, his death is loudly proclaimed, and his countrymen are called to witness his state. Recovery is slow; and the tenth day he comes forth from the sacred hut in an emaciated condition. For ten months after, the new sorcerer must abstain from the flesh of birds and beasts, and only the smallest kinds of fish are allowed him. Even cassava-bread is to be eaten sparingly, and intoxicated drinks avoided during that period. Meats and food not indigenous to the country are especially tabooed. I have known one of these men refuse to pick up some North American salt-fish which had fallen on the ground, lest by touching it he should neutralise the power of his enchantments. The sorcerers are furnished with a large gourd or calabash, which has been emptied of its seeds and spongy contents, and has a round stick run through the middle of it by means of two holes. The ends of this stick project—one forms the handle of the instrument, and the other has a long string, to which beautiful feathers are attached, wound round it in spiral circles. Within the calabash are a few small white stones, which rattle when it is shaken or turned round. The calabash itself is usually painted red. It is regarded with great awe by the heathen Indians, who fear to touch it, or even to approach the place where it is kept.' Wonderful as such degradation seems to us, in the people who believe in these sorcerers, the apparent belief of the sorcerers in themselves is still more wonderful; but this Mr Brett does not doubt—they perform all their juggleries over their own children, and have all the incantations gone through over themselves when they are sick.

The Waraus, most degraded of tribes, are the most renowned as sorcerers. The huts which they set apart for the performance of their rites are regarded with great veneration. A traveller, visiting a Warau settlement, entered one of those huts, not being aware of the offence he was committing, and found it perfectly empty, with the exception of the gourd. There was in the centre of the hut a small raised place about eighteen inches high, on which a fire had been made for burning tobacco. The sorcerer being asked to give up the gourd, peremptorily refused, saying that if he did so, his 'two children would die the same night.' The most imaginative of their superstitions is that concerning the Orchu, an important person in Indian mythology. She is a mysterious female inhabiting the waters, not so malignant as the Yauhahu, but very capricious, and much dreaded. Her form is that of a mermaid—according to the European fancy; but she sometimes assumes the head of a horse, or of some other animal. She often amuses herself by merely terrifying mankind; but sometimes bears both canoe and people to the bottom. The Indian belief in this creature is shared by the immigrant negro tribes, who call her the 'water mamma.' In their mythology and legendary tales, one Sigu figures largely—a colossal hero, whose doings are not altogether unworthy of admiration. 'Unlike the aborigines of Hayti,' says Mr Brett, 'whose patriotic vanity led them to believe that their

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island was the first of all things, and that the sun and moon issued from one of its caverns, and men from another; the tribes of Guiana acknowledge the immediate work of a Creator. Among those near the coast, the belief formerly prevailing was, that 'the Great Spirit, having created the heavens and the earth, seated Himself on a huge silk-cotton tree by a river-side, and cut off pieces of its bark or wood, which he cast all around. Those which touched the water became fishes; others flew in the air as birds; while some, as animals of various kinds, and lastly, man, moved on the earth.' To this very ancient legend, additions have been made during the last three centuries. According to one of these, the white race sprung from the branch of a certain tree, which the Great Maker cast upon the water. 'There is in this a little quiet satire, as the tree from which the branch was taken is of little or no value.' These and the many strange, and in some instances poetical, fancies narrated by Mr Brett, still flourish in the far interior, and in the swampy regions stretching towards the Orinoco, and are carefully transmitted by these remote people, who have no other lore. They are, however, rapidly dying out among the Indians who are brought in contact with civilisation. Such of the Carib women as have embraced Christianity have taken to wearing clothes with much readiness, and seemed at first to think they never could wear enough; while the men developed a tendency to wearing shirts—keeping the soiled one under the clean—and very brilliant flowered waistcoats. As they did not adopt any other portion of the garb of civilisation, the effect was more peculiar than pleasing.

On the whole, Mr Brett makes one rather like the Indians of Guiana; but he does not clear up the mystery of their early history; nor does he think it ever can be cleared up. The discoveries made by himself and others indicate unmistakably that great changes, without any traceable influence having been brought to bear upon the frightfully barbarous tribes of the interior, must have taken place. Cannibalism, for instance, which was indubitably a universal custom, no longer exists, and the Indians, as we have said, are ashamed and distressed at its discovery. The most archaic forms of weapons have been replaced by graceful and efficient ones of native invention and manufacture. Are these things evidences of an inherent law of progress and development? or were they suggested by invasion, by intermixture of race, of which there is no record, written or graven? A dense cloud hangs over the origin of these tribes of Guiana. Mr Brett thus summarises their history, as far as it is known: 'In the sixteenth century they appear before us; the Caribs and fiercer tribes attacking, and the others fleeing, or defending themselves as well as they are able; while the practice of enslaving each other seems to have generally prevailed. In the course of the next century, we see them chiefly engaged in resisting the encroachments of a fairer and stronger race, which arrived from various countries of Europe with more destructive weapons. In the eighteenth century, while still enslaving each other, we find them frequently engaged by the side of the white man in deadly contest with the black.'

The middle of the nineteenth century beheld these various conflicting races united in peace. Judging from the rapid decline of their numbers, and the continued prevalence of the causes of that decline, it does not seem unlikely that there will be no Caribs by the middle of the twentieth century. Apart from the consideration that the people of that time will not have the chance of reading so pleasant and interesting a book as Mr Brett's, perhaps the extinction of the traditionally unconquerable aborigines of Guiana will not be to be deplored.

THE PROBLEM.

Her life is all one neutral tint;
A cold and quiet gray;
No thunder-cloud nor sunbeam glint
Darkens or cheers her way;
No great events their shadows cast
Across her Present or her Past.

From year to year she patient sips
The tasteless cup of life;
No annals e'en escape her lips
Of blighting care or strife;
And rarely from them falls one word
That would be worthy to record.

She is not old—she is not young—
She works from day to day,
Nor cares for those she dwells among,
And hers—the neighbours say—
A nature neither warm nor cold,
Too soft to carve—too hard to mould.

And yet her face has saddening power,
I seek the cause in vain—
As sometimes, at the twilight hour,
A misty, treeless plain,
With drearier feelings fills the heart,
Than scenes of strife or storm impart.

Kingdoms might fall, and empires quake,
Nations rejoice and groan,
And in her breast no interest wake,
Yet surely I have known
A sound, a scent, a trifling thing,
Search out some memory's hidden spring;

When, slowly rising to her eye,
I see a faint light glow,
And then—I know not how or why—
It must be long ago—
By that pale gleam I read the cost
Of a life's welfare staked and lost!

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CO-OPERATIVE HOUSEKEEPING.

Is this a new term in England? There are many other designations in which the word 'co-operative' takes part—such as co-operative production, exemplified in the cotton and woollen mills owned by working-men in Lancashire and Yorkshire; co-operative mining, known in principle, if not under that identical name, by the tin and copper miners of Cornwall, and by a few among the coal-miners of the north; co-operative land-buying and house-building, familiar to the members of land and building societies; co-operative money-lending, usually combined in some way with the operations of these same societies; and co-operative stores, for (professedly) buying retail at wholesale prices, as the Pioneers of Rochdale have done successfully for many years past, and as many families in the metropolis are now attempting to do. It matters little, however, whether the name co-operative housekeeping be new among us; the interesting questions are: What does it mean, and is there any good in it? An American lady has recently sketched a plan on the subject, developed to a certain degree of completeness—not in the 'Woman's Rights' tone adopted by so many of her countrywomen, but in a plain and sensible manner. She does not afford us the means of mentioning her name, seeing that the scheme has been treated partly in a small book or pamphlet published anonymously, and partly in the pages of one of the most widely circulated American periodicals.

It is in reference especially to the state of society across the Atlantic that this scheme has been brought forward; but many points present themselves as data for comparison between the two countries. The lady-writer looks with much anxiety at the position of her countrywomen. Be the cause what it may, be the fault where it may, American women in the well-to-do classes have an insufficiency of employment. As, in England, club-life takes men away too much from their families (in the estimation, at least, of the families themselves); so, in the United States, does hotel-life prevent the formation of those social domestic habits which form the charm of the family circle. American ladies, daughters of mercantile and professional men, are nurtured very delicately, and are chivalrously protected from all the harder and sterner experiences of life. The same thing, to a large extent, prevails in England, but (so far as evidence goes) not to so great an excess. The writer states very decidedly that one consequence of this is, the encouraging a habit of expensive dress; a young man finds such a wife a very costly treasure; and, as a consequence, other young men delay marriage to a late period, or do not marry at all. It is the *Saturday Review* over again, the Materfamilias of the *Times* over again; only, in this instance, the writer treats mournfully and affectionately of her own countrywomen—urging *them*, rather than the men, to bring about a more healthy tone of affairs. What English families think of American hotel-life, is to some extent known to most readers; what this American lady thinks of English club-life, is sufficiently denoted in the following impassioned words: 'The English club-house, stronghold of intensest egotism, built of women's hearts, and cemented with their tears—the living tomb of love.' As to the dress question, this lady says: 'A woman cannot dress with mere neatness in these times under two hundred dollars a year.' Now, this is equal to about forty pounds. Would English ladies assent to this statement, so far as they are concerned? There are, we are told, two million women in the United States whose social position would claim for them the designation of ladies (in a country without a titled or hereditary aristocracy); and among these two millions are a formidable phalanx reared elegantly, dressed expensively, and very little employed in any useful pursuits.

Other suggested modes of social and individual improvement we pass over here, in order to notice one of very remarkable kind, sketched by the lady-writer to whom we are referring. Let not a reader at once pooh-pooh it as absurd and impracticable; for, in the first place, its failure could only be

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proved by actual trial; and, in the second place, it is primarily intended for America, where many phases of society present themselves, little known in England. The purpose held in view is twofold—to economise a little in housekeeping, and to give women—especially the wives and daughters of commercial and professional men—an incentive to more active and useful employment than at present. It is a scheme for co-operative housekeeping, for applying to family wants and family duties the principle that underlies the co-operative system generally. Not—as in the schemes of Robert Owen, Fourier, St Simon, Cabet, and other dreamers—that families are all to live together under one roof, and share everything in common; they are only invited to lessen the cost of food, fuel, cooking, dress, sewing, washing, &c., by adopting the organised instead of the piecemeal plan.

This is how it is to be done. Women are to do everything connected with the matter, as far as possible; seeing that an improved employment of women's time and thoughts is one of the objects in view. Wives may be considered to have no capital, apart from their husbands; and both household duties and social prejudices might seem to militate against the adoption of anything like a trading scheme by the mothers and matrons of families, or by a wife with no purse to study but her husband's. These difficulties it is sought to overcome. What the bread-winner gives to the housewife, to support the weekly expenses, is to be made to go further and to do more than at present. How curiously is the whirlwind of American life depicted in the following words! 'Our husbands and fathers are already overworked in this mad American rush of ours. They cannot stop to mend the holes made in their pockets by the relentless family expenses.' And the other sex is invited to come to the rescue: 'The wives and daughters who enjoy the fruits of this thought and toil can do it for them most daintily, if they will only lay their white hands together, and give to it a few hours of every day.'

We are invited to suppose a case where, in any town or district, a considerable number of women, wives and daughters of families, are willing to form a Co-operative Housekeeping Association. They choose a president and secretary. They draw up a constitution and by-laws; taking as a model, so far as applicable, those of the Equitable Pioneers at Rochdale (a body which has attracted much attention in America), and of some other successful co-operative undertakings in England. The main purpose of the association is to be 'to furnish the households of its members, for cash on delivery, with the necessaries of life, unadulterated and of good quality, and accurately prepared, both as to food and clothing, for immediate use and consumption;' and the secondary purpose, 'to accumulate, from the profits of this sale, capital for each individual housekeeper or her family.' Whatever committees, councils, managers, superintendents, &c. may be appointed, all the offices are to be filled by women—with an exception presently to be mentioned. They are not to become traders, except among themselves. The association is to sell only to members; and a rigorous system of ready-money payments is to be adopted. Not only is it contemplated to sell food-materials and dress-materials, but food ready to eat, and dresses ready to put on; because the hope is, to save expense, loss, waste, trouble, and annoyance in cooking, laundry-work, sewing, and servants. The authoress mentions a fact, or rather puts forth an estimate, which may possibly serve as a means of comparing family expenses in the two countries; to the effect that, 'in town and city families, twelve hundred dollars (about L.240) a year pass through the hands of the mistress for food, fuel, servants, and dress.' Every English reader will be able to determine for himself what kind of establishment this would denote in our own country, and what amount of total income would be required by the husband or head of a family living in this mode. In America, it is said to denote 'a family living with moderation and economy.' The authoress insists (and indeed it is her main purpose to shew) that a system of co-operative housekeeping might be made to effect large savings in all these four items—food, dress, servants, and fuel for cooking and washing.

The association is to sell at a fair profit, analogous to that realised in ordinary trade; and not at cost price. This is advocated on the ground that the profit, when shared among the members periodically, will be more availably useful than if it came in daily driblets; and because experience has led to a similar result in England. The association 'will accept no voluntary labour, but will, as far as possible, fill its offices with its own members, or their female relatives and friends, at fixed salaries.' So far this is consistent with one of the avowed objects of the movement; but the authoress urges that her sex shall not be ranked lower than men, unless there be a good assignable reason: 'these salaries, as well as the wages of all its clerks and servants, shall be the same as would be paid to men holding similar positions.' She thinks it necessary gradually to remove the prejudice that 'ladies will not work for money;' and this is one of the means to effect the removal. Once again, we must, throughout these observations, remember that America is the country held chiefly in view.

It is to be one of the rules of the association that any housekeeper may be received as a member, and that all the members shall be equal in the eyes of the association. Let us not run away with the idea that democratic America is democratic in everything. 'Women,' we are told, 'being at present essentially aristocratic, many may demur to this article, as tending to introduce into their companionship those who are not of their own set.' But this, it is urged, is a feeling which must not, cannot, be introduced in trade. 'In business, social distinctions are not recognised. Money is money, whether it comes from the poor or the rich; and if a mechanic's wife wishes to be a co-operative housekeeper, though she may buy less and simpler food and clothing than a broker's or a lawyer's wife, yet, if she pay as punctually for it, she has as good a business standing in the association as they.' There is also the consideration that, in *making* and *doing* (part of the services paid for by women to women), the women of the middle and humbler class would be directly needed. As much as possible, all employed would be members, and all members would be employed. In order to insure that wealth shall not drive out the humbler element, each member shall have only one vote at the general and committee meetings of management.

Of course there must be a little capital to start

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with; and this is provided by weekly payments from every member, up to a certain amount, which shall be regarded as the value of the share. When the trading has been going on some little time, the accounts are to be balanced quarterly. Let us suppose (1) that there is a loss (which would seem to denote bad management in some quarter or other); (2) that there is a small profit; (3) that there is a moderate profit; (4) that there is a large profit. If there is a loss, the members must bear the loss among them, by paying up a small addition for each share; in order that the working capital may not be reduced below its original amount. If there is a small profit, it will be divided among the members as far as it goes. If it reaches a certain average, moderate, or expected amount, it will bear a definite ratio to the money price of each share, like a definite amount of interest on capital. If the profit goes higher than this, then the large purchasers will begin to reap an additional benefit; for, after the fixed rate of dividend or interest has been provided for, the surplus will be distributed according to the largeness of the purchases made. A lady has no more voting power than a humbler housekeeper; but as her purchases are likely to be larger, she will find a proportionate benefit whenever the profits of the association are good.

But amidst all these details about profits and dividends, what are the things bought and sold, and how are the buying and selling to be managed? The main departments of household economy to be attended to are dress, washing, and cooking, including the wherewithal for those important matters. There are to be three committees, superintending these three departments. The dress department (if the association be tolerably large) will comprise a store, a fitting-room, a sewing-room, &c. A stock will be kept, comprising all the principal materials for women's and children's clothing—to such an extent, and of such variety, as the committee may from time to time deem best. In the sewing-room there will be needlewomen, with or without sewing-machines. These women will, as much as possible, be members of the association, receiving pay as workers, but at the same time having a share in the management and in the profits. If they consent, they will all dress alike, and will be provided with comfortable dinners and teas in the cookery department of the establishment. It points to a noticeable difference between England and America, in regard to young women engaged in workrooms and factories, that provision is to be made for gymnastics or calisthenics, as a corrective of some of the evils attendant on too close plying at the needle. Young women in America indulge in more dancing than their own class in England; and the store and workroom are to be occasionally cleared out for a ball.

The co-operative laundry can, it is admitted, be managed more easily than the co-operative dress department, because there is less diversity in tastes and in processes. The same is not the case, however, in the co-operative kitchen. Here our authoress confesses that the chief difficulties will have to be encountered. But she regards these as difficulties to be conquered, not to be succumbed to. She says we must consult all the hotel plans, restaurant plans, public-dinner plans, cheap-cookery plans, &c. adopted in the chief European towns; and she merrily adds, that 'it will be hard if Yankee brains cannot invent a "Universal Heat-generating Air-tight Family Dinner Box."' Perhaps she is not aware how remarkably near M. Sörensen's curious Norwegian stove approaches to this character.

Men-folk are to have a *little* to do with the Co-operative Housekeeping Association. There is to be a council of the male heads of families, to assist in the larger financial matters, and to advise in difficult questions. The mistress of a household cannot, must not, become a member without the sanction and approval of her husband—this is set down as a *sine qua non*. 'Being our governors, no such enterprise as co-operative housekeeping could be started or sustained without their sympathy and consent; and as they have now the power of veto on our housekeeping arrangements by virtue of being also our bread-winners, so, as their funds alone would sustain co-operative housekeeping, they should have the same power there. We should simply have to trust, as we do now, that our reasonableness and good judgment and study to please them, would in general be such as to shield us from blame and reproach.' A change in the laws relating to the property of married women would have much to do with the form which such an association might eventually assume.

Co-operative housekeeping may or may not be suitable to England; but it is certainly brought forward in a sensible, womanly, and thoroughly honest spirit.

KITTY.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

THE Combe was a delicious old farmhouse, all red brick and rich green ivy, nestling low down amidst the warm soft hills of Midlandshire.

To call it a farmhouse, however, hardly gives an idea of what it was. Approaching it from the back, by the poppy-edged path through the cornfields, and down the daisy-covered hill-slope that brought you right upon it with a run, it *was* a farmhouse. There were accurate haystacks reared about it; there were tidy pig-sties and cow-houses, and cart-sheds and long low barns; and there were the deep utterance of the kine in their comfortable shelter, and the impertinent cackle of turkey-cock, and goose, and fowl. But approaching the Combe from the front, it would never have been known as a farmhouse at all. Its little diamond-paned windows peeped out upon a broad lawn, edged with laurels, and box, and daphnes, and studded here and there with a copper-beech, or a cluster of dark pines; it had a broad carriage-way leading up to the house-door; there were seats upon the lawn under the spreading trees; its window-sills were filled with blooming and scented plants; and everything was so bright and smooth it might have been a small mansion, or a gentleman's quiet country-seat. But it *was* a farmhouse for all that, only a very prosperous and well-regulated one.

Attached to this delightful, cosy Combe was a vinery; a broad, aslant-roofed, old-world thing, glistening and scorching in the sun under the south wall; and in this vinery were the Combe's master, Michael Courtney, and Kitty, his one daughter and only child. As the two stood together under the slope of sunny green leaves

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and purple fruit, they did not look like father and child at all. Mr Courtney was bent and shabby, and looking lost or scared, in his rough, gray, country-cut clothes, that would have assumed his shape when he was out of them, so long had they been worn upon his great wide form; Kitty was in a charming morning-dress, that had no fold upon it but those given by laundress and *modiste*, and she wore it with such ease and prettiness of demeanour, as gave perfect assurance she could accommodate herself to silks and jewels, and 'society,' every bit as well. Old Michael looked hard-worked, unwieldy, poor; Kitty had litheness, and grace, and beauty, with *l'air* of having never done anything in her life at all. So as they stood side by side in the tinted sunlight, unless heed were paid to what the two were saying, and to the manner in which they said it, the tie that bound them could never have been guessed. Every word of their little history would have had to be told.

'Never mind, pap,' were Kitty Courtney's words. This was her baby-name for papa, and it was the one still most frequently on her lips. 'It is no matter, dear. Come with me.'

'I can't, Kitty,' said Mr Courtney; 'I can't, I can't;' and though his daughter was touching his arm to persuade him to come away, he did not yield to her, but put his hand up to his forehead, and rubbed it with a sort of testy despair. 'I must,' he said again, in difficulty and in trouble; 'I must—I must—see if it will grow!'

'Next year, pap, dear, perhaps,' Kitty soothed him, and smiled out. 'We will come and look at it again, by-and-by. Come out into the garden now. It is too hot to stay long in here. Come, dear; come.'

Then one can understand, as Kitty tries again to win her father away, that this is only the memory left to her of the great active man whose voice was round and cheery once, whose hand was sure at his gun, whose saddle was as often his resting-place as his chair. Then one can understand that this is but the ruin of bright friendly Michael Courtney. The ruddy skin is soft and white now; the hand never gets its aim; the eyes are dulled; and there is a look upon the face that means that something has been taken from it, and that its trouble and distress must ever rest there, whilst that something remains away. But there is the love left for what the dear father has been; there is the great pity for what he is now; and with him, on his side, there is the flickering recollection of the old life, the old pursuits, making all novelty distasteful, and leading him to linger in the greenhouse this sunny morning, with the anxiety only of the occupation that was his pleasure in years gone by.

Kitty could not induce him to go now. She tried again, with the pleasantry she would often break into, and that would sometimes win. 'You think a vapour-bath is good for me, pap,' she said. 'You are turning doctor, now mamma is too active to let you continue farmer, and you are forcing me to take what you prescribe. But do come away, to please me, dear. Do let us go.'

'But it *ought* to grow,' said Mr Courtney, rubbing his head still, and worrying himself over a young plant that was sickly, and shewed only a few stunted leaves. 'Why doesn't it? Where did it come from, Kitty? Who brought it?'

'Don't you remember?' asked Kitty. The name she would have to utter was one that always gave her heart a check; and, even before the audience of this dear father, she held back. 'Come, who was it now?' she cried, trying to evade an answer. 'Remember, pap, dear. Think!'

'I can't, Kitty! I can't!' cried Michael Courtney; his hands up despairingly to his forehead, appealing, as it seemed, for memory, just as he would for sight, had he been blind.

Kitty was touched and penitent. 'You shan't try, pap,' she cried. 'I will tell you. It was—it was—Mr Musgrave, from Bracklington House, pap, dear.'

'Mr Musgrave, Kitty?'

'Yes, dear. Abel—Hamilton—Musgrave, of Bracklington—House.'

'But didn't he die, Kitty?'

'Yes, pap; your old friend, the father. But it was—it was—Mr—Mr Abel, the son, who sent the plant. And, perhaps, pap, dear, *it* doesn't thrive because *he* doesn't thrive either!'

'Why, he was very rich, Kitty. I sold him my spotted mare!'

'Yes, *old* Mr Musgrave, dear. But when he died, you know—and it is only two years ago—it was found that he had not so much money as people thought; and young Mr A—Mr—Abel could scarcely keep on the factory, and at last he failed.'

'Ah, I don't remember, Kitty; I had forgotten,' said Mr Courtney sadly. He was conscious still, at times, of his helplessness; and when he was, that made Kitty pity him so very much the more.

'Never mind, love,' she cried tenderly.

'I can remember,' old Courtney went on with his lamentation, 'what happened years ago, but nothing that is going on to-day!'

'Never mind, love,' Kitty answered again. 'What does it matter? When you were young, everything was very pleasant to you; so keep on thinking about it. Don't trouble about what comes now. It isn't nice, pap, dear, at all.'

Mrs Courtney appeared now, and did in one order all that Kitty's coaxing, in all these minutes, had entirely failed to do. She was one of those tall, thin, upright ladies, dark-eyed and dark-haired, with a just distinguishable trace of down upon the upper lip, who are admired for dash and bravery when they are young, but who become somewhat too candid and masterful when they are getting old. She possessed, as all her breed do, small features, which were pretty, and a small head; she had well-marked eyebrows and excellent teeth, with a particularly lax tongue, and a good solid quantity of self-belief. But she was a good creature; an active leader in anything that was right; a thorough abhorrer of everything that was wrong. She was not tender, but she was true; and all honour to her.

'Catherine,' she cried, as she came to the inner vinery-door — no baby-names with *her*—'bring your father to the drawing-room, as quickly as you can. I see the Folletts at the turn of the road, and you must go to them, as I am busy, and chat till I come. Make haste!'

And Mr Courtney suffered himself to be led away by Kitty without another glance or word; and she placed him in his chair by the open drawing-room window, just where his eyes could best fall on the sea of hills in front of him, and where the sun was shaded nicely from his smooth bald head, and then the door was widely opened, and the Misses Follett were ushered in.

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They were good-natured girls, rather loud-talking, rather loosely made, long-handed, fair-haired, dressed neither in good taste nor in garments of well-assorted colours; but they had a faculty for keeping the neighbourhood alive with picnics, and teas, and dances, and so they had their purpose in their generation, and fulfilled it in a very pleasant way.

Much gossip fell from them about the town of Aberminster, two miles distant, where they lived, and from which they had just walked; and then Mrs Courtney had finished the business that had kept her this short while from them, and came bustling in.

'You have come about the picnic, of course,' she cried directly she had shaken hands and said how do you do. 'Have you fixed what day it is to be?'

Kitty could not resist a little laugh. 'Mamma loses no time, you see,' she cried. 'She is a first-rate economist in other things besides her farm. Only let a social sun shine, and over goes her hay!'

'And why not, Catherine?' asked Mrs Courtney, surprised that her rapidity should be taken for rapidity, or for anything but the proper opposite to sloth. 'I *know* Jane and Sophia would not come out to the Combe without they had something to come about; and of course it is the picnic. I was sure it was the picnic when I saw them on the road; and I am not wrong, my dears, am I?'

'You are quite right, Mrs Courtney,' one Miss Follett said; and 'That was the very thing,' the other Miss Follett said; and then, whilst Mrs Courtney rang for plates and glasses, and they were brought, and she produced and served delicious rice-cake and gooseberry-wine, the visitors made known between them that an early day in the ensuing month had been fixed on, and that the *locus* unanimously chosen for the gathering was the squire's seat, Ashbury Hall.

'Of course the ladies invite the gentlemen,' further made known one of the Misses Follett.

'Of course,' said Mrs Courtney, refilling the young ladies' glasses with her clear gooseberry-wine. 'To be sure!'

'Well, then,' said the other of the Misses Follett, 'we are puzzled about Abel Musgrave. In his case we don't know what to do.'

Kitty was open-tongued in a moment. 'Puzzled!' she echoed, with a quick flush. 'Why, Jinny and Sophy, what *can* you mean?'

'Catherine,' Mrs Courtney interposed, 'don't be so hasty over nothing at all. Jane and Sophia mean, of course, because he has failed. It might not be agreeable to some people to meet him now he has become so poor.'

'Mamma!'

'Well, he *is* poor, Catherine,' the arithmetical Mrs Courtney said. 'All the pity and liking for him in the world cannot alter facts. He is very clever, and pleasant, and considerate, but you can't make money out of *that*, so it 's of no use to try.'

'But the meanness of letting money make any difference!' Kitty in her warm indignation cried. 'At Christmas, when he was laid up with his broken leg, he couldn't visit, of course; but now that he is beginning to get about again, and wants a little cheering, to turn from him, merely because he has lost his money, is a great deal too bad!'

'Mind, I don't say it would make any difference to *me*,' Mrs Courtney began.

'Oh!' cried Kitty, a little bit appeased.

'It was of others I was thinking. But be a little calm, and we will talk it over. Let us see.'

So, whilst the Misses Follett partook heartily of their cake and wine (a walk through two miles of lanes and highways would have given sweet flavour to less dainty fare), a canvassing was gone through of Master Abie Musgrave, and his fate was settled. He *should* be invited to the picnic, the verdict went; whereupon Kitty cooled down a little, although, when the Folletts had finished their visit, and she was walking with them, without her mother, to the Combe gate, she gave them such further fillip for their hesitation as from other lips would have sharply stung.

'How commercial you are, with your weights and scales!' she cried. 'The people you visit must have a precise value, the same as so many pounds of tea! You will be counting bones next, and if any one have the misfortune to lose a finger, you 'll say he mustn't associate with us, who have our normal ten!'

'Nonsense, Kitty, how wildly you talk,' said one of the Misses Follett; and the other didn't say much more; partly because there wasn't enough in them for much 'say;' and partly because no one—except Mrs Courtney—attempted anything against Miss Kitty. They would have come off badly in the venture if they had!

'Why, people with one arm—soldiers, injured men—mustn't sit at the same table with you,' was Kitty's next cry; 'and what of people who are minus two! Really, Jinny and Sophy, I hadn't thought you could be so mean!'

The three had got to the gate now, and the Follets took their rubbing laughingly, as it was intended, and then they went. Kitty stayed a minute at the gate to watch them to the bend of the road, and then, as she was enjoying the quiet and the sun, the thoughts that were nowhere if they were not with Abie Musgrave, were sent suddenly scattering by the sound of a horse's hoofs.

She turned hastily to go away. Stirred on a subject very dear to her, she was in no mood for the commonplace chat that must have come from her if the rider proved to be any one she knew; and she was just making her retreat behind a laurel hedge, when the horseman rode swiftly up to the gate, and she saw it was the very he of whom her thoughts were full! It was the man whose misfortunes were to be overlooked—it was Mr Musgrave!

She was back again to where she had started from directly, her face one bright open smile. A moment before, she had imagined words upon her lips, that had coloured her cheeks with blushes as she thought of them, and that she thought she *must* have uttered if Mr Musgrave could have come before her; but now, face to face in this way unexpectedly, usage—or, it may be, self-defence—gave her its involuntary armour, and she met him with only her ordinary pleasantry, and with a frank open hand.

He was better? she hoped. And he was enjoying a ride this nice summer day? He would move a little while she opened the gate, and let him in? He would stay, of course, now that he had come?

'No,' Mr Musgrave answered, thanking her with a face and hand as frank and friendly as her own. He would like, but as he couldn't, he must keep on saying no.

Then Kitty laughed, and said she saw through

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it all. 'You saw the Folletts at the gate,' she cried, 'and you want to catch them up! I wish I had known, I would have kept them, just this one minute, back!'

'Well, they are not so far,' said Mr Musgrave—a tall, brown, bearded man, with eyes that looked down on Kitty very contented and bright. 'If I am so anxious, I could catch them up.'

'Don't let me keep you, then,' said Kitty, making a very elaborate mock-bow.—But she wanted him to stay with all her heart!

'Thank you,' laughed Abie, in her own vein. 'You are, as I have ever found you, *extremely* kind.'

'Good-bye, then,' went on Kitty. 'I won't detain you. Why don't you go?'

'It is such a pleasure to see you, Miss Kitty,' said Abie, imitating her lavish bow. 'The few moments I have to spare, I would rather spend where I am.'

If this had not been said so banteringly, it would have been exactly what Kitty would have liked to hear; but how could she tell whether, underneath Mr Musgrave's jesting, there was a meaning as warm as her own? She could only give her little laugh again, therefore, and she bent to stroke the horse on which Mr Musgrave sat.

'It is a pretty creature,' she said, toying with its mane. 'It must be a treat, now you are lame, to be able still to ride.'

'It is a treat that is only mine,' answered Abie Musgrave, 'through the kindness of Edward Sumner. I cannot afford to keep a horse now, Miss Kitty.'

Kitty spoke in a lowered tone. 'Not one, Mr Musgrave?' she asked—'not one?'

'No,' Abie quietly answered her—'not one. The Bracklington House stables are useless now; I might as well have them all pulled down.'

'You must miss *Old Sol*, then, sadly,' said Miss Courtney. 'I know you have ridden many a pleasant mile on him.'

'What colour was *Old Sol*, Miss Kitty?' asked Musgrave, smiling again, and making her look up with a smile too.

'Why,' said Kitty, recovering her usual way, 'he had a blue beard, of course, and a spotted tail; and his legs were yellow, and his back green; and his head and ears were the new *mauve!*'

'It was a clever thing, then,' laughed Musgrave, 'to sell him, and especially for a fair sum!'

'To be sure,' cried Kitty; 'just as clever as you should be; but no more. Any one could sell a gray horse or a brown!'

'Well, look at this I am on now,' said Musgrave. 'Does he look like my good *Old Sol?* How could you be deceived?'

'Poor old horse!' cried Kitty, seeing then it was really Musgrave's attached old friend. 'I am so glad you can have him still.'

'Yes, it was very kind of Sumner,' answered Abie. 'He bought him of me, and said, whenever I wanted him I only had to ask. But now, the thing is, that I cannot ask, Miss Kitty! I cannot afford a ride now in the middle of the day. I must mind my business. I was obliged to come out this morning to see the squire—he had written for me; but I have overstopped my time now, and I must go.'

He held his hand out to bid good-bye; but it did not seem as if he wanted to be away.

'It has made my ride the pleasanter,' he said again, 'having had this little chat with you; but I must not over-stay my time.'

How Kitty wished that words would come to her that would be right to say! How she wished the choking at her heart would go, and that she could speak to Musgrave as she would to any other man! 'When—when will you come to see mamma?' she hurried out, because she knew the time was vanishing in which she could say anything at all. She could not speak as calmly as she liked, but she must say something. 'You—you are such a stranger at the Combe!'

'I am a stranger everywhere now,' said Musgrave gravely. 'I must use myself to that.'

'Not here,' said Kitty, letting her eyes fall the moment she had ventured to lift them up—'not at the Combe!'

Could Abel Musgrave guess what her pretty trepidation meant? Did he know why her laugh was gone, and why her blushes rose so whilst he held her strangely trembling hand? Kitty could not tell. If the knowledge had been of all things the best life to her, it could not come to her, and she must stay unwise. She knew that Abie said he had spent *many* happy evenings at the Combe; she knew he said that he must come soon to thank Mrs Courtney for having been so kind to him when he was ill; for having thought of so many little dainties to do him good; and she knew he said again that he could not over-stay his time, with that strange lingering that had sounded in his voice before; but she knew no more. He had let go her hand at last, and he was gone.

CHAPTER II.

'How absurd I am!' Kitty Courtney said to herself the moment after. 'How very absurd I am! Here have I been talking to Abie Musgrave and never said a syllable to him about Ashbury Hall! And he looked so sad and overborne too! I might have thought of something that would have been a little pleasure. Bah! As though a *man* would care about a picnic! At anyrate, such a man as Abie—when, too, he has business matters troubling him, and has to fight only to keep his home! But I might have said something kind! No man is too manly to be moved when people are kind. Certainly, if he thinks I am a hard-hearted, unsympathetic person, I have only myself to blame. But why is he always so distant?—No, not distant; but just—just—just what I don't wish him to be, and that I never would be to him! I wish he knew that I had spoken up so much for him this morning, that I don't in the least care for money, and like him every bit as much now that he is poor!'

Miss Courtney sauntered on—down the laurel hedge, to where some tall trees sheltered her from the sun. The same song was sung by her thoughts still. The next time she saw Mr Musgrave, she *would* know from his manner whether he cared for her or not. It was only the certainty she wanted; it was only that she was longing to be sure! If he did *not* love her, why, then, so be it—amen. That would be the all. She supposed she could sustain a struggle as well as other men and women who had had to deliver up their best hope. She could chain *her* thoughts as others had had to chain theirs. She could stay *her* heart. It was to be done. But surely, surely, Abie *must* care! She could not have mistaken

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all the signs that made up the tale that was such heaven! Surely he must—he must!

And Miss Courtney sauntered on still: past the verbena beds and hollyhocks—past the vinery on to the lawn; the scales adjusted in her mind still; the balance down on the side that was heavy with her heart's big wish. Then she told herself she was a little fool—which was pretty much what she had begun with—and she put an end to all her cogitations by a toss in the air of her pretty head, and a movement of her hands as if she would clear the mist from before her eyes.

Nevertheless, in spite of all renunciation, Kitty found that thoughts of Mr Musgrave would steal to her. An unexpected opportunity to meet him came. Those administrative girls, the Folletts, determined to have a little tea before the Ashbury Hall picnic, that arrangements might be talked over, and so be insured to run smooth; and to this Mr Musgrave and the Courtneys were invited. It made Kitty in a rapturous state of elevation. Her toilette for that happy evening became a matter of serious and blissful moment. Should she be dressed in white muslin, with rolls of blue velvet twisted in and out her hair? Or should she choose her pale-gray silk with poppy trimmings, and nothing in her hair at all? There were no eyes she thought of pleasing but Abel Musgrave's; and, of course, she knew his taste. And she made her choice for the neat gray; and, when the evening came, she put it on, and before the great cloak was wrapped round her that was to hide her all away during the half-hour's drive to town, she went down to her father, to give him her kiss and her good-bye.

A good 'auntie,' a small sister of the big Mrs Courtney, was with him (and able to stay with him all the evening, or Kitty would not have gone away), and the two looked up, brightened, when she opened the door and came in.

'Pap,' she said, with her hand upon his round bald head, 'it seems so unkind to be going out, and to leave you here.' She was so glad herself—she was warmed to such ecstasy—she felt more than ever how much her father was denied. 'Don't you think mamma and me very wicked things?'

'It 's no use going, Kitty,' said Mr Courtney simply; 'I can't walk, and I can't see.'

Kitty knew that, and that was why such love and pity came from her in a deep-pressed kiss. 'You dear old pap,' she said—'you good dear old pap!'

'And I went once, Kitty,' continued the old man. 'I was a spry young fellow in my day.'

Kitty knew that too; and she thought still more of the pleasure that was hers *now*, and that she trusted would soon be hers never to go away. 'You are a good pap,' she cried again—'you are a good, charming, dear old pap!'

'You won't be long, Kitty?' asked Mr Courtney. 'You will come back very soon?'

'Yes; very soon,' Kitty soothed him with—he never liked her or her mother to be away. And she thought of what the 'soon' would be to her, and of the happiness the next few hours would reveal.

She could not stay any more. Her mother sent to tell her the carriage was at the door, and she gave her aunt and father a parting kiss, and went down. Then, with a flush upon her cheek that made her look so much prettier than usual, that even Mrs Courtney noticed it, and gave a sharp glance at her as they passed through the hall, the drive to Aberminster and the Folletts' house began. There was much to listen to during its pleasant two miles. Mrs Courtney always had plenty to say on every subject in existence, and there was no reason why she should be less loquacious to-day than was her wont; so Kitty's dress—she cried—would certainly hang over the phaeton's side and get spoiled with mud—and her hair would get sadly roughened if she did not draw down her veil—and her own dress was so tight and uncomfortable across the chest, she was sorry now she had put it on. But Kitty was little the worse, or better, for the perpetual stream. She was going to see Abie Musgrave, and that was enough talk for her. When her mother told her of her dress, she quietly drew it in; when she spoke about her hair, she let her veil fall down; but *her* theme was Abie Musgrave, and all this rest was only foreign chords. She was going to Abie Musgrave, to talk to him, to sit by his side; perhaps, even she was going to sing to him—she had some of his favourite songs with her in the phaeton now; and she would just say to him gently, delicately, that she had other music that would please him when he had *inclination* enough to come; and she was sure his answer would be the very substance of her bright hope. It couldn't be in any other way!

She looked very pretty, stepping into the large cool room, by her tall and handsome mother's side. Her ample cloak was gone then, and the grace and heartiness of her manners had nothing to conceal them, as she gave and received a cordial greeting from everybody there.—Had Mr Musgrave come? was the sharp question of every pulse she had.—Yes! was the answer the same moment from her eyes. And she was led to him by Jinny Follett, and placed on a chair the very next to the one on which he sat.

Then, of course, her glad story ran? and she had warm answers exactly as she had hoped? No; not at all. Not one of the phrases she had rehearsed would come to her—not one could leave her tongue! Nothing was just as she had imagined it, so all her scheme was tangled, and no speech would fit! She had not expected to have found Mr Musgrave already arrived; she had thought to have been seated on the couch when he was helped in, and that this would have been the very couch on which naturally he would have been brought to sit. She had thought, then, that when those who knew him best had been up to make a little court to him, she would have been left alone to have made, just as naturally, the court that little much the more; but now she saw her mother and she must have left the Combe considerably too late, or else the Folletts were hurrying things on considerably too soon, for here was tea announced directly, and she had only asked Abie about his health, and other conventional little pros and cons, and she positively had not another opportunity for a word with him at all!

No, not all the evening long; actually, not all the evening long. She was not seated next to him at tea. Tea was a real meal at such times in Midlandshire, entailing placement at the table, and consequent shutting-off from chat with any folk but those at either hand. She could speak to him, of course, but it was only of such things as any Anne or Mary opposite to her could have talked about just as well, and as could have been

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transmitted from one end of the table to the other openly, like the apricot jelly and rich almond-coated cake. She was not seated next to him at cards: these, and not music, were brought forward as the entertainment of the evening, and she and Abie both were marshalled off among the young and merry folk to the lively 'round game at cards;' but she might as well have been as far off him as the Combe, for she could only ask him from the distance, as she asked all the others, about a 'natural,' and whether he was 'content.' Then supper brought the same disappointment; he was four people from her, on the same side. She would not even have known that he was there, unless she had bent her head. *His*, therefore, were not the eyes that were attentive to her—*his* were not the hands that passed her anything she might desire. And, directly supper was over, Mrs Courtney rose to go away. She always did. She always would be the first, punctiliously, to rise from table—resisting every entreaty to remain for supplemental and freer gaiety after cold fowl and riddles had done their work. So there was Kitty up again in the bedroom, being helped on with her cloak, tucking her music-bundle behind her drapery, that it might not be seen that she had brought it, and feeling that she was no nearer the knowledge she had been longing for than if she had said no to the Folletts' invitation, and had staid at home!

Her attempt at concealment of her well-filled leathern music-roll was seen, and a sharp comment on it made.

'Why, we have never had a song!' the Folletts and a group of other girls cried. 'What a shame, Kitty, to bring your music, and then to leave it here!'

It is not pleasant, certainly, to take a music-budget anywhere, and then not to be asked to open it; but this was so small a matter to Kitty Courtney compared to that other budget she had had no chance to open, that she could afford it a very good-natured laugh. 'Oh!' she cried, pushing the obtruding portion of her roll tight in, 'it will do another time! It is not like the cream-cheese some of you have been declining to take to Ashbury—it will keep!'

And she laughed still more when she was in the quiet moonlight, in the phaeton, being driven home; and more still when the drive was over, and she was in the solitude of her own silent room. What—she asked herself—had her evening been? What had it all come to, now it was at an end? Its little events were all before her, spread out like one of her old school-sums, and what were they, now she could reckon them all up?—The lines were filled with ciphers, and there was no unit to make them anything more! She had been, and she had come away; but that was the Alpha and the Omega, and there was no midway on which she could lay her head and dream. She had been twisted in, and then she had been twisted out. She reviewed the little divisions of the evening: how she had been carried off after supper with the tide—past Mr Musgrave, past all chance of any word or look from him but the then said good-night—out from the room, out from the house, out from the very town in which he breathed, into the even, unflurried placidity of the Combe; and, obliged to be moved either by its cruelty or its absurdity, she vaulted from the former as too sober-serious, and turned her eyes only on the last.

Well, it was all over now; it was done; there was no more to be said or thought about it; and it was far better to let it go: she should be free now; indeed, she *was* free. Her heart was still, her pulses calm: she should never again deliver herself to such foolish hope and expectation; she would have fact for her subsistence from now; fact that she was sure that she could clutch when she wanted it, and that would not mock her by vanishing into air. She would sink back into the repose and serenity of the Combe; she would be her father's solace, her mother's listener, with only her music and her cheerfulness to be the gilding spread upon her way.

Two days after, she was ready for a walk to Aberminster. Ashbury Hall picnic was her errand, of course. In all history, the lives of men, being traced from outside points, approach the centre of some great event, and there become woven into one harmonious whole; and it was the same with Kitty and her friends. They were walking steadily towards their great pleasure-party; they carried each their thread to add it to the general woof; and though each was but an individual, a single purpose was actuating every one; and Kitty—any more than any other—could not wrestle against her fate. She was to go to the grocer's, and the chemist's, and the Cedars (the name of the Folletts' house), and if she did not execute her commissions properly, there would ensue a general woe.

'Pray, don't forget,' Mrs Courtney called after her, for the dozenth time: 'there is the essence of almonds, and the isinglass; the anchovy paste, and sardines; and then there is the message to the Folletts—altogether five things. Don't forget one; there 's a good girl.'

'To be sure, mamma,' Kitty cried. 'I will recollect that I have five fingers and five senses; and I will even go so far as to remember that there are five lancets in the church east windows, and that between our seat and the pulpit there are five pews; and then I shall be just as good as when I was a little girl home for the holidays at school! I will not forget!' Upon which she went a few steps out of her way to look in through the drawing-room window, and give an extra nod to her dear 'pap;' and then gathering a just-opened blush-rose, that was looking far too beautiful to be heedlessly passed by, she was really off Combe precincts, and set out upon her road.

If anybody else could have forgotten that Bracklington House—Abel Musgrave's—was next door to the Cedars, where she was going, Kitty Courtney didn't. Magnificently free as she was, superlatively superior to the fetters that might *once* have bound her, she was as conscious of the fact as if it had been a fierce Indian sun, and were pouring down vertically on her unprotected head. She knew the owner would not be there; she knew it was the time he would be absent at his factory; but she gave a long look at the well-known windows, and at the great hall-door that stood between them, nevertheless. Nearly all the shutters were closed; the flower-beds were unfilled; there was a thorough air of desertion and neglect everywhere about. And Kitty knew what this meant for Abel Musgrave. She knew it pointed at rigid self-denial—altered habits that must have seemed to him like migration to another land. But she walked on; made her call; walked by again; executed her little errands—with a salutation here and there as she passed any one she knew; and was down the hill again, leaving the narrow pavements of real

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Aberminster town. Then she had to choose between one more street again or a pathway through the minster-yard; and having had enough of bustle and confusion, she decided to avoid the chance of any more, and she passed through the posts that formed the headway of the quiet path.

Dear, dear! There was Abel Musgrave!—What should she do?—He did not see her!—Should she turn back?—He was toiling, with two sticks to help him, to the seat in the south porch (quite close upon the path), and he need never know that she had been so near!—What should she do?

There was no choice now. Musgrave had accomplished his sharp difficulty of climbing into the porch, and had no sooner thrown himself heavily on to the seat than he had seen her, and was struggling to draw himself up once more, that he might do the meeting fitting honour. She could only run to him the same moment, hindering him, and laying a thoughtful hand upon his arm.

'You must not get up,' she cried, 'now I see you are so tired. I will sit by you rather than that; then I, too, shall get a rest.'

She did as she said, and the old south porch held them; and the sculptured angels were the only audience, with their folded hands and low-bent heads.

Abie thanked her warmly, so that the blushes flew into her cheeks. His resting-place would have an association now, he said. He always stopped there on his slow way from his home to his factory, and it would have a memory now it had always lacked before. She was *very* kind.

Kitty thought of the shrouded windows she had just passed by, and the flowerless garden-beds; and she could not reply with all of her usual cheeriness and laugh.

'It is no harm, Mr Musgrave,' she said, 'to have to do things to which we are not used. It is very good that there is a seat here exactly where you want it.'

'Yes, that is *very* good,' answered Musgrave, 'especially *now*'—and here Kitty was obliged to look up with a little smile and bow, because it was her nature, and she could not help it—'but the poverty that brings me here is no pastime! It requires a strong will to battle with that!'

Poor Kitty! This was just the time when she could have said: 'Poverty, Abie, is nothing! I am yours all the same!' or, rather, this was just the time when she could have sighed out that, if she had not been so magnificently free! so superlatively superior to love's every little chain!—but what could she do now? Nothing. Nothing but let her eyes again fall down; but trace round the dim carving of a grave-stone at her foot; but feel her heart was beating very hard.

'May I tell you,' asked Musgrave, 'what poverty brings to me?'

'Yes,' said Kitty, with her eyes quite down.

Then she heard Musgrave say that poverty meant, for him, the giving up of the one thing he wished for, the determination to do his all—to endure everything—till he could get back into his former position, and enjoy what he had enjoyed before. She heard him say that to do this, perhaps, he ought to have given up Bracklington House; but it was the mere shell of what it had been, he was living there with only one servant—all the furniture being gone—and he thought he might have been many months before he could have found any one to take it; and so, with that much of his former self, there he stayed. And then poverty, he said, made him work: it made him be his own overlooker, his own head-clerk; for he was resolved to pay off all his debts; he would recover his position no other way. But, he went on to tell, this was the mere sketch of poverty. The filling up came to a great deal more. Those were the few broad facts, which in themselves would be small and easy; but a hundred things that had become his nature had now to be checked a hundred times a day; and then there was the great wide fear, that when he had worked up to the prize he longed for, the prize might have been grasped by some other, and be gone away!

And there was nothing more. The old dim-carved grave-stone had other feet to tread it, the listening sculpture heard what other voices said. A group of visitors, led by the sexton, came up to enter that way into the church, and as they referred to Mr Musgrave for some matter of architectural history that was a point of dispute, Kitty said a little fluttering good-bye, and went her way. But she *thought* Abie pressed her hand; she *thought* his eyes had some special meaning in them as they rested on her face; and somehow she was not so confidently certain of her freedom when she got back to the Combe as she had been when she had started from it! And somehow she was not so confidently certain that it was so *very* happy to be free! It seemed to her—there was just a sweet savour coming—that there was something else that might possibly become a great deal more delicious still!

THE BASTILLE.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

THE details given in our former chapter will have afforded a clear idea of the organisation of the administration of the Bastille; we may now proceed to speak of some of the most striking facts mentioned in the archives of that institution, gathered from them by the laborious researches of M. Ravaisson, wherever those documents were to be found, which included the British Museum, those in the Dubrowski Collection at St Petersburg, the Arsenal and Imperial libraries at Paris, and other sources existing in that capital.

The case of the Count di Pagano, or Pagan, is one of the earliest of the sad histories recorded. What his offence was, beyond the accusation that he had been heard to say that he would kill the king by magical arts, is a mystery. The account that may be gathered from his letters, written in Italian, represents him as an old man seventy-eight years of age. He was imprisoned in 1652, and the letters he addressed to the minister Colbert date from 1661 to 1665; it cannot, therefore, be said that he was impatient in beginning the long course of supplications he continued until the day of his death, as is supposed. The tale of his sufferings is more pitiful than many a narrative of a like kind that has made a noise in the world. Their severity may be inferred from the statement, that from want of means to buy candles, he was obliged to pass the greater part of his time in darkness;

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that he had been compelled to wear the same and only shirt he possessed seven months. He begged the minister to make the sole gift he had bestowed on him, four hundred francs, an annuity, in order that he might not be compelled to lie naked on the bare ground; the man of whom he hired the few articles he had previously had the use of, having refused to allow him to retain them any longer, because he had not been paid for upwards of a year. The sole answer of Colbert to his heart-rending supplications that can be found is the laconic one, 'Let him be clothed.' What ultimately became of him is not known; the date of his last letter is the 28th November 1665, and it is a remarkable coincidence that the celebrated engineer, Blaise Pagan, is recorded to have died at Paris on that very day; the question is, whether this may not be the same man who had endured this terrible imprisonment through thirteen weary years, without having been brought to trial, and simply because of the accusation that he had boasted that he would cause the king's death by his magical arts.

The hatred Mazarin bore to the Cardinal de Retz extended to his servants and all connected with him. Either the minister must have been very severe on the score of morals, or he was hard driven to find a reason for committing the Abbé Dorat, a friend of the cardinal's, to the Bastille, the charge against him being merely, that when he lost money at card-playing, he cursed and swore out of all measure. That he was not likely to improve in this respect while in prison, is certain, supposing the statement of an official is true, that the greater part of the prisoners lived without religion, amidst curses and blasphemy; that the Bastille was, in fact, a kind of hell upon earth, in which the strong-minded, strong-armed spinster, who bore the name of De Vezilly, and whose appearance as a litigant was familiar to all who attended the law-courts, was greatly out of place. She was confined sixteen months in the prison, for having abused, boxed the ears, and attempted to strangle the president of one of the law-courts, because, as she alleged, he had favoured the cause of her brothers, in opposition to her own.

Another case shews to what extent crimes might be committed with impunity by men possessing influence even so late as the time of Colbert. The criminal was a certain Marquis de l'Hôpital, cousin of the marshal of that name, who was noted in the locality where he lived for his dissolute conduct. The parish priest, who did not see in his high rank any reason for sparing him, publicly rebuked him. To revenge this well-deserved censure, he waylaid the priest, and with the aid of two pages he had taken with him, he killed a peasant who accompanied the censor of his acts, and left the latter lying on the ground, with, as was stated in the account drawn up for official purposes, no less than one hundred and twenty wounds, notwithstanding which he was picked up alive. The offence for which he underwent this cruel treatment was so creditable to him, that the whole body of the clergy took up his cause. The marquis was summoned to answer for his crime before the parliament, but he managed to elude the condemnation hanging over his head by availing himself of all the expedients at the command of the wealthy and influential in those days to put off any judgment of his case. Meanwhile the affair had assumed the form of a struggle between the nobility and clergy, the latter endeavouring to rouse the king into doing justice, by recalling to his memory that he had solemnly sworn on the day of his consecration to renounce the right of pardon in the case of assaults on ecclesiastics. The nobility, on the other hand, saw, or pretended to see, in this attempt to bring one of their order to justice, an attack on their privileges, which they represented as involving an attack on those of royalty. By the exercise of his influence, and the claims he had on the regency, the chief of which is said to have been the murder of the Marshal d'Ancre, Marshal de l'Hôpital procured the grant of what were termed 'letters of abolition,' which seems to mean a quashing of the entire case. The scandal, however, was of too crying a nature to admit of such a termination of the affair, and the parliament refusing to let the matter drop, the only way in which a victory could be obtained over it was the manœuvre of making the criminal surrender himself as a prisoner, and then conniving at his escape.

It was about the same time that the first pamphleteer was arrested on account of circulating what in France were termed *gazettes à la main*, or, as similar publications were called in England, 'flying sheets,' which in France, and probably in this country also, would have been often better denominated by the omission of the letter *f*. He did not suffer long for his novel offence; his plea, that what he had done was for the purpose of earning his daily bread—a plea that seems to have been equivalent to absence of malicious motives—was deemed a sufficient excuse, and he was set at liberty.

Wicquefort—the author of a work bearing the title, *The Ambassador and his Functions*, which, by the way, was written while he lay in prison under sentence of imprisonment for life for having sold, in 1675, to the English ambassador the originals of the secret advices given by Lord Haward to the Dutch government—tasted imprisonment in the Bastille, but was liberated after a few days, though only to be conducted, very much like a common felon, by an agent of police, to Calais, and there put on board a vessel, by which he was conveyed to his country, and surrendered into the hands of his government. The documents dug up concerning him by M. Ravaisson would induce any jury to pronounce that he richly deserved the treatment he received.

Mistakes were sometimes made in the arrest of individuals; one of these occurred in the case of the king's biographer, a man named Magnon, who acted with Molière, and who was himself the author of some very indifferent plays. The mistake was made clear, and he was liberated after a short imprisonment, though, if he could have foreseen that he would be murdered soon afterwards, he would probably have preferred enduring the ills he had, to exposing himself to so tragical an end.

From the description given of the building and

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the manner in which it was guarded, the reader will have no difficulty in believing that escape from the Bastille—unless connived at by the authorities—would be impossible. Nevertheless, an escape from it was once made, and the narrative is one of the most marvellous on record. The name of the prisoner who had the courage to attempt it was Latude. The offence for which he was imprisoned was having attempted to obtain an appointment by representing to Madame Pompadour that a plot existed for taking her life; rather an odd way of effecting his wishes, but his calculation was, that by awakening her gratitude, he might succeed. His scheme was seen through; and to punish him, he was sent first to the prison at Vincennes, from which place he made his escape, and then to the Bastille. By observation, and by counting the number of steps that led from his chamber to the chapel, he satisfied himself that there must be a double floor. By means of two iron legs drawn from his table, and worked on the tiled floor until they had a flat edge resembling a chisel, he and a fellow-prisoner got up the tiles, and found that not only was there a double floor, but that the space was left empty. The next thing to be done was to make a cord, and to do this he was abundantly supplied with material; having at his disposal a good stock of linen, which he had been allowed to retain as not being contrary to the regulations of the prison. They began by drawing out the threads one by one, until they had sufficient to make a kind of ladder between fifty and sixty feet in length. By means of this ladder, they sustained themselves in the chimney, while they worked with the legs of the table at the iron bars which defended the exit of prisoners in that direction. This labour was frightful. The mortar had become so hard by time, that if they managed to clear it away to the depth of the eighth of an inch round one bar in the course of a night, they considered it a good night's work. To soften the mortar, they used to ascend with their mouths full of water, and spurt it into the hole, little by little, as they got on with their work. Had they been able to work freely, this would have been excessively toilsome: as it was, they had to work in such painful positions, that one hour at a time was the most they could endure, and their hands were so cut and bruised that they never descended from their labour without finding them covered with blood. Notwithstanding the torture it caused—of which Latude could never speak in after-years without a shudder—they persevered in their labour; and at the end of six months, during which they had steadily prosecuted it, they had succeeded in loosening the whole of the bars, and were at liberty to continue the manufacture of the rest of the articles they required.

First of these was the wooden ladder, to enable them to ascend from the moat to the parapet, and from thence to the governor's garden. As the prisoners had to supply themselves with fuel at their own expense, they had a stock of wood in their cell, which was sawed up in logs of about twenty inches in length. To cut these logs to suit their purpose, a saw was necessary; this he made out of an iron candlestick, by means of half of the steel belonging to the tinder-box, from which he had previously manufactured a knife. By the use of these tools, they worked their logs into a ladder, every part of which was marked in such a way that they could put it together in the dark. All these things were stowed away beneath the floor as they were completed, to await the night when the attempt at escape was to be made. But in addition to the wooden ladder, another had to be made of not less than eighty feet in length. The linen and silk articles were again resorted to, and the process of unravelling continued until, in course of time, they had worked the threads into rope capable of bearing the weight of a man. This was intended to effect the descent from the top of the Bastille; but this was not enough. Knowing that this top projected over the wall too far to allow a man to steady himself in his descent by its means, and not knowing how long circumstances might require them to remain on the ladder, during which they would be swinging backward and forward, and spinning round like a joint of meat before a fire, they made another rope one hundred and sixty feet long, which they passed through two holes drilled through the ends of one of their logs. This rope would of course hang double, and by holding one in the right hand, and the other in the left, they were able to steady themselves in their descent. Other ropes were made for sundry purposes, the total length made by them being about four hundred and seventy yards in length. So much for the preparations, which were only a part of those required before the attempt to escape could be made.

Having fixed on a night to make the attempt to escape, Latude climbed the chimney, in doing which he underwent great pain from the grating off of the skin from his elbows and knees. He had carried up a cord with him, and by its means he drew up the different things they required to aid their escape, which were followed by his companion. Having reached the platform, they fastened the ladder to one of the guns, and Latude descended successfully, but with immense pain and difficulty. His companion then drew up the loose rope, and lowered their tools, after which he came down himself, Latude holding the bottom of the ladder, which made it comparatively easy. All this was done within hearing of the sound of the sentinel's footsteps as he marched to and fro. The moat they had descended into was filled with water to the height of their armpits, and had pieces of ice floating in it. As they had been obliged to give up the mode of escape they had planned in the first instance, the only other way was to wade through this water to the opposite side, and by means of their bars to make a hole through the wall. This wall was nearly five feet thick, and it took nine hours to make a hole large enough to squeeze through. Besides the labour this involved, every half hour they were obliged to dip their heads under water, to avoid the risk of being seen by the guard, the light of whose lantern fell upon the spot where they were at work every time the rounds were made. At length, after incredible exertions, they found themselves outside the wall and at liberty; but they had not gone far before they fell into an aqueduct, the water in which was about ten feet deep, and there was a great thickness of mud at the sides. With great difficulty they scrambled out, ran some distance, and then fell on their knees to offer up a thanksgiving for their escape.

It is a remarkable circumstance in the history of the Bastille that the builder of the two towers of which it was originally composed ended his days as a prisoner in one of them; the last

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governor, the unfortunate Launay, was murdered, as everybody knows, when the Bastille was taken by the populace in 1789.

FAR EAST.

The great and increasing prosperity of the Dutch colonies has attracted much attention to them of late, leading to their being discussed in books and pamphlets from the commercial, social, and political points of view. An American traveller and naturalist of eminence, Mr Albert S. Bickmore,* has lately visited the beautiful and romantic Eastern Archipelago, in the interests of natural history and science; and, while contributing to our knowledge in the above-mentioned branches, furnishes an extraordinary and brilliantly picturesque account of the fantastic group, in the midst of whose serpentine forms the vast island of Borneo lies like a huge slumbering turtle. Bound to

> The glad islands of glittering seas,
> Where scented forests perfume the breeze—

to the coasts guarded by the fabled harpy, terror of the old Dutch sailors, the traveller began to perceive indications of the tropical features while yet far off. Snakes swam, and fragments of rock, and sea-washed palms drifted over the sea; and, like Columbus, he first saw the cocoa-nut, idly tossed by the waters—that strange fruit, for one specimen of which a prince of Ceylon is said to have given a whole shipload of spices, unconscious that it grew in profusion on the Seychelles. While the shore was yet thirty-five miles distant, the air was fragrant with the odours of the isles; and as they sailed up the Java sea, the irregular contour of the coast formed scenes of endless beauty and variety, with its dense and varied vegetation, its groups of tall palms and mangroves (the latter even below high-water mark), divided from the ocean only by a strip of ivory-white coral sand, shining with wonderful brightness in the sun.

Batavia is not a bad place to linger at a while, even though one wants to get on to the tropical savage life, which influences it not at all, and yet is so near it; and a quite delightful place for the student of science, as it boasts a number of valuable 'collections,' and two 'Societies,' whose proceedings are of the most energetic kind, and whose publications are of great scientific importance. It must have a strange effect to watch things of this kind going on in a place where the population is so mixed, where the Europeans number only 5576; and the other thousands who make up the half million inhabitants of the residency of Batavia are Malays, Chinese, Arabs, and 'all other eastern nations,' to whom the intellectual activity of the Europeans is of course unintelligible.

The natives (Malays) are remarkably short of stature, the male sex not averaging more than five feet three inches in height. Their faces are lozenge-shaped, the cheek-bones high and prominent, the mouth wide, and the nose short but not flat. Mr Bickmore gives the coast-people a good character for mildness, trustworthiness, and hospitality. They are also very quiet and indolent; are nominally Mohammedan in religion, but not in the least fanatical; retain many of their Hindu notions, and are passionately addicted to gambling. They are very cleanly, and bathe constantly, in large and sociable parties, on which occasion the utmost decency and good manners are observed. Beards are represented among them by a few straggling hairs, which they pull out; and the lank coarse hair is worn long by both sexes, so that it is not easy for a stranger to know whether he is looking at a man or a woman. There is nothing exciting about these harmless people; but the wild tribes of Sumatra, the Celebes and Ceram, supply plenty of the strange and terrible. The buffalo abounds in all the large islands of the Archipelago, as in Ceylon and India. In Java, it is very ugly and very useful. It must be startling to a stranger to come upon pools of water whence protrude the noses and eyes of these slow creatures, called there the water-ox. The natives make artificial ponds in the highlands of the country, that the buffaloes may rest, after their favourite fashion, on their journeys. They are docile creatures generally, but have an extraordinary dislike to the sight of Europeans, which they exhibit by breathing heavily through the nose. 'At such times,' says Mr Bickmore, 'they become restive and unmanageable, and their owners have frequently requested me to walk away, lest I should be attacked.'

The natives are not deficient in appreciation of the beauties of nature. Among the lofty dark-blue mountains to the south, a native prince, named Rahden Saleh, possesses a magnificent estate, and a palace like that of the fairy Pari Banou; it is the richest native residence in the Eastern Archipelago. Rahden Saleh is an extraordinary person, and when Mr Bickmore visited him, he found him engaged in forming a portion of his grounds into a superb zoological garden for the government at Batavia. He is a fine landscape-painter, an accomplished linguist, and the original of the Eastern Prince of Eugène Sue's romance, *The Wandering Jew*.

The determination of the Dutch government to make their settlement as much as possible self-supporting, has developed a number of mechanical industries among the natives, who appear to be a happy people, dividing their time between moderate labour and immoderate gambling. The Dutch government prohibits cock-fighting, but the Spaniards only tax the vice, so that in the Philippines it is indulged in to an extent which brings in a yearly revenue of forty thousand dollars. The Malay language bears testimony to the prevalence of this infamous amusement; it has one specific name for cock-fighting, one for the natural, and one for the artificial spur of the cock, two names for the comb, three for crowing, two for a cockpit, and one for a professional cock-fighter. In a public garden at Surabaya are some images, of immemorial antiquity, of the gods of the ancient Javanese worship. The favourite, judging by its frequency, is a man with the head of an elephant, seated on a throne resting on a row of human skulls. The elephant, abundant in the peninsula, Borneo, and Sumatra, does not exist in Java, nor does the beautiful wild horse of Sumatra and the Celebes. Six species of deer are found, among them the lovely animal almost legendary in Europe, the pure white deer.

Birds are numerous and gorgeously beautiful, and the wonders and delights of the forests what tongue can tell? To every insufficient picture of them the mind reverts with ever fresh pleasure,

* *Travels in the East Indian Archipelago.* By Albert S. Bickmore, M.A., F.R.G.S. of London, &c. London: John Murray.

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untired by a certain sameness, feeling its charm ever new. Miles and miles of magnificent forest cover the hillsides and crown their heights, with masses of the palm, the cocoa-nut, the banana, the zambutan, the mango, the bamboo, the giant fig-tree tall as the palm, great oaks and shining laurels, luxuriant graceful ferns, and the beautiful cotton-wood tree. Far above the tropical forest, the tops of the barren volcanic mountains spread their grim irregular range, in the temperate region. It would be difficult to imagine more enjoyable travel than a coasting-voyage in the seas which surround these wonderful islands of the far East; a voyage which is but a succession of beautiful views, and of opportunities for the observation of the grandest atmospheric and other phenomena. The awful 'burning mountains' lend terrific grandeur to the scene; while the story of the sudden overwhelming ruin which they wrought is not to be forgotten for all the beauty and the life around.

It was midsummer when Mr Bickmore reached Amboina, the goal of his long journey, and the most important of the Spice Islands. Here, one hundred and fifty years ago, Rumphius made his great collection of Eastern shells, described, in 1705, in his *Rariteit Kamer*, which was lodged at Leyden, and destroyed in that period so fraught with disaster to the arts and sciences, the first French Empire. Mr Bickmore journeyed to the far East to make a similar collection for the benefit of his own country. He had to encounter much difficulty and not a little danger, including a horrible ascent of a volcanic mountain, which one shudders to read, and an encounter with a huge python, which is a tale, for all the quiet tone in which it is told, worthy of the most thrilling style of boy literature. The shells are his chief objects, but he will not find many readers to agree with him; they will linger over the extraordinary details which he gives of the customs of the savage tribes of the interior, concerning whom he confirms many of the horrid stories which have hitherto been supposed to be either quite mythical or highly exaggerated—and the wonderful productions of nature, which he describes with a true naturalist's love.

Early in his stay at Amboina, Mr Bickmore saw two fine specimens of the *Birgos latro*, an enormous hermit crab, whose habits are most remarkable. The creature feeds on the universally beneficent cocoa-nut. As the ripe nut falls from the tree, it tears off the dry husk with its powerful claws until the end of the shell, where the three black scars are found, is laid bare. It then breaks the shell by hammering with its heavy claws; and the oily fattening food within is obtained by means of the pincer-like claws attached to its hinder joints—so perfectly is this animal adapted to its peculiar mode of life. The huge hermit is regarded as a great delicacy for the table, and is carefully fed for that purpose. When the traveller, having done a brisk trade in shells, departed for the next village on the coast, he asked the rajah if he could give him a bottle in which to carry water in his canoe. 'The rajah,' he says, 'smiled to think I could be so unaccustomed to tropical life, and ordered a servant to climb one of the cocoa-nut palms above us, and cut off some of its clusters of large green fruit. These we could carry anywhere, and open when we pleased; and a few strokes with a heavy cleaver at once furnished us with a sparkling fountain.'

This same rajah gravely displayed to the traveller, as priceless treasures, a few glass rings, which he averred were not the work of man's hands, but had been taken out of the heads of snakes and wild boars! All attempts to explain their real nature and origin were vain, and ill received. The possession of the magic treasures enhanced the rajah's importance, the explanation would have endangered it.

The clove harvest is an interesting period and object. It occurs twice a year, in June and in December. The natives of the islands where they grow never eat cloves in any form, and there is no reason to suppose they ever did. 'The clove,' says Mr Bickmore, 'probably came into use originally by accident, and I believe the first people who fancied its rich aroma and warm pungent taste were the Chinese. The similarity of the native name to that of the Chinese, and its marked difference from that of the Brahmans, or Hindus, lend probability to this view.' When the Portuguese first came to these islands, the Chinese, Arabs, Malays, Javanese, and Macassars were all found here trading in this article. The first notice of cloves in Europe occurs in a law passed during the reign of Aurelian I., between 175 and 180 A.D., where they are mentioned as forming an article of commerce from India to Alexandria. The round-about mode of travel, and frequent transfers, so increased the original price, that in England, before the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope, thirty shillings per pound were paid for them, or L.168 sterling per hundredweight, which was 365 times their original price. It was to make this immense profit that the Portuguese, the Spaniards, the Dutch, and the English were all so anxious to find a passage to the East by sea, and why, when those islands had been discovered, each strove to monopolise the trade itself, and all carried on such a persistent and piratical warfare for years. In the traveller's account of the earthquakes in the islands—one a year is the minimum at Amboina—there is a close resemblance to that given of the eruptions in Iceland by the Swedish professor Pjakjull with respect to the diseases caused by volcanic action. In 1699, when a succession of earthquakes occurred all over the Archipelago, frightful epidemic fever prevailed, and the theory now advanced is, that quantities of poisonous gases arose out of the earth during the violent shocks.

On the whole, the life of the natives of these beautiful islands is a happy and enviable one. They never know any physical want, and they are apparently incapable of mental anxiety, the desire to have something reserved for sickness or old age is not known to them, and they have no conception of the meaning of a famine, and no word in their language to express it; nature having supplied their wants with an unsparing and unfailing hand.

The prevailing elements of the picture are beauty and peace, until Ceram, the largest island in the Moluccas, is reached. It is really one great mountain-chain, which sends off many transverse ranges and spurs, the only lowlands being east of the Bay of Amahai, and forming its southern shore. Some of these mountains are of magnificent height, and the entire range is covered with continuous and unbroken forest. Many portions of the island are entirely unknown, and the estimate of its population is almost guess-work. Judging of the natives by Mr Bickmore's description, the fewer there are of them the better. The Resident at

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Amahai sent some of the coast-people to invite the *Alfura* or savage mountain-people to come down and perform their war-dance. A party of twenty accepted the invitation. They resembled the Malays, but were darker, and had crisp though not woolly hair. Their clothing was not abundant, and being made of bark, resembled a strip of coarse brown paper, four inches wide and three feet long. The following brief description has something about it peculiarly dreadful, though we are tolerably well accustomed to savages. 'Each of the warriors was armed with a *parang*, or cleaver, which he raised high in the right hand; while on his left arm was a shield three or four feet long, but only a few inches wide, which he held before him, as if to ward off an imaginary blow. Their dance was merely a series of short leaps forward and backward, and occasionally whirling quickly round, as if to defend themselves from a sudden attack in the rear. Their only musical instrument was a rude tifa, which was accompanied by a monotonous song from the women, children, and old men. At first, the time of the music was slow, but by degrees it grew quicker and louder, until all sang as fast and as loud as they could. The dancing warriors became more excited, and flourished their cleavers, and leaped to and fro with all their might, until, as one of our company remarked, their eyes were like fire. It was easy to understand that in such a state of temporary madness they would no more hesitate to cleave off a head than to cut down a bamboo.' Nor do they hesitate, for they are far-famed head-hunters, and are even greater proficients in the art, and more devoted to its exercise, than the Dyaks of Borneo, for it has passed into a law of the tribe that no young man can marry until he has cut off at least one human head. This systematic enactment reduces the Bornean savages to the rank of mere amateurs in comparison. With what horror the American traveller, fully realising this horrible fact, must have regarded these frenzied wretches, more loathsome than any brutes! The head of a child will suffice for the bare, scanty, formal fulfilment of the law, though it is regarded as a mean offering—the head of a woman, because she can possibly escape, or shew some kind of fight, is somewhat more glory; the head of a man is held, of course, in higher estimation; and the head of a white man is a proof of the greatest bravery, and is therefore the most glorious trophy. A few years ago, the Dutch on the north coast had a war with these natives; and when they had driven them to the mountains, they found in their huts between two and three times as many human skulls as it is probable there were people in the whole village, men, women, and children taken together. When a man is afraid to go out on such a hunt alone, he invites or hires two or three others to assist him, and all lie in wait near a neighbouring village, until some one chances to pass by, when they spring out, despatch their victim, and escape. This, of course, creates deadly enmity between each tribe, and every other near it; and the whole interior of the eastern half of the island, where head-hunting prevails, is one unchanging scene of endless bloody strife. When a head is secured, the brains are taken out, and it is placed over a fire to be smoked and dried. During this process, the muscles of the face contract and change the features until they assume a most ghastly grimace. When a warrior has cut off a head, he draws a circle on the paper-like bark of his only garment. One of the pleasant persons who danced for the delight of Mr Bickmore, had four such circles; and the traveller gave him to understand that he knew their meaning, by drawing one hand four times across his throat, and then holding up four fingers; 'whereon,' he adds, 'the savage hopped about as delighted as a child, thinking that of course I was regarding him as the bravest of the brave, while I looked at him in mute astonishment, and tried to realise what a hardened villain he was.' One heartily sympathises with the comic little touch of complacency in the next sentence: 'Our North American savages are civilised men compared to these fiends in human form.' He saw more of the Alfura a little later, when he went into the mountains with a band of soldiers hunting for rebels, and arrived on the scene of one of their drunken revels, in which each man drinks as much of an intoxicating liquor, made from palm-juice, as he possibly can, and then all join in a dance, and kick about a human head, obtained for the special occasion, and tossed, all bleeding, into the centre of the convivial circle.

The most sentimental philanthropist would surely acknowledge that the Alfura want a good deal of extermination. Mr Bickmore's sensations are quite intelligible. 'The natives,' he says, 'whom our soldiers had seized were present, and took part, as they confessed, in these bloody carousals. A sickening fear crept over me before I fell asleep, as I realised the probability, that were it not for our guard, instead of our taking away these culprits to be punished, they would sever every one of our heads, and have another diabolical revel.' The surprising fact is that, under the circumstances, Mr Bickmore managed to go to sleep at all. It was a delightful change from these fiend-haunted forests to the beautiful nutmeg groves of Neira, and the splendid coral reefs of Lontar; the ascent, which, however, was frightfully perilous, of the terrible Gunong Api volcano, and the seclusion, for exploring purposes, in a forsaken hut in the recesses of the forest, with the strange bright birds for companions, and the wonderful trees and flowers for the traveller's ceaseless, ever-new delight. In the northern peninsula of Celebes, amid much that is beautiful and attractive, Mr Bickmore especially noticed one dreadful sight, a leper village, containing nineteen inhabitants, whose sufferings he describes, after a solemn and startling fashion, adding: 'No one who has not seen such lepers as these can have any idea of what forms human flesh can assume, and life yet remain in the body.' It is consolatory to read his testimony to the humanity with which they are treated by the Dutch government.

The Padang Plateau abounds in interest. Every production of nature is there beautiful, lavish, delicious to every sense; the sublime, the graceful, the luxuriant, and the romantic are wonderfully mingled, noble and majestic animal life abounds. Only the human race is detestable and terrible; Mr Bickmore's account of the cannibal Batta tribes is among the most frightful records of savagery yet added to the annals of humanity. They are habitual, and, so to speak, *dilettante* cannibals, cooking the human carcass in different ways, and seasoning it with various condiments. They do not eat only their war-prisoners, or enemies; cannibalism is the ordinary gratification of their appetites, and their cruelty is so infernal that

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Dante himself could not have evolved it out of his imagination. The natives of the Pagi Islands are dreadfully savage and degraded, but they are not cannibals. One turns with delight from these miserable beings, to the noble beasts, the gorgeous birds, the curious insect tribes, and the redoubtable serpents, which in their far superior fashion people the far East.

STRINGING THE NERVES.

When you Englishers hear an American tell a story, you generally Ho, ha! or Ha, ha! or wink at one another, just as if it was down impossible for what you call a Yankee to speak truth. And I must say that we do sometimes indulge in a bit of tall talk. But I'm going in now for a bit of the real grit—something that happened down our way, and not something that I was told, but saw with my own eyes, acted in, and was mixed up with; and I want you to be on good terms with me, and for once, in a way, just to take for granted that what I tell you is quite true.

You see, I'm an engine-driver on the Great West-by-north Railway. We don't chase lightning over the prairies on our line, for we're slow and pretty sure. I've been half as fast again on your London and Birmingham and Great Western—faster than I liked too, though it was my trade, so you see I don't mean to raise your hair that way.

Ours is a new line—a very new one—running through miles of unsettled country, where it's no wonderful thing to make out in the far distance half-a-dozen Inguns galloping along with their hair and blanket streaming out behind; and more than once I've wondered how it would be if one of those painted beauties was to collect his friends, and pull up the line. 'Pon my word, it's about as sensational a feeling as can come over you. Talk about your hair standing on end, why, there's a perceptible creeping, for all the world as if some one was pouring canary-seed through the roots. And, mind you, tomahawk and scalping-knife are not things only to be heard of in Cooper's novels, for they are in use to this very day, so that more than one Sioux or Pawnee warrior can display his green and bloody scalps torn from the heads of the hated whites by his treacherous hand. Seems very horrible, no doubt, and to belong to the past; but for all that, such things are taking place every day in the Far West.

Now, it's through this part of the country that our line runs, and for years past I've drove on that line. I drove there when it only ran twenty miles; and I saw and ran along that line as it stretched out farther and farther into the great region westward, till it went its hundreds.

We've cow-catchers on our engines, and nothing to laugh at neither. On your few mile-long lines, you can fence; but when your line happens to get over a thousand miles, fencing comes expensive, and would make a hole in the profits; so that it was soon found necessary to have something in front that would throw off a cow or a bullock if it had strayed on to the line; or else, being an obstinate sort of beast, it might throw off the train. For they will stray, and there's no mistake about them, and when you see them there, and sound the horn—for we use that as well as a whistle—instead of the stupid things getting off and into safety, they'll go galloping on in their clumsy cock-tail one-two-three amble, till we catch up to them, and then—well, I should say that in my time I've made beef of a score of cows, though I never made an end of a fellow-creature yet. I was very near it, though, once.

You've laughed about the stokers going out in front on to the cow-catcher, to heave billets of wood at the brutes; but it's a fact, and I've done it before now; and a good crack from a cornerish piece of wood has saved 'em, making them give a kick and a plunge off the single line, and giving us room to go by.

But there are things that will not get out of the way, do what you will; I believe you might sound the horn or whistle, or whatever you'd got, at any old woman who was crossing the line, and she'd only stand still and stare; while, if you had a billet of wood, she'd only shake her umbrella at you, and call you a villain. They're dreadful creatures are old women, and if it warn't for the thought that they were once young, I don't know how we should bear them. They don't seem to understand railways at all; they never have their tickets ready; they're always either too soon or too late; and when once they are in the car, they bother every one to death, and drive the guard mad by expecting that folks have entered into a conspiracy to carry them right past their destination. Why, a friend of mine, a guard on the line between New York and Chicago, once told me of an old lady going to the last place and wanting to get out at the first station.

Well, putting cows first, and old women second, the next on the list, to my way of thinking, stand children, bless 'em! I love children, got half a score of them myself, but they always give me the cold shivers when I see them near a railway. For you see, I suppose, for company's sake, being an out-of-the-way lonely spot, there was a chap built himself a log-shanty close to the line, where he had made a bit of a clearing, and perhaps he thought it would be a bit of company for his wife and little ones to see the trains go by with people in, besides being a bit of protection from the wandering tribes about; for you see where a man sets up his tent, as you may say, out in the wilderness, he's obliged to run risks; so any chance, however small, of making it less risky is snatched at.

I got quite to know those people, and nice, hard-working folks they were. Why, before they had been there six months, that bit of wilderness began to look like a little garden of Eden; and two more people came and pitched in the next bits. I quite knew those first folks, though we never spoke; for I always went by them at twelve miles an hour; but the little ones used to stand at the shanty-door and cheer, and as time went on, I'd wave my hat to the wife and the husband too, so that they generally used to come out, when they heard me coming up or down; and more than once mine has been an anxious journey when I've passed there, and all has been quiet, for I've thought that perhaps the Inguns had been down, which would have meant murder and fire; but somehow I never had that to trouble me, for the next time I'd pass there would be some one at the door or in the strawberry patch in front.

We got to be such friends at last, that I used to buy candy and dough-nuts, and heave 'em into the garden as I went by, for the children to scramble after, and that's what it was that did it, and this is how it was.

We were going comfortably along one afternoon,

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till, as we got near the clearing where my friends, as I called them, were located, I began to furridge about in my pockets for a couple of papers of something that I'd got, when my stoker says: 'Hollo! what's that on the line?'

'Cow?' says I.

'Cow; no,' he says: 'why—why—it's three children!'

'Sound the'—— I did not stop to finish, but opened the little valve myself, making the still afternoon air quiver with the hollow booming roar it sent far and wide.

'That's moved 'em!' says my stoker, laughing to see the little distant figures scamper away.

'I thought it would,' I says; and then with my hand on the valve, I made the thing scream and roar again, for there was one of the little ones still right in the middle of the track.

In a moment I'd forgotten all about the stuff in the papers, for a curious sort of feeling came over me, one that for a few moments took all the nerve from my limbs, so that I could not move; and then, instead of reversing the engine, I began to creep forward; while, as if from the same feeling, my stoker stood staring with all his might right at the poor little child.

We were too near for it to have done any good, even if we had both done our parts, and it was with a groan seeming to force itself out of my breast, that I told myself it was through my encouraging the poor children with presents that this was going to happen, for there, seeing no danger, was a little bright-eyed, long-haired thing dancing about and waving its hands as we came swiftly on.

It takes me some time to tell it, but it only took a few moments; and there it all is now like a picture that having once seen I can never forget. It was a glorious, golden, sunshiny afternoon, with all looking bright and mellow: the hut, with its patch of flowers; the children by the side of the line, and their mother running out wild and frantic-like, but only to drop down in the track, half-way between the door and where her little one was dancing and waving its little hands as we glided on.

I felt like a man does in one of those nightmare dreams, when the will is there to do something, only a dreadful kind of face holds you back, and you can see danger coming nearer and nearer, and yet not avoid it. We neither of us spoke, but stood there, one on each side, leaning forward as helpless as the poor little child in front, till, with almost a yell, I fought clear of the power that seemed to hold me, and with the feeling on me that I was too late, crept along the side of the engine, and lay down with arms extended in front of the cow-catcher.

Only moments, but moments that seemed like hours, as with its strange, hurrying, jumping motion, the engine dashed down, as I told myself, to crush out the life of that poor little innocent. I wanted to shut my eyes to keep out the horrible sight, but I dared not; and though now I seemed to be doing what might save the child's life, I could not think it possible. There it was, just in front, and yet we appeared to come no nearer. In an ordinary way, we should have passed the shanty a score of times; but now the horror of those moments acted so upon my imagination that we seemed to crawl slowly but surely, like the motion of some vast machine that hardly seems to move, and yet forces its way on with a power that there is no stopping.

Twenty yards—ten yards—were we never going to pass over the spot? or would some miraculous power stop the engine? I tried to shout, but only a curious hoarse noise came from my throat; I wanted to wave my hands, but they remained stretched out obstinately towards the child.

Five yards—four—three. There was the little thing laughing in its innocent glee, for it was expecting some little present from me, who was then calling myself its murderer, and lay there motionless as a statue.

Two yards—one—at last—all over. There was a shock as we dashed down upon the little thing, who seemed to stretch out its hands to mine, and to leap, actually jump, into my arms, and then, with it tightly grasped, we were still going on and on; I with my eyes shut, but feeling that I had the child tightly held to my breast, and yet not able to look to see if it was hurt.

Then I don't know how it was, but I believe I must have got up, and crawled back to my place by the stoker; but I don't know, I can't recollect doing it, only finding myself sitting down there, holding the frightened little child in my arms, and feeling stunned and helpless as a child myself.

'What am I doing of?' I said at last, for my stoker had spoken to me. 'Why, I'm crying,' I said; and so I was crying like some great girl.

We dared not stop to take the little thing back, but we sent it from the next station; and you'll believe me when I tell you, that we were better friends afterwards than ever, so that for long enough we used to make signals, I to the folks at the cottage, and they to me; but I shall never forget that little one getting out upon the line.

IN THE TWILIGHT.

Sits pale Alice in the twilight, at her laurelled lattice there,
Gazing out upon the landscape with a sad and vacant stare:
From below the light wind climbeth with a faint and odorous sigh,
And a white star and a whiter moon hang in the evening sky.

She has sat there very often in the days that have gone by,
With the same calm, mournful bearing, and the same sad, sorrowing eye,
As her heart had lost its object, and her spirit lost its aim,
And as earth was but a dreamland quite, and life an empty name.

What can ail her? wonders Colin, coming nightly from the field,
Who never knew the gloom of heart that falls when spirits yield;
What can ail her? wonders Mary, sturdy Colin's sturdier wife,
Who ne'er allowed a grief to pall in all her checkered life.

But as for him who roameth now in shadow of the firs,
He hath no need to ask her case—his own is like to hers:
Both nurse a silent sorrow which hath never yet been told,
Nor ever will while suns revolve, and human hearts grow old.

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THE FIRST COIFFEUR OF HIS AGE.

WHEN the last century was something older than our own, and hair was the great concern of the fair sex, as it is at present, system being their watch-word then, as chignon is now, the arbiter of beauty's destiny was M. Gastelet, of the Rue St Louise, Paris. The house, and even the street in which he lived and did business, have been swept away by the march of modern improvement; but doubtless his fame is still preserved in the high traditions of hair-dressing, for M. Gastelet was a mighty man in his day. Some said that his genius was first revealed to the fashionable world by a hair-dye which he invented for Madame de Pompadour, when that notable lady could appear only by candle-light, lest it should be discovered that she was growing old; some insisted it was through a wig he had fabricated for the Duchesse d'Orleans, which made her oldest friends take Madame la Duchesse for her own grand-daughter. Whatever was the source of Gastelet's power and glory, they grew and increased with systems and surmounting curls, till in the fair morning of Louis XVI., when they called Marie Antoinette the Queen of Hearts, he was undoubtedly the king of heads.

The numbers he had redeemed from grayness before and after the time, were not to be reckoned. The advantageous matches obtained through his skilful arrangement of tresses, false and true, furnished matter of amazement to the Parisian gossips. His heart-breakers and peace-destroyers, as certain curls were called in those days, were believed to do execution worthy of their names, two German barons having committed suicide, and three English lords gone mad, through the cruelty of their fair wearers, not to speak of duels and other desperate doings arising out of the same. What wonder that M. Gastelet's place of business was so besieged by ladies of all ages in and out of carriages, that the Rue St Louise was perfectly impassable for the greater part of the day; what wonder that his correspondence kept three secretaries in constant employment, that his assistants and apprentices formed a sort of household troop, that his agents were an army scattered throughout the provinces, and that M. Gastelet himself thoroughly understood his own importance.

To the use of scissors or curling-tongs, he never condescended; the proudest of grande-dames could get him to visit her hôtel only by falling suddenly sick: in his *bureau de conseil*, as he chose to call his shop-parlour, the great man held a levee every day from twelve o'clock till three, at which ladies were expected to attend and hear his decisions regarding the proper decoration of their heads. There he sat on a crimson-covered *fauteuil*, attired in a morning-gown of blue damask, with satin slippers to match, and a *queue* of *recherché* tie, while round him sat his fair clients, like courtiers round their monarch, and he delivered judgment on each in her turn. 'Madame,' he would say to one, 'your head demands the aspiring style; a towering system, with unlimited curls, pins, and feathers, form your best prospect of success;' to another: 'Madame, you can appear to advantage only in Arcadian simplicity, falling braids and a fillet *à la* shepherdess;' while a third was commanded to be seen in nothing but severe toilets, if she hoped to produce a favourable impression. The wives of ministers and millionaires, the daughters of prefects and farmers-general, ladies whose disputes for precedence had broken up the peace and pleasure of many a ball-room, whose tongues and tempers were the dread of friends and servants, not to speak of their fortunate lords, attended M. Gastelet's levees, received his commands without a murmur, and, what was more remarkable, paid for them in solid louis-d'ors. Great is the power of fashion and vanity, and on their mighty bases Gastelet's power was built, and his fortune likely to grow to princely proportions; at least all Paris thought so, and more than one good family had commenced negotiations with him through matrimonial agents, for the great coiffeur was still unmarried, when all domestic affairs were cast into the shade by a professional difficulty which threatened his prosperity, if not his fame.

Among the Russian nobles who came to reside

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in Paris immediately after the elevation of Catharine II.'s fourteenth favourite, which was supposed to have made Petersburg too hot for them, was a certain Princess Nareskin, a widow of high connections and some beauty, according to the Russian type. She was also said to be marvellously rich and prudent, and having foreseen the coming danger, to have sold her estates in good time, and vested the proceeds in French and German funds, all but one seat of her ancestors in sixty-five north latitude, with two or three thousand peasants attached, which she kept by way of stake in the holy Russian empire, to return to when her own money was spent, and the empress had changed her mind. In the meantime, Princess Nareskin established herself and suite in a magnificent hôtel in the then headquarters of *ton*, took a box at the Grand Opera, and daily astonished Paris with the splendour of her equipage, and the number of her retainers. The jewellers went into ecstasies over her orders, the milliners had outbursts of enthusiasm, and hotter ones of rivalry on the same subject; and when M. Gastelet was summoned to the Hôtel Nareskin, he thought it worth while to go in person.

The French servants of her Highness—and she had not a few—made known to their acquaintances that his interview with the princess was long and confidential, held with closed doors in her private dressing-room, and with no attendants present but the Tartar dwarf, who understood nothing but Kalmuck, and the Livonian maid, who was deaf and dumb; but when Gastelet returned home, it was evident to the simplest of his *employés* that something of more than common importance occupied the great coiffeur's mind. He spent half-days in a back-room he called his studio, turning over bundles of choice hair, and arranging his most elaborate designs for wigs on the head of a wax-figure, known in his establishment as *la dame de Moscovie*. He sent for his most confidential agents, and was closeted with them for hours; and his goings to the Hôtel Nareskin were frequent enough to serve an ardent suitor for the wealthy widow's hand. The cause of those remarkable proceedings was at length made plain to such of his assistants as he thought best qualified for professional secrecy; and their intimates learned that the Princess Nareskin had come to Paris expressly to engage Monsieur Gastelet's skill on a subject which had foiled all the other coiffeurs of Europe. Her Highness did not choose to make it public, of course; but she was descended from a Polish family, which, in the revolutions and misfortunes of its country, had lost every remnant of inheritance but the plaka. That heirloom had come down to the princess, just when the departure of an experienced husband, and the lapse of a decent time of mourning, had enabled her to contemplate and arm herself for new conquests; but who can conquer with a shaven head? Shaved her Highness's head had to be, in spite of all the efforts of physicians, quacks, and even witches, whom, like a true daughter of the North, she consulted, some being yet to be found among the Finns and Lapps, and their endeavours were equally unsuccessful to make the hair grow again in its accustomed manner. The princess had got wigs of every form and pattern, shade and quality. She had tried them on at mirrors false and true, till her seven maids were exhausted, and herself went off in hysterics; but none of them suited her complexion like her own lost tresses, which, as such cases render necessary, the fire had consumed; and it was an article of faith with her Highness—some people thought the only one she had—that justice would never be done to her youth and beauty till a wig of the same colour, quality, and appearance was duly fabricated and fixed upon her head.

It had been M. Gastelet's boast that with him no hair was matchless, and no peculiarity impossible to suit. He had wigs for the zenith of charms, for the first touch of fading time, and for the latest autumn of beauty. The inconsolable widow could be fitted at his establishment with a coiffure of grief not to be mitigated; and the dame about to cast off her weeds, with one of assuaged sorrow. But in all Gastelet's resources of hair and skill, there was nothing that could or would suit the Princess Nareskin. Her hair, of which she had kept the only preservable portion, and a small one it was, had been neither red nor golden, nor auburn nor flaxen, but a combination of all four; and no other shade could her Highness be persuaded to wear. In vain Gastelet's agents ransacked the provinces, made promises to hair-dealers, posted advertisements on church doors, and sent criers through the remote villages where nobody could read. In vain Gastelet himself frequented the washing-greens on the banks of the Seine, and explored the lowest faubourg, in hopes of finding some head covered with the unmatchable locks. His agents failed, and so did he. The couriers he sent across the frontiers, armed with minute samples of her Highness's hair, and permission to pay anything that was asked for its match, returned empty-handed, and some of them never came back at all. His place of business was inundated by hair-dealers and peasant girls, every one declaring that the tresses they carried in their hands or on their heads were the very thing he wanted, and should be bought without loss of time; and the great coiffeur got into several quarrels and some lawsuits in consequence. The weight of that concern on his mind made him rather uncertain at times in his levees. He enjoined blonde upon ladies who looked perfect scarecrows in anything but raven locks, and equipped two German baronesses in coiffures so remarkably unsuitable, that all Paris thought they must have escaped from some lunatic asylum. Two or three desperate love affairs and several eternal friendships were broken up through these effects of M. Gastelet's pre-occupation. Any one else would have lost caste, and custom through them also. As it was, six ladies came scolding to his shop, and two of them threatened his own queue. 'But what does it matter,' cried M. Gastelet; 'I am in despair.'

The princess was in despair too. Without the hair that did her justice, she could not go to Versailles, then the fortress of fashion and the seat of royalty, where the Russian ambassador was ready to present her, and the ambassador's wife, who had been her rival belle in Petersburg, to triumph over her altered appearance. So the princess sat fast in her hôtel, generally in the private dressing-room, surrounded by her wigs, and despatched hourly messengers to Gastelet with the all-important question: 'Is there any hope?' Latterly, the messengers got for answer only a shake of Gastelet's head. The despair was deepening; an unknown quantity of mineral waters, mixed with *eau de vie*, was required to support the

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spirits of her Highness; and her household were uncertain whether she would ultimately burn her wigs, and retire to a Greek convent, or proceed on her career of conquest with them all in turn, and never be seen two days together with the same coloured hair, when a ray of hope dawned at once on the princess and the great coiffeur.

Like other men of power and position, M. Gastelet had agents of whom he was by no means proud, and the chief of these unmentioned people was one Martin Brique. Whether Martin was a Swiss, a Bohemian, or a Creole, was supposed to be known to the police, who had paid particular attention to him and his history for the last twenty years, one half of which he had passed in the various prisons of Paris, but nobody else could say; he was a dark-complexioned, dwarfish, monkey-like man, who might have belonged to the undergrowth of any country, and assigned himself to those different nationalities as they happened to suit the exigences of his career. A promise of two thousand livres down, and no questions asked, had set Martin's wits to work; and after scouring Paris and its purlieus to no purpose, he had gone eastward to the Alpine lands of Dauphiné, saying, that if there was odd-coloured hair to be got in all the world one would find it there. Martin had been absent about six months, Gastelet's last courier had come back empty-handed from the Baltic towns, where his last hope had been, and the great coiffeur was sitting in his empty bureau one evening with the feelings of a defeated minister, when Martin Brique made his way in as quietly as he had made it into many a merchant's warehouse and nobleman's mansion, and flourished almost in Gastelet's face a bundle of the long-sought-for, long-despaired-of hair. It was the same, the very match and counterpart of that which the Princess Nareskin had lost by the razor and the fire, and Gastelet felt himself the ruler of heads and the dictator of coiffures once more.

'My dear, my precious Martin!' he cried, folding the remarkably dirty dwarf in his arms, 'where did you find it?'

'I answer no questions, and I want my two thousand livres, monsieur,' said Martin, wriggling out of his embrace: 'you are too much of a gentleman to forget your word of honour.'

Gastelet's dignity was in abeyance for that moment, and could not be offended; he paid the two thousand livres with many expressions of affection and gratitude, to which Martin made no response, but that he would take no paper; and sweeping the silver into his dirty wallet, the successful agent departed, while his more successful employer flew to the Hôtel Nareskin. The princess did not exactly fold Gastelet in her arms, but she called him everything from an angel upward, and being a devout daughter of the Greek Church, gave thanks to her patron saint on the spot, and then demanded that a suitable wig should be fabricated out of what she called the heaven-sent hair, before Gastelet or one of his employés slept.

It is recorded that they did go to rest rather late that night, but were thundered up by her Highness's Cossack footman long before daybreak, to the great alarm of the Rue St Louise, most of whose inhabitants supposed the street to be on fire; but the said footman never left the premises till the wig was finished. There was some difficulty in fitting her Highness's head, which was a Russian one, and not of the smallest size; moreover, by medical advice, it had to be kept strictly shaven, and the nice adjustment of the fastenings was therefore a delicate operation. But M. Gastelet's own skilful hand accomplished the feat; the princess was at length wigged to her mind. She paid like a princess; and he went home to repose on his laurels, or at least in his bed; the first quiet sleep himself and his household had had for nearly sixty hours. As for her Highness, she went to the Grand Opera the same evening, and on the following day to Versailles, where the Russian ambassador presented her to the queen; and his wife fainted with envy at the sight of her recovered hair. From that day, the Princess Nareskin was seen, heard of, and admired in every gathering of rank and fashion. There was not a penniless scion of nobility—and such olive branches were by no means rare in France at the time—who did not hope to win the rich and gay widow—there was not an unmarried prince of the blood whom she did not hope and endeavour to snare. Royal favour increased her chances; she was included in the king's hunting-parties, and invited to the queen's Trianon. The French court had a small vendetta just then against the Empress of all the Russias and her fourteenth favourite, and took that opportunity to shew it.

The Princess Nareskin became the reigning foreign belle, an article never wanting to the *beau-monde* of France since foreigners first began to spend their time and money in its society. There was the usual wonder, gossip, and semi-scandal about her; the fashion she set, the duels she caused, and the matches she was about to make, furnished topics to the coteries and *on-dits* to the wits. In common with all belles of home or foreign growth, she was admired by the men and hated by the women; but both admirers and haters agreed that her Highness had very remarkable hair. Its suitability to her complexion, its length and luxuriance, and the variety of styles in which she was accustomed to have it dressed, disturbed the peace, and perhaps the temper, of many a court beauty. The secret of its origin was better kept than that of most locks of the kind: none but Russian maids were allowed to know it, and being serfs' daughters, without a word of French among them, they had no chance of enlightening the backstair people of noble houses; Gastelet and his assistants had the bond of professional honour and considerable profits to insure their silence; moreover, the great coiffeur had his doubts about the manner in which his unmentioned agent, Martin Brique, had come by the bundle of hair which he presented to him that evening in his solitary bureau. Martin's agency and other doings had been brought to a close about six weeks after, by the knife of a brother Ishmaelite, with whom he had had a quarrel in the Faubourg St Antoine, and the best policy was to let the whole transaction rest with him in the cemetery of the Innocents. So the princess had her hair dressed in the most recherché and varied modes, heard compliments on its beauty with an unconscious simplicity of manner, which everybody said was charming, and refused a single curl to the prayers and vows of many a high-born admirer, with a dignity and composure perfectly natural.

No rival star having risen on the fashionable horizon, her conquering career continued to another winter, always the gayest season in Versailles; but the unprovided-for branches of nobility who had

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hitherto sighed around the fair and well-dowered widow, saw a cloud come over their prospects, for the whisper went that Madame la Princesse had positively captivated the Duc de Chartres. He who lived to be called Egalité, and vote for the death of Louis XVI., was even then in the condescending and popular line, ready to forget his royal blood, and generally in want of money; whereupon Madame Nareskin had hopes, and her less exalted lovers great cause of fear. The hopes and the fears were subjects of remark to the entire court and its following, assembled on a certain evening, late in December, to see a new play, pronounced to be of exciting interest at the time, but long ago forgotten. The theatre of Versailles, which was built by Mansard for Louis XIV., has undergone many alterations since that play was new and applauded; but at the time, it retained its pristine form, a sort of outlying wing of the great palace; and its most select boxes were situated at the end, immediately adjoining a private chapel, which the Grand Monarque had fitted up for himself in his old and devout days, by way of having his bane and antidote both before him. In one of those select boxes sat the Princess Nareskin. Next to the royal one, it was the most select and costly in the house; there, according to tradition, Louis le Grand used to sit alone with Madame de Maintenon, when in ill-humour with all the rest of his rather large family. The rich Gobelins tapestry with which it was lined, the inlaid mirrors and brocade curtains, belonged to his stately and expensive time; and the lady who sat within seemed worthy of them, from her lace and satin-covered hoop, at least four yards in circumference, to her towering coiffure, a pile of curls and a blaze of diamonds.

It was a night of triumph to her as well as to the author and the actors of that long-forgotten play. The duke had been casting glances of adoration in the direction of her box, all through a scene of precise and long-winded love-making, such as charmed the critics of the period; the princess thought she heard them call her Duchesse de Chartres, and, fully determined to rivet the chain of enchantment, was bowing her head with strong but graceful emotion as the curtain fell on the parted lovers, when something seemed to clutch the tower of curls and diamonds. Madame Nareskin started up with a true Russian bound, and from boxes, pit, and gallery burst a mingled shout of astonishment and laughter, for curls and diamonds all were gone, and the reigning belle, in the splendour of her evening-dress, stood with a head as clean shaven as that of a Capuchin!

Madame Nareskin immediately went off in strong hysterics—what less could woman do under the circumstances? but at the same moment several ladies, in different parts of the house, followed her example; and in wild exclamations and frightened whispers the tale went round the theatre, that a long bony hand had been seen to grasp the jewelled coiffure, now known to be a wig, and vanish with it nobody knew how. Some said the hand was black, and had claw-like nails; some said it was white and fleshless as that of a skeleton: one was certain it had come up through the floor of the box, with a wonderfully long arm, bare and black; another swore it had come down through the ceiling; and a third asserted that he had seen it dart straight out of the wall. The house was in confusion not to be brought to order; ladies were carried out screaming in all directions, and among them the wigless princess. Men with stars and ribbons on their breasts were making remarkable haste to get out; and some pious or timid souls made vows then and there against entering a theatre for the rest of their lives. Even royalty did not feel inclined to sit; it was whispered that the queen and Madame Elizabeth had both seen the hand come out of the wall: at anyrate, the royal box was frightened as much as the subject ones. The performance was stopped at once, and the audience hurried to their homes, to wonder, to frighten each other, and to talk over the abrupt disappearance of Madame Nareskin's hair.

It is said that the princess's first inquiry, on her return to consciousness, was for her diamonds; and when told how they had been seen to go, she raised such an outcry about thieves robbing the widow and the stranger, as, with the help of her Cossack and Tartar servants, roused the *commissaire* of police, who got the theatre searched from garret to cellar; but no trace of diamonds, wig, or thieves could be found. The police, according to custom, arrested everybody connected with the theatre, and everybody else of whom they had the slightest suspicion. For weeks after, they were engaged in the investigation of the whole affair. It was said the court, and especially the queen and Madame Elizabeth, were particularly anxious to make out the agency by which Madame Nareskin's coiffure had disappeared; but examination and inquiry alike failed to fix the blame on any one of the arrested. People of all classes testified to having seen the hand clutch the princess's headdress and bear it away; but their testimonies were found so conflicting on every point regarding its colour, size, shape, and the direction whence it came, that they could be received only as evidences of the varied powers of light, shade, and imagination.

The police could discover nothing except that a trick of extraordinary cleverness had been played off on the Russian princess and the public of Versailles, the secret of which must remain for some happy accident or fortunate commissaire of future time to unravel. But the scores who had seen the mysterious hand, and the thousands who heard of it, were not disposed to accept that official explanation. The age was a fermenting one; under its fashion, frivolity, and philanthropic schemes, the first French Revolution was a-brewing; while breaking away from old beliefs and habits of thought, it had a strong inclination to the supernatural, as Cagliostro and the Rosicrucian doings made manifest. Who first suggested the idea to Madame Nareskin's mind was not distinctly known: some said it originated among her Russian maids; but when the police had searched their utmost, and found no clue to the mystery, she declared her opinion that the hair so long sought and so triumphantly worn had been obtained by murder, and torn from her head by the unresting ghost. That the ghost should have carried off her diamonds also, was explained by the confessor for whom she sent in post-haste to the nearest Greek monastery. He made it clear to her Highness that the loss of the gems was a signal judgment for wearing the crime-purchased wig; and such a tangible token of divine displeasure telling powerfully on her Russian mind, the princess directly betook herself to the most reliable austerities of her Greek Church, and talked of

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making a pilgrimage to kiss the feet of the dead and dry saints in Kiev—a sovereign remedy for troubled consciences in the North. But Madame Nareskin's conscience belonged to the order that never get troubled without bringing other people into trouble too. M. Gastelet had got the hair and made the wig; he was doubtless guilty of the crime, and she and her Greek confessor united in denouncing him to the police.

The mysterious disappearance of Madame's coiffure was known in M. Gastelet's bureau soon after it occurred. He had always entertained some doubts of the hair being lawfully obtained; the higher the wonder and gossip about the lost wig rose, the more he felt himself compromised, and when warned of his danger at the eleventh hour, he could think of no resource but to hide himself in the attic of his own house. Gastelet was great in his levee, great in his shop, and great in the whole art of wig-making, but very small in things that lay beyond them. The police searched for and found him in the attic; and they had therefore got something to go upon, to the immense satisfaction of the commissaire. That gentleman did not accept the solution which the princess and her confessor gave to the problem that puzzled him and his; but keen and careful inquiry had made him aware that some mystery had attended the getting up of materials for the lost wig: a charge of murder had been preferred against Gastelet, and if not guilty, why did he hide himself? To work the commissaire and his assistants went in their usual fashion: Gastelet was imprisoned, examined, and spied upon; he denied the crime of course—the police were accustomed to that; but he could give no account of how or where the singular-coloured hair had been procured, except that it was brought to him by Martin Brique, a bad character, and now beyond the reach of warrant or question.

The accusation and arrest of the great coiffeur added a new element of wonder and sensation to the tale, which was by this time exercising the tongues and wits of all France, particularly the upper circles, among whom Madame Nareskin had so shone till that strange eclipse came over her. Those who laughed at the idea of a ghost abstracting a lady's wig in full evening splendour, diamonds, feathers, and all, were yet prepared to believe in the coiffeur's guilt as firmly as the police. The long and fruitless search which Gastelet had made for the hair to suit her Highness, though kept secret at the time, was now revealed by his agents and couriers, every one anxious to exculpate himself from any share in the criminal transaction. The silence which he had observed on the subject of his ultimate success, and his present unsatisfactory account of it, not to speak of his concealment in the attic, all weighed against him in the public mind.

The hairdressers of every order and degree, who hated him with one accord, did their best to strengthen the general impression; there was not one of their shops in Paris or Versailles that had not a version of Gastelet's crime, with full particulars of how and where it had been committed; and the specified victim belonged to all sorts and conditions of mankind, from a gipsy girl of the Spanish frontier, to a count's daughter receiving her education in a convent of Alsace. His employer, Madame Nareskin, did not escape her share of the blame, her princely admirer had got a sight of the clutching hand, and whence he supposed it to come was never made public; but he took an early opportunity to suggest that Madame's Russian penances were not for nothing, and that she must have had art and part in the getting of the hair. The commissaire of the police was of the same opinion. Madame Nareskin was placed under surveillance, secret and circumspect as befitted her rank, which justice much respected in those days; but it was known that the princess was not to quit French territory, however well inclined to resume her travels, that her previous history had been minutely searched and sifted, and that some curious facts had been brought to official light.

Never was murder more firmly believed in, or condemning evidence more anxiously waited for by a discerning public. It could not be got, with all their search and inquiry; the police for once, like the rest of mankind, found everything but what they wanted. Gastelet had no other story to tell; but between the frequent examinations in and out of prison, the company of warders and spies, the frightenings he got from authorities, and the exhortations he got from monks, the poor fellow's mind, never particularly strong except on wigs and systems, became muddled to the degree of almost believing himself guilty, and he would probably have confessed according to the next examiner's views, if a circumstance had not happened to give the whole case a new complexion.

The commissaire of police was sitting in his private office one day, reading over the last report of his most efficient prison-spy regarding Gastelet's sayings and doings, when a fiacre stopped outside, and the official heart bounded for joy as his servant came in to say that a stranger who could give information concerning the accused hairdresser waited at the door. 'Admit him,' said the commissaire; and in walked a priest, evidently from some distant province, leading by the hand what seemed to be a young nun, deeply veiled, and carrying a parcel carefully wrapped up. At a few words from the priest in the tongue of Upper Dauphiné, she advanced to the table at which the commissaire sat, rapidly unfolded her parcel, and laid down before him the identical coiffure wrenched off the head of Madame Nareskin in the Versailles theatre, with its system curls and diamonds all complete; then ran to the nearest corner, crouched down, and began to cry. The priest soon pacified her with his mountain patois, and related to the commissaire in good French, for he had been educated at the Sorbonne, her unhappy story. She was the daughter of a noble Dauphinese family, but a *crétine*, and placed by them in an ancient convent of Franciscan nuns, which, being situated in a remote Alpine valley, had preserved a custom common to monastic houses in the middle ages, and kept within their walls an asylum for the female insane of the district. The convent had never been a flourishing one, and its revenue was chiefly derived from that source; but the nuns were old and few, and had to take as assistants in the management of the asylum three or four robust women, one of whom happened to be the sister of Martin Brique, a native of the Swiss frontier. Claudine—such was the only name by which the crétine daughter of a noble house was allowed to be known in the commissaire's published Report—was one of their best paying patients, and remarkable for more than ordinary cunning, dexterity of hand, and the pride she took in the uncommon-coloured hair which now formed the wig, and had once been her own. In an evil hour, Martin

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Brique, incited by Gastelet's promise of two thousand livres, found his way to the convent; and his sister, unable to resist the prospect of one thousand, which he promised to her, but never paid, assisted him in decoying poor Claudine into the neighbouring forest, where he cut off her valued hair almost at the roots, and set off with it to his employer in Paris.

Claudine could not give a correct account of her loss to the guardian nuns, whose oversight age had made somewhat slack; but with the keen perception sometimes found to exist in otherwise deficient minds, she guessed the route Martin had taken, and, in spite of his sister's vigilance, contrived to escape from the convent. The nuns and their assistants searched for her in vain throughout the mountain country, so did her family; and months after, when both had given up the search in despair, Claudine returned, much exhausted by hunger and hardships, but bringing with her the magnificently dressed and jewelled wig made of her own stolen hair. That in so long a journey she had been able to keep it and its gems from the thousand covetous eyes and hands to be met with in town or village, the nuns thought was wholly due to the special interposition of their patron saint, though the priest thought her natural cunning might have somewhat assisted it. He was the curé of that Alpine parish, and it cost him and the good nuns some months to get out of Claudine, how, following Martin Brique's track, she had begged her way to Paris, saw her own hair by accident on the head of a great lady, followed that lady about everywhere unnoticed, till she got an opportunity of plucking the wig off her head, in a place which she described, but they could not understand. It was their united opinion that the diamonds sparkling among the curls and feathers must have belonged to the queen of France; and the priest was thinking how to restore them to her Majesty, and save Claudine from punishment, when a traveller whom he entertained one stormy night, presented him with a Paris journal containing the whole story of Madame Nareskin's loss and Gastelet's arrest. To save an innocent man from the consequences of so dark an accusation, he directly set out for Paris, taking Claudine with him, by consent of the nuns, that she might make the case clear, by shewing the commissaire how and where she had contrived to wrench off the princess's wig.

Claudine did clear up the case, and gave a wonderful example of crétine cunning, by shewing the commissaire what he and his assistants had never dreamed of. The long-disused chapel of Louis XIV. had a low and broken window, through which she had managed to creep; it had also a small door, by which majesty had found its way from the theatre to devotion, but long forgotten and completely concealed by the rich tapestry lining the box in which Madame Nareskin sat to see the new play, when Claudine contrived to open it behind her, draw aside the tapestry, and possess herself of the wig. The story of the ghost and the murder was thus exploded, to the deep disappointment of the public. The princess identified her lost coiffure with not a diamond missing, but was not quite satisfied because nobody would punish the crétine girl, whom the good priest took safely back to the convent of St Francis, from which it is said she never wandered again. The laugh rose on all sides against her Highness; what was worse, her belleship was ruined by the exhibition in her box on that eventful night; and a German duchess reigned in her stead; so Madame Nareskin retired to Vienna, where play was then deepest, gave up conquest, and took to cards. Gastelet was liberated, of course without a stain on his character; but he had lost caste by getting into the hands of the police, and some attributed to that event the sudden change of fashion which abolished systems with all their towering structures, and made flowing hair the mode. His occupation was gone; and perhaps he had enough of wig-making; but out of the wreck of his business and fortunes he collected enough to live upon in the quiet old town of Narbonne, where he had been born. There the man so tried and talked of passed out of the public mind; but he came to the sunset of life in peace, having survived court, throne, and revolution, and never forgot that he had been the first coiffeur of his age.

THE LAST RECORD OF LORD BYRON.

'A GREAT book,' says the sage, 'is a great evil,' and, in the case of a book in two great volumes, the remark has double force. These long-promised *Recollections of Lord Byron*, by the Countess Guiccioli, might be compressed with advantage into a single duodecimo. A series of chapters, headed 'The Constancy of Lord Byron,' 'The Modesty of Lord Byron,' &c., would have been a dangerous experiment even in a biography of Lucretia; but with such a subject as his Lordship, this sort of treatment is simply ridiculous; when they come to 'The Mobility of Lord Byron,' most readers will think it time to stop. The title of the work too is a misnomer: the personal 'recollections' are very few: the quotations from other biographies of the poet are interminable. Yet surely, since the Countess Guiccioli thinks it necessary to put forth so stupendous a monument of the departed, the inscription might have been made better worth reading. We have the word of a trustworthy and intimate friend of his, that her influence over him was great, and for good; from a most ignoble course of life at Venice, says Shelley, she saved Byron, and ever afterwards exerted over him an excellent influence. Yet nothing of this is gleaned from the work before us; the present authoress must be in possession of letters, opinions, interesting facts of this great man, such as no other living person has to boast of: she is continually scolding Moore for having destroyed those private papers, the publication of which would have whitewashed the poet's reputation; and yet she herself makes no effort to set him right with posterity. She abuses Moore and Macaulay for their descriptions of her Idol, and she does not spare his dead widow, but she adduces no proof of the correctness of her own view, that his Lordship was almost an angel.

The brief space devoted to 'The Faults of Lord Byron,' is filled with the virtues omitted in the chapters of avowed panegyric; yet we cannot be blind to the fact that these are matters of assertion. The corroborative testimony of names and dates is almost always wanting. That Lord Byron was capable of acts of noble self-denial is certain: that he may now and then have dismissed very charming young ladies, who, enamoured of his fame and beauty, came privately to consult him about their manuscript verses, with the most excellent advice and a

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paternal salute upon their brows, is also possible; but really, from the countess's account, one would think he was editor, trustee, and friend of the family to half the pretty girls in England, and that his conduct throughout was strictly professional, dashed with a wise benevolence. When young women, married or single, fell in love with him—which seems to have happened about 'once every quarter of an hour'—he always fled from the temptation; upon one occasion, he even 'declined to go to Asia,' lest he should disturb certain family relations by his presence in that continent. In fact, if among the male sex there was ever 'a dragon' in the matter of virtue, it was my Lord Byron. Apart from this absurd exaggeration, there is no doubt that half the vice imputed to the Man arose from the looseness of the Poet, and perhaps a good deal of the other half to Lord Byron's own affectation in making himself out as bad as he could. Mr Finlay, who knew him well, declares *that he not only calumniated himself, but hid his best sentiments.* This remark is quoted by his present biographer with evident triumph; she imagines it shews his hatred of hypocrisy; but hypocrisy has been well defined to be the homage which vice pays to virtue, and the vice that declines to pay it, is not always of the least objectionable sort. 'We are forced to confess,' says his present biographer, 'Byron had one great fault: it consisted in a species of *cruelty* towards himself, *a positive necessity of calumniating himself.*' It is most amusing to read the querulous complaints of the countess at Lord Byron's having been taken at his word in this matter; as though a successful Genius, and the handsomest man of his time, could possibly expect a greater charity from his contemporaries than he exhibited towards himself. She appeals (through her English translator) to 'the great and moral feeling that pervade [*sic*] the two last cantos of *Childe Harold;*' to Moore's remark, that the lines on the Death of Thyrza are 'far too beautiful and too pure to have been inspired by a mortal being;' and finally even calls in the aid of orthodoxy in the person of 'the very Rev. Dr Stanley, Dean of Westminster,' as a witness to the spirituality, not of Lord Byron, but of his Hebrew Melodies.

The truth is, as respects the Libertinism attributed to Lord Byron, it was grossly though not malignantly exaggerated; and besides, perhaps scarcely any man has ever been so attractive to the fair sex. In the first place, he was a lord; in the second place, he was supremely handsome; and in the third place, his fame, whether wholly deserved or not, was something of which those who did not live in his time can form no conception. The system of advertisements had not then attained its present dimensions, but he was advertised—gratuitously and by word of mouth—as no author has been before or since. His domestic squabbles, his antagonism to established opinion, and his supposed dissolute mode of life, all helped to make his reputation with the ladies. With regard to his personal appearance, there is considerable information afforded in the present work. For feature and expression, though it was very pale, the beauty of his face seems to have been absolutely unrivalled. It struck men as much as women. His eyes were so luminous and expressive that Walter Scott compared his young rival's head to 'an alabaster vase lit up by a lamp within.' 'No portrait,' says Dallas, 'has done him justice; the charm of expression and the grace of movement, were beyond the power of the brush to render. 'Of his face,' says Moore, 'the beauty may be pronounced to have been of the highest order, as combining at once regularity of features with the most varied and interesting expression. His eyes, though of a light gray, were capable of all extremes of expression, from the most joyous hilarity to the deepest sadness, from the very sunshine of benevolence to the most concentrated scorn or rage. But it was in the mouth and chin that the great beauty as well as expression of his fine countenance lay. His head was remarkably small, so much so as to be rather out of proportion with his face. The forehead, though a little too narrow, was high, and appeared more so from his having his hair (to preserve it, as he said) shaved over the temples. Still the glossy dark-brown curls, clustering over his head, gave the finish to its beauty. When to this is added that his nose, though handsomely, was rather thickly shaped, that his teeth were white and regular, and his complexion colourless, as good an idea perhaps as it is in the power of mere words to convey may be conceived of his features. In height he was, as he himself has informed us, five feet eight inches and a half, and to the length of his limbs he attributed his being such a good swimmer. His hands were very white, and, according to his own notions of the size of hands as indicating birth, aristocratically small.' As to his intellectual expression, Scott remarks: 'Of poets, I have seen the best that this country has produced, and although Burns had the finest eyes that can be imagined, I never thought that any man except Byron could give an artist an exact idea of a poet. His portraits do not do him the least justice. The varnish is there, but the ray of sunshine is wanting to light them up. The beauty of Byron is one that makes one dream.'

In his novel of *Venetia*, Mr Disraeli also gives a truthful and elaborate description of Byron's appearance, under the name of Hubert. No wonder, then, since it even moved men to admiration, that all women were attracted by Byron's beauty, including even his wife. Moore once asked Lady Holland whether she thought that Lady Byron had really ever loved her husband. 'Could it be otherwise?' replied she. 'Was it possible not to love so lovable a creature? I see him now, surrounded as it were by that great light: oh, how handsome he was!'

With respect to his lameness, we are assured by his present biographer that 'no defect existed in the formation of his limbs: his slight infirmity was nothing but the result of weakness of one of his ankles.' As for the emaciation of his legs, as evinced by the post-mortem examination, that was 'brought on by his habit of ever being on horseback.' A curious illustration of this subject has lately appeared in the newspapers. 'Mrs Wildman (the widow of the colonel who had bought Newstead) has lately given to the Naturalist Society of Nottingham several objects which had belonged to Lord Byron, and amongst others his boot and shoe trees. These trees are about nine inches long, narrow, and generally of a symmetrical form. They were accompanied by the following statement of Mr Swift, bootmaker, who worked for his Lordship from 1805 to 1807. Swift is still alive, and continues to reside at Southwell. His testimony as to the genuineness of the trees, and to the nature of Lord Byron's deformity, of which so many contradictory assertions have circulated,

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is as follows: "William Swift, bootmaker at Southwell, Nottinghamshire, having had the honour of working for Lord Byron when residing at Southwell from 1805 to 1807, asserts that these were the trees upon which his Lordship's boots and shoes were made, and that the last pair delivered was on the 10th of May 1807. He moreover affirms that his Lordship had not a club-foot, as has been said, but that both his feet were equally well formed, one, however, being an inch and a half shorter than the other. The defect was not in the foot, but in the ankle, which, being weak, caused the foot to turn out too much. To remedy this, his Lordship wore a very light and thin boot, which was tightly laced just under the sole; and, when a boy, he was made to wear a piece of iron with a joint at the ankle, which passed behind the leg, and was tied behind the shoe. The calf of this leg was weaker than the other, and it was the left leg. (Signed) WILLIAM SWIFT."'

Lord Byron had a way of walking, remarks Galt, that made his lameness almost imperceptible, and indeed he spent several days with him on shipboard without discovering the fact. That he was not morbidly sensitive to the defect, as is generally supposed, we have, for once, his biographer's own testimony, instead of a quotation from other people. 'Once at Genoa, he walked down the hill of Albaro to the seaside with me, by a rugged and rough path. When we had reached the shore, he was very well and lively; but it was an exceedingly hot day, and the return home fatigued him greatly. When home, I told him I thought he looked ill. "Yes," said he, "I suffer greatly from my foot; it can hardly be conceived how much I suffer at times from that pain;" and he continued to speak to me about this defect with great simplicity and indifference. He used often to laugh at it, so superior was he to that weakness. "Beware," said Count Gamba to him on one occasion whilst riding with him, and on reaching some dangerous spot—"beware of falling and breaking your neck." "I should decidedly not like it," said Byron; "but if this leg of which I don't make much use were to break, it would be the same to me, and perhaps then I should be able to procure myself a more useful one."'

It is a pity that our authoress does not occasionally permit herself to deviate into commonplaces of this sort, which at all events afford a definite idea of what she intends to convey; it is no use her telling us that the influence of the Norman Conquest has shewn itself in no noble individual so much as in Lord Byron, who, 'belonging to the Gallic race (modified by the Latin and Celtic elements),' evidenced this genealogical mixture in his moral and intellectual character. This requires, as the Americans say, to be 'fried' before it can be rendered intelligible. If the people about Lord Byron, indeed, were accustomed to speak of him in this style, it is no wonder that folks at a distance got very misty notions of him. That the lies invented about his Lordship were, however, most monstrous, there is no doubt. Even the great Goethe indulged himself with a most abominable critique upon *Manfred*, which perhaps he considered owed some of its beauties to his *Faust*.

Byron's own criticisms, although never attaining this extremity of extravagance, were singular and unjust enough. The fact is, his intellect, although so powerful, was so subjective, that it considered all things in their relation to himself. A spoiled child from the beginning, he remained so to the end, whether on the heights or in the depths of fortune. A more egotistic man, as it seems to us, never existed; though he was, on occasion, capable of self-sacrifice. When his gondolier was drawn for the conscription, he not only paid the sum (and he was ordinarily generous in mere money matters) requisite to buy him off, but even delayed a proposed journey in order to arrange the affair (since there was a necessity for it) in person. But this gondolier was a favourite servant, and Byron would do anything for those who were personally attached to him. His judgment was warped by affection, at least as much as by prejudice. He once amused himself by drawing a 'triangular *gradus ad Parnassum*,' in which he thus classifies the position of contemporary poets—all his personal friends at the top, and the others nowhere. Walter Scott is at the apex; in which opinion he may, at that time, have had many to agree with him. Then, a long way down, but still second, and all by himself, Rogers! Below him, Moore and Campbell together; and below *them*, Wordsworth and Coleridge!! Perhaps, since they were living together at the time, Shelley was omitted from this remarkable verdict: but Keats (over whom no intelligent person would now dream of placing Rogers) is also left out. He was never brought within Byron's personal circle, and therefore had to die before that tardy eulogium was pronounced: 'His fragment of *Hyperion* seems actually inspired by the Titans, and is sublime as Æschylus.' Byron afterwards gave out that his indignation against Keats's depreciation of Pope had not permitted him to do justice to the young man's genius.

Notwithstanding Byron's close intimacy with Shelley, his religious opinions, at all events in later life, seem to have been more orthodox than they are supposed to have been. He naturally protested against those sentiments being considered as his own which he placed in the mouth of 'the first murderer,' *Cain*. 'I, of course,' says he, 'embody myself with the character while I draw it, but not a moment after the pen is off the paper. I am no enemy of religion, but the contrary; and as a proof, I am now educating my natural daughter a strict Catholic in a convent of Romagna.' Indeed, he would not permit her to remain under the kind and feminine superintendence of Mrs Shelley, lest her feelings upon religious subjects might be disturbed by the conversation of the author of *Queen Mab*.

One of the most interesting portions of these so-called *Recollections* is, where we have pointed out to us those passages in Lord Byron's poems wherein he paints himself. These occur, for the most part, in *Don Juan:*

> His manner was perhaps the more seductive,
> Because he ne'er seemed anxious to seduce;
> Nothing affected, studied, or constructive
> Of coxcombry or conquest: no abuse
> Of his attractions marred the fair perspective,
> To indicate a Cupidon broke loose,
> And seem to say: 'Resist us if you can'—
> Which makes a dandy while it spoils a man.
>
> By nature soft, his whole address held off
> Suspicion: though not timid, his regards
> Was such as rather seemed to keep aloof,
> To shield himself, than put you on your guard.

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Serene, accomplished, cheerful, but not loud,
Insinuating without insinuation;
Observant of the foibles of the crowd,
Yet ne'er betraying this in conversation;
Proud with the proud, yet courteously proud,
So as to make them feel he knew his station
And theirs:—without a struggle for priority,
He neither brooked nor claimed superiority.

That is, with men: with women he was what
They pleased to make or take him for.

There was the purest Platonism at bottom
Of all his feelings.

Without arguing the question of pure 'Platonism,' which is a somewhat delicate one, the assertions of his present biographer as to the sort of charms which were most pleasing to Lord Byron in the fair sex, are at variance with the statements of his other biographers. 'He felt no attraction,' says she, 'to that style of woman since called "fast." . . . . In order to be truly loved by Lord Byron, it was requisite for a woman to live in a sort of illusive atmosphere for him, to appear somewhat like an immaterial being, not subject to vulgar corporeal necessities. Thence arose his antipathy (considered so singular) to see the woman he loved eat.' It must be added, that he himself combined example with precept in this matter, since he never touched meat, and complained that a dinner which consisted of fish and a pint of Bucellas, made him heavy and stupid: when he beheld Moore consuming a beefsteak with gusto, he regarded him attentively for some moments, and then inquired gravely: 'Moore, does not this eating of beefsteaks make you ferocious?'

It was 'her air of modesty and reserve,' remarks the countess upon this subject of Byron's fastidiousness, 'that first drew him towards Miss Milbank.' And this confession is the more remarkable as it is the only compliment which that lady receives throughout these volumes. The chapter devoted to 'Lord Byron's Marriage, and its Consequences,' although a very bitter one, is by far the most striking part of their contents; and although an *ex parte* statement, deserves to be heard, since the other side has had the ear of the public for so long. Indeed, at this present time, in the admirable volume of *Biographical Sketches* just published by Miss Martineau, we have the plaintiff's case thus strikingly stated. 'Never was a young creature' [she is speaking of Miss Milbank] 'led to the altar more truly as a sacrifice. She was rash, no doubt; but she loved him, and who was not, in the whole business, more rash than she? At the altar, she did not know that she was a sacrifice; but before sunset of that winter day she knew it, if a judgment may be formed from her face and attitude of despair when she alighted from the carriage on the afternoon of her marriage-day. It was not the traces of tears which won the sympathy of the old butler who stood at the open door. The bridegroom jumped out of the carriage, and walked away. The bride alighted, and came up the steps alone, with a countenance and frame agonised and listless with evident horror and despair. The old servant longed to offer his arm to the young lonely creature, as an assurance of sympathy and protection. From this shock she certainly rallied, and soon. The pecuniary difficulties of her new home were exactly what a devoted spirit like hers was fitted to encounter. Her husband bore testimony after the catastrophe, that a brighter being, a more sympathising and agreeable companion, never blessed any man's home. When he afterwards called her cold and mathematical, and overpious, and so forth, it was when public opinion had gone against him, and when he had discovered that her fidelity and mercy, her silence and magnanimity, might be relied on, so that he was at full liberty to make his part good, as far as she was concerned. Silent she was, even to her own parents, whose feelings she magnanimously spared. She did not act rashly in leaving him, though she had been most rash in marrying him. As long as others called him insane, she was glad to do so too; and when she left him for her father's house, she regarded him as mad. When Dr Baillie and other physicians whose opinions were asked (not by her) declared him sane, she still abstained from acting on her own impulses or judgment. As the published correspondence made known, the case was submitted, in an anonymous form, to Dr Lushington and Sir Samuel Romilly; and the unhesitating decision of these two great lawyers and good men was, that the wife—whoever she might be—must never see her husband again. When they knew whose case it was, they did not swerve from their first judgment, but declared that they would never aid or countenance Lady Byron's return to her husband.'

The case for the defendant is stated in the work before us. From it we learn that, at first, the Byrons got on together well enough, notwithstanding that they were as opposite in temperament, opinions, and habits as two persons well could be; but her Ladyship was a slave to rule, and as inflexible as the figures she loved to study. She could not do without the comforts 'so generally appreciated and considered necessary by English people;' and for which Lord Byron had certainly no taste. His long sojourn abroad had given him foreign habits. He did not dine every day, and when he did dine, it was upon some (to her) objectionable dish. He swallowed his breakfast, which consisted of a cup of green tea, without sugar, and the yolk of an egg, standing, which naturally scandalised a young person who liked a tea-urn; while she, on her part, considerably disgusted him by asking, three weeks after marriage, *when he intended to give up his habits of* VERSIFYING. If this last remark was really made, it was itself sufficient to explain the subsequent separation; but there was, as it seems, an abundance of other reasons. Lady Byron was 'extremely jealous,' and placed a female spy over her husband's actions. She forced open his writing-desk, and found in it several proofs of intrigues that had taken place *previous* to his marriage, and in the frenzy of her jealousy, even sent one packet to the husband of the lady compromised. Altogether, there were worse than faults on both sides, and it is not to be wondered at that this ill-assorted pair soon separated. In the eyes of the present biographer, 'the cold companion who brought him ruin for her dowry,' as he says in his *Prophecy*, was really the cause of all his woes. 'If I had been the husband of the Countess G——,' said he, a few days only before setting out for Greece, 'we should have been cited, I am certain, as samples of conjugal happiness, and our retired domestic life would have made us respectable.' But, with all due respect for this independent but anonymous witness, we do not think that 'respectability' would have been Lord Byron's fate under any

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circumstances. As an appendix to this curious observation of the biographer, we presently read, among other reasons for Byron's unpopularity in England, that 'his admiration for foreign beauties wounded feminine self-love at home.'

The singularity of these *Recollections of Lord Byron* extends to the translator: it may be forgiven to the Countess Guiccioli that she does not know that Cheltenham is an inland spa; but the gentleman that puts her work into an English form should not have admitted this passage: 'He shewed at an early age his disposition to a poetical turn of mind by his meditative wanderings in Scotland among the mountains, and *on the seashore at Cheltenham*.' Is it possible, then, that the famous Address to the Ocean was evoked by the contemplation of the Cheltenham Waters?

AN ADJUTANT'S DUTIES.

I HARDLY knew whether or not my good star was in the ascendant, when, on the occasion of 'Straps' obtaining his captaincy, our good colonel offered me the appointment of adjutant. To the uninitiated in the matter, it may appear that the 'proud position,' to say nothing of the addition of some three shillings and sixpence to his not superabundant pay, would make the idea a welcome one to a needy subaltern; but there were other considerations which it is necessary to explain.

I believe (for it is not necessary for an adjutant to have a classical education) that, according to its Latin derivation, the word adjutant signifies 'helper'—not in a *stable* point of view, for I have nothing to do with the colonel's horses, but keep one of my own, upon which I flatter myself I make a rather good appearance at parades and reviews; but, in the words of the military authorities on the subject, I am the 'mouthpiece of the commanding officer;' I am to have charge of young officers and recruits, whom to instruct in their drill, and for whose efficiency I am answerable; I am to superintend the drill and discipline of the regiment generally; to me are to be addressed, for the commanding officer's consideration, letters from the various departments of the regiment; and by me, or in my name, must the commanding officer's opinions and directions be conveyed to the regiment at large; and all the rest is left to my 'zeal and discretion!' This is a 'large order,' and it seemed especially so to me, when, in my young days, I was offered the appointment. But the pride of being selected from some thirty other subalterns, the additional pay, the forage for a horse, and, above all, the hope that I might really do well, and bring credit to the regiment by the manner in which I discharged my duties, outweighed the considerations of my youth, inexperience, natural laziness, and the fact that my promotion might be productive of the envy, if not dislike, of my brother-officers, with whom, I flattered myself, I had hitherto been popular.

The adjutancy is very often held by an officer who has been promoted from the ranks. This is well in many respects; but yet the arrangement is not altogether advisable. The adjutant from the ranks is undoubtedly a first-rate 'drill' (he has probably been regimental sergeant-major), and bears a first-rate character for intelligence and integrity, or he would not have been so promoted; but, on the other hand, he has to be the adviser, to a certain extent, of the colonel; he is his 'go-between,' and, upon occasion, has to convey censure to officers, senior and superior in rank to himself. In this capacity it is necessary that he should be a *gentleman*. Moreover, with the non-commissioned officers and privates of the regiment, an adjutant from the ranks is seldom popular. He is too strict with them. He is (from experience) 'up to all their little games,' and is 'down upon them' on every occasion. He knows too much of the 'when,' 'where,' and 'how' of their irregularities and misdeeds, and is generally an advocate for punishment in a severe form, for 'cure' without 'prevention.'

In some cases, the 'mouthpiece,' the adjutant, takes it upon himself to perform without the 'instrument,' the colonel, and the result is not so much out of tune as might be supposed. Indeed, I have heard it said that the only officers required in an army are a general, an adjutant, and an assistant-surgeon! The individual who made this remark belonged to the last-mentioned grade, and was an Irishman, which accounts perhaps for his ignoring the question of whom the *assistant*-surgeon is to assist if there is no surgeon! Yet it is perhaps a little dangerous, in these days of economy, to thus make public the opinions of my Hibernian friend, lest the experiment may be tried of reducing our national military expenditure after his receipt.

The duties of an adjutant are very similar in whatever part of Her Majesty's dominions he may happen to be quartered; not on active service, of course, for that is quite another matter, but at home, in the Mediterranean, and the colonies, the work is very much the same. In India, it is rather different, as there he has dealings with the natives, and is sometimes also interpreter to the regiment. The heat of the climate, too, makes it necessary to have parades at odd hours; but in other respects the 'mouthpiece' preserves his accustomed place.

To begin, then, with an adjutant's life in barracks in a country town at home. If he is worth his salt (and we flatter ourselves that, generally speaking, we are up to our saline value), he rises at 6 A.M., the hour when the morning is made hideous by the bray of the bugles sounding the 'dress' for the early parade. This same dress is a warning bugle, which goes half an hour before each parade. It is of all bugle-sounds the most lugubrious and discordant, and its drawling, melancholy tones provoke every dog in barracks to howl in concert. The first parade of the day is at 6.30 A.M., and lasts for an hour. It is an uninteresting affair, under the superintendence of the adjutant and sergeant-major, no other officer being present at that early hour, except one or two young ensigns who are learning their drill. The men are generally without arms, and are told off into squads for 'extension motions.' The impression of an uninitiated observer, on seeing a squad put through the extension motions, would be that a number of men stand in a row, simultaneously contorting their bodies in every conceivable manner, whilst another man, with stripes on his arm and a short stick in his hand, struts about in front, *barking* at them.

After the early parade, our adjutant receives his budget of letters, which is generally of considerable size. They are of all sorts and sizes, from the largest official to the smallest 'billet-doux.' There are letters from men (gentlemen very often) desirous to enlist, but requiring that immediate

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promotion may be guaranteed to them; letters from fathers wishing to purchase their sons' discharge; from mothers and friends, inquiring after the welfare of men in the regiment, and why they never wrote (as if I could tell!); and sometimes of men who have left the regiment, or died, or been killed in action years and years ago, and would have been altogether forgotten by us, but for the record kept in the orderly-room of what has become of them. There are advertising circulars, too, without number, principally from money-lenders; also from quack-doctors, from wine-merchants, tailors, and tradesmen of all sorts. These, together with the usual letters which fall to the lot of ordinary mortals, occupy our adjutant's time pretty fully until he repairs to the mess for breakfast at half-past eight. Here he meets the quarter-master and 'orderly subaltern for the day,' who have been superintending the issue of rations; the subaltern looking sleepy, and his appetite evidently not rendered very keen by the quantity of raw meat he has been called upon officially to inspect. At half-past nine, the bugle sounds for guard mounting parade. The men for duty fall in at 'open order' for the inspection of the adjutant, who goes round the ranks, and sees that each man is shaved, his hair properly cut, and his uniform and accoutrements scrupulously clean. He then goes round a second time, and looks at the pouches and ammunition; then a third time, and inspects the rifles; the men all this while standing 'at attention,' stock still, and scarcely daring so much as to wink without obtaining permission to fall out of the ranks and do so. To *sneeze* would be a serious breach of discipline! After the inspection, and all being found satisfactory, the guards are marched off to their posts. At ten o'clock, the doleful 'dress' is again heard, with the canine accompaniment; and at half-past ten is the regular morning parade. There is more 'pomp and circumstance' about this than there was at the early morning arrangement. The band plays; the men turn out in 'marching order,' and all the officers in full dress. The colonel himself takes command, and does the 'barking,' varied by an occasional growl, or a roar, if the manœuvres are not performed to his satisfaction.

After parade at half-past eleven, we all repair to the orderly-room, where the prisoners are 'told off' by the commanding officer. I fancy our proceedings here are very similar to those of an ordinary London police-court. A man is brought in, escorted by a sentry, and charged with having been 'drunk,' or 'absent without leave,' or what not. The evidence is taken; and the captain of the man's company produces the 'defaulters' book,' which shews how often, and in what manner, the culprit has previously committed himself; and he is punished accordingly. If he denies the charge, or if the offence is serious, he is remanded for a court-martial, by which he is tried. This is all very sad, and one sighs and wishes the world were better. But it is not so very bad after all, and the little military world is not so much the worst part of it as is generally thought. Soldiers are not murderers and butchers *con amore;* on the contrary, they are, I think, kinder-hearted than any other men of the same station of life, except perhaps sailors. They are peculiarly fond of children, and of taming and making pets of dumb animals. There are many Corporal (and even Private) Trims now-a-days, although they are differently dressed and better paid and cared for.

After the disposal of prisoners is ended, the colonel and the adjutant are left alone with their correspondence, and the latter drops into the post of private secretary. The colonel shews the adjutant the official letters he has received that morning, and *vice versâ*. Documents are signed, and letters written in answer to those received; drafts of others made, and of the 'orders' for the following day. This (with a short interval for luncheon) occupies our hard-worked functionary until half-past two, when there is another parade—more drill, more barking, growling, and roaring, until half-past three. He then returns to the orderly-room, and signs the orders for next day. These consist of the detail of officers and men for duty, of notices of awards of imprisonment and stoppage of pay, as also the names of men who have become entitled to good-conduct pay, &c., with directions for the parades and drills on the ensuing day, and many other things, which to describe here would be tedious.

After he has signed the orders, the adjutant's work for the day is virtually ended, except when there is an unusual amount of correspondence, when he is often at work for the whole afternoon and evening (with an interval for dinner at mess) until late at night. Moreover, he is supposed to be continually 'in the way,' in case of anything unusual occurring, and to be ready at all times to receive and answer letters, and see people, at odd hours and on odd subjects, who do not think it worth while to 'bother the colonel!'

It may be remarked that the adjutant works pretty hard for his money, in which opinion I entirely concur with the discriminating reader. If, however, it be supposed that I have written this paper for the purpose of indulging in an Englishman's privilege of grumbling, never was a greater mistake made. It was written solely from the suggestion of a friend (who ought to know something about such things), that it might possibly amuse and interest ordinary readers to peruse an account of the duties of an adjutant.

KITTY.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.

THERE came the day for the picnic to Ashbury Hall. It was fine and sunny, and laden with the beautiful scent of flowers; and, inasmuch as Kitty Courtney knew it would bring her to Abel Musgrave, she thought all things were fine and sunny, and laden with beautiful flower-scent too.

With a certain utterance echoing in her ears, with its unhindered music making her raise her hands joyously to hide her impatient and longing eyes, it was just the shelter that it should be, to stray into Ashbury woods out of the blaze of the hot July sun. Kitty had been in the park now perhaps two hours. She and Mrs Courtney, and some half-dozen other ladies, had arrived as pioneers, to attend to the unpacking of the hampers; and now that this was seen to, and it was time for the company to come, Kitty had left My Lady's Oak-tree, that was the rendezvous, and had strayed away. She sat where she could see the guests as they drove in, and where she would stay till

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she saw Abie Musgrave. He was her whole entertainment. Why was she there, if it were not that she might be with him! And had he come? Not yet; and Kitty still sat on. The lime-tree avenue was merry with dog-cart, and wagonnette, and phaeton, as they rolled briskly in; but not one of them held Abie. And then horsemen came; alone, or in clusters of two or three; and through the massy foliage she could recognise them all, and not one was Abie. But she sat on—getting weary of vain looking, sick from deferred hope; tearing up fern-leaves she had gathered, strewing the petals of the dog-roses into a little heap at her feet. More gentlemen were riding quickly down the avenue; but no Abie. The hotel 'sociable' was as crowded as it would bear; but it did not bring Abie. And now Kitty must go away. The company must be all come; it must be time for tea; and she must leave the bowering hazel-trees with this weeping heart within her, and go away. But, there was one chance left: Abie might have gone the other road! There was a bridle-path leading through the spinny, and if he had had *Old Sol* lent him, he was sure to have chosen that! How absurd not to have thought of that before; how ridiculous to have forgotten it, and to have sat hankering there!

Out from the little wood, then, Kitty walked; across the avenue, by the syringa-beds; over the soft dry turf, up to My Lady's Oak. Happy faces gave greeting everywhere—merry tongues; but still no Abie Musgrave. Smart young men, smarter still by roses or heather-blossom set about their hats, were carrying cakes, and creams, and custards, and placing them round the knoll; smarter girls, who would not have had their hats disturbed for all the wild-flowers in the world, were hurrying after these, for glad mischief, undoing their work directly it was done; children, as heedless and noisy as they should be, careered about amongst crockery and baskets, getting inextricably involved with dishes of fowl and ham; and burly fathers and contented married men were overlooking all with a broad warm smile, that meant they felt their being there a little condescending, but that there might be somewhat of satisfaction in the doings after all. Here, also, were the Folletts, and every tribe and variety of the Folletts, amidst such piles of damson-cheese, and ratafias, and candied-covered buns, it seemed the simple spreading of them would take an hour more; and here, too, was handsome and active Mrs Courtney, with a word for Kitty directly she saw her come.

'Catherine,' the word ran—and Mrs Courtney spoke from a cluster of restless-minded matrons anxious for the quality of the tea—'you can fill these sugar-basins with sugar, and send some one for more boiling-water from the lodge; and get the spoons out from the little Tunbridge basket; and go round and call all the people who have come.'

So Kitty did as she was bid; and then went on her little mission from busy group to group. To the lake's edge, where young folks sat upon the grass, and chatted; to the little brook, where the willows grew so thickly, she had to go right down to a pretty arbour to see if any one were in it; to the crisp-turfed terraces, where children were having eager and heated runs; to the path in the shadow of the great Hall windows; to the laurel thicket; to the head of the little beech-grove. And people trooped to the rendezvous at her call, leaving all their loitering-places in one gaily coloured stream; but she saw no Abie—she came to no Abie Musgrave! Surely, Kitty thought, she must chance upon him now! He would be in the shelter of this plane-tree, on the seat behind this weeping-ash.—No. Kitty went further still, with her heart growing so vexed and fretted, her usual cheerfulness was getting changed to tears; but she could find no Abie. Not in the peach-walk; not by the marble sun-dial; not riding—late now as it was—along the avenue; not by the flower-beds stretched before the house. She must go back, then, to My Lady's Oak. She had emptied the pleasure-garden thoroughly. There was no one else to be seen, why linger any longer now?

Back, therefore, Kitty went; so out of heart, she could have flown away; so out of heart, that if any one had spoken to her, she would have liked to have laid her hands about their face. Back across the avenue; by the odour-laden syringa-beds (how languidly they smelt! how even these nearly made Kitty faint and cry!); over the soft dry turf, up to My Lady's Oak.

Kitty's steps went faster. Musgrave *must* be there now; she *must* soon meet him, and see the love so strongly moving her lighting on his face! Surely he would not have staid away! Surely, after that talk with her in the minster porch, he would not have missed this chance of being at her side! He *must* be seeking her as eagerly as she was seeking him!

No; there was no Abie: not with those with their filled plates already on their knees; not with those who had just thrown themselves upon the grass; not with those who were yet laughingly straggling in. He had not come; he had not meant to come. It had never been his thought to come; and he had no care whether she were here or not. And overborne by this conviction, Kitty seated herself away from all the babbling idlers who seemed to have all they could desire, and amidst the unloveliness of empty baskets and strewn cloths, sat disconsolate and alone.

Mrs Courtney discovered her the instant there was a little lull. 'Catherine,' she cried out, 'what are you doing there? Come here, child, for some of Sophia's nice hot tea!'

'No, thank you, mamma,' Kitty said. 'Send me some, and I shall be very glad; but I am tired, too tired to come.'

A couple of the beaux, with flower-garlands on their hats, sprang to her side directly her mother spoke, and held out each a hand to help her to her feet.

'Go back!' she cried petulantly to these. 'When

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I am hot and tired, I am like the babies, I grow very cross and peevish; and if any one comes near me, I will stone them off!'

She must come, they said. She must allow them to take her to Jinny Follett, who had the most ravishing Venice-cake and raspberries anybody had ever seen. She must consent. One, two, three, and the remove would be done.

'I cannot!' Kitty cried out again. 'I would rather stay here! Let me have my way!'

'Nonsense!' rung out Mrs Courtney, aiding the young men with her authoritative tongue. 'You have my permission to bring her of your will, if she won't come of her own!'

'You are great bears,' Kitty tossed out, as she was obliged to yield. 'You are jailers! You are spies! I will be as mischievous as possible! I will worry you all I can!'

And Kitty sat and played at pouting, to cover her chagrin; and she leaned upon the grass and pulled it, and picked the daisies into shreds.

Ah me! there was no word mentioned of Abie Musgrave. Kitty listened hard for that. She would have recovered some liking for the company, if they had shewn a little care: she could have melted into her ordinary *badinage*, if, by some stray chance, they had satisfied her mind; but they seemed to forget there was an Abel Musgrave; and she sat and began to hate herself and everybody, and to feel she could not keep down the aching at her heart.

The tea went on—with much running up and down the little knoll, much upsetting of plates and spoons; the girls were over-brimming with their friskiness, the boys quite as frisky as the girls. Kitty's silence was taken by them for caprice and waywardness, and made to do duty so for plenty of merriment more. Biscuit-pellets were fired at her, and sugar-shell. She was teased with offers of every dish, and worried into play; she was forced to hurl counter-missiles, compelled to take up the position of a besieged castle, and beat her assailants back: with her heart yearning—with the only thing she would have done—the only word she would have spoken, being to watch and ask for Abel Musgrave.—What had kept him? Had he sent word he couldn't come?—she was obliged to fence and parry, to snap out a threat or a repartee; and it was only when some newer target offered that her tormentors left her finally in peace; and then she held her head down, that no one might see her face, and she fretted miserably at the crushing end that had come to her hopeful day.

There came a stir. With her head still turned away, with her heart still full, Kitty was conscious of a slight commotion near her, and a sudden stoppage to the rattle of the spoons. A half-dozen young men bustled to their feet, and waved their hats and handkerchiefs in the air. There was a gig being driven along the avenue; and as it came quickly, and drew nearer, Kitty, even with her lowered head, saw the driver was Stephen Biddulph, the cheery widower, whom she had never missed, bringing with him the Abie Musgrave she had missed so painfully, she had thought that in another moment she must have cried!

She would not raise her happy eyes then; she must hide the cheeks that had such an exulting flush upon them, or they would tell her tale at once: so she plucked at the grass still, crushing the daisies and clover-heads into little fairy balls, throwing them down the knoll ceaselessly, to occupy her nervous hands. She dared not speak; the sudden triumph after her deadening pain had brought such ecstasy, she longed only to leave the busy feasters, and enjoy her gladness out alone. And there was no need for her to step into the front. Musgrave had a multitude of hands extended to him, to assist him from the gig, to welcome him when he was seated on the ground; so she kept her head down while she took her tea; she made all the haste she could; and then stole down to the willows overhanging the little brook.

There was a wooden bridge spanning the tiny thread of water, and Kitty crossed it and walked into the shrubbery beyond. She was crowned now; she had begun her reign; she had only now to stretch out her hand and grasp the jewels she had been longing for, and her exultation would be complete. She did not bound and hurry when she had consciousness of this; she only trod on triumphantly, feeding on her happiness, anticipating the quick coming harvest of her joy; and when she had lifted up her face to feel the cool air, she turned back to join the party, that she might realise her dream.

She could see My Lady's Oak when she made her turn; she could not see Abie though, and she was wondering who had helped him to move far away, when, looking down, she saw him, only a few steps from her, sitting at the foot of the wooden bridge.

He had not heard her come. She had time to note his attitude, his aspect—the willows over him—the wild-flowers to the very brink of the brook, before he raised his eyes, and knew that she was there. Then Kitty would have had him fly to her—she would have flown to him—she would have had him take her to him unasked and undisputed without a wavering word; but though there was pleasure in the face that swiftly recognised her, it seemed to Kitty she saw nothing more, and she was chilled to her heart's core, and her ecstasy died right away.

'I did not hope any one would be coming here,' said Musgrave, looking up at her as she leaned on the wooden rail.

'It was the quiet—it was that that brought me;' and Kitty spoke with a great deep pang. She shut her eyes, too, painfully, and sighed, and would have passed by.

'Nay,' Abie cried to her; 'stay, now you are here. Because I didn't hope for you, that is no reason not to be glad.'

'But I came for quiet,' fretted Kitty, unable to bear the agony of her wound; 'and I can have no quiet if I stay.'

'Must I *come* for you?' asked Musgrave, signing to a seat at his side. 'Will you not sit here without being made?'

No; Kitty dared not. It was too cruel to her, this communion with Abie, and then the communion ending where it had begun. She shook her head. But—this outer darkness was so killing, that lost light so sweet! and she was *but* a woman—and—and—she would!

Womanlike, though, she would be asked again. 'I will stay here,' she said. 'I will not go away, but I will stay where I am.'

'No,' urged Abie. 'Talk loses by the distance between us now, and you know I cannot easily get to you! Pray, come!'

'But why?' was Kitty's luring. 'I don't like to move unless I know why.'

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'I will not tell you till you are here,' said Musgrave, his tones almost drawing her to his side. 'Then, if you will listen, you shall hear. Come!'

So Kitty stole down—round the overhanging willows, down the moss-grown bank; with steps that lengthened out the distance (she did not know why), and with a sadly treacherous heart; and then she knelt upon the grass by Abie, seated herself, and he took her hand.

'I had no greeting when I came,' he said, 'and so I may have it now.'

'You—you came very late,' broke out Kitty.

'Well,' was Abie's answer, 'to tell you the truth, I did not think to get here at all.'

This was not the speech to make Kitty's lip keep still. 'Perhaps you did not *care!*' she said; her cheek very pale.

'Why, for that,' said Musgrave, not looking at the face melting so cruelly at his side, 'what is Ashbury Hall, or anywhere, to *me?*'

'You might'—cried Kitty, so near an outbreak now she was on the very verge—'you might have liked—have liked to—to meet your friends!'

'Friends!' echoed Musgrave, looking round at the Hall, the groves, the avenues, with a broad sweeping eye. 'What is it that friends can do for *me?*'

Kitty's tears broke into a full sharp shower. Spite of her striving, spite of the strong curb, they fell in a hard hot burst, and she started up to fly away.

'Kitty, Kitty!' Abie cried, catching at her skirt.

She would not stay. She had been so full of love to this man, the agony of her swift overthrow was more than she could bear. Over the bridge she meant to go, out into the little thicket, where the same trees that had witnessed the confession of her joy should look on whilst it was laid low; but she gave one glance at the brook-side where death had come to her, and she saw Abie raising himself, with a speed perilous to his enfeebled limb, that he might get to her and pluck her back.

'Kitty, Kitty!' rang his cry again; and his arms were out that she might come.

And the trees looked down upon a different hasting, and the willows fluttered with another cry. Kitty turned—back upon the smooth bank, down upon the short crisp grass; and Abie snatched her, and drew her closely to his breast.

'Little girl!' he cried—'little girl! has it come to this?'

No answer for him; nothing but the dear head close upon his breast.

'Why, little girl!' was his cry again. 'My Kitty! Isn't this little girl's faith as strong as mine?'

Kitty found faint voice through her tears then. 'I have no faith at all,' she sobbed; 'I am very foolish; very weak.'

'Why, Kit,' cried Abie, kissing the lips that had spoken to him, and the eyes that again sank low, 'have I been cruel? Ought I not to have relied on you being strong?'

'You are the best,' sobbed Kitty. 'It is only I who am not good; it is my weak fault. Forgive me, and let me go.'

'Go!' cried Abie, holding her more tight. 'Now I have once had you, you shall never go away! No, little Kitty! *My* little Kitty! You must stay now!'

'But you never would!' said Kitty, through her sobs—'you never would, if I had not been so weak! You will mock at me by-and-by!'

'Why, Kit, listen!' cried Abie. 'I never should have held back without a word, if I had not loved you as I do! I meant to have worked hard—the hardest; to have denied myself everything; to have had no expense I could have done without; so that in three years, perhaps, I should have worked myself back to what I was before; and then, my Kitty, love, I should have come to you, the crown of all my labouring, and told you what I tell you now. Are you clear, my Kitty, about that?'

'Yes.' And Kitty let the kisses fall upon her lips, and did not take her held hand away.

'I did not speak,' Abie went on, 'because I would not have any one looking shy upon you. Do you understand?'

'Yes,' was again Kitty's one word of answer; but this time the sobs began to die away.

'I might have lost you so, I know,' said Abie: 'that was my only fear. But I was *almost* sure, Kitty; and if I *had* been mistaken, it would only have proved that it was better I had never told! It would have shewn you didn't care, Kitty. Do you see it all now?'

There came from Kitty just the anticipation of a smile. 'But if you didn't tell me,' she asked, 'if you never spoke, how was I to know?'

The kisses fell swiftly and frequently at this. 'You *should* have known,' cried Abie, 'that I *couldn't* see you without thinking you the dearest little Kitty in the world! and if you loved me, you should have been certain that I loved you!'

'I wish,' cried Kitty, with the sparkle of her usual self—'I wish, to tease you, I dared deny now that I do!'

Abie's response to which was impeded much by kisses; but it went, as Kitty's quick ears understood it: 'You merry Kit! How could I know such a great deep waterfall was under a face like this!'

And at night, when the sun had turned from gold to gray, and the moon had crept up silently to her work, Kitty left the old woods and park of Ashbury to get back with her mother to the Combe, and a pretty confidence she had to mingle with her affection and her chat. She had to tell of Abie; of what he had said to her; of the time it would take to work himself free. He and she had thought to be just as they were, she said; to have no engagement beyond an understanding that they were tied together by a great strong love. And then, when Abie was what he hoped to be, he would come to the Combe to say what he had to say, and then—and then—why, Kitty would like to know what papa and mamma would answer in return!

Mr Courtney put his hands out with only feeble comprehension of what she told. 'You are my own little girl, Kitty!' was his plea. 'You mustn't leave your poor old father! You mustn't go away!'

But Mrs Courtney's comment was pitched to a very different tone. 'Gracious, Catherine!' she cried, 'is that why you staid so long at Abel Musgrave's side? I saw you sitting there; but I never thought it would have come to this. Why, child, the man is only just recovering from ruin; and to think of *you!*'

Nevertheless, when the three years were over, there was no 'No.' Good luck came to aid Musgrave's good endeavour; and when people saw to

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what an establishment he had returned, they began to hint that Mrs Courtney had managed very well, and that perhaps Kitty couldn't have done better, even had she tried!

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

CHEMISTRY has been described as a science in which, if a man will but stoop, he cannot fail to pick up things worth finding; and that this is the fact is demonstrated by the unbroken series of discoveries made in all countries where science is cultivated. Not startling discoveries, perhaps, furnishing occasion for popular excitement, but unobtrusive results of hard work and intelligent investigation. Chemists enjoy the great advantage of a field of research which is inexhaustible. The more they learn, the more remains to be learned; and it is safe to predict that, wonderful as have been the discoveries made by chemists within the past twenty-five years, those to be made within the next half-century will be at least equally so.

Dr Frankland has been for some years experimenting on certain phenomena of combustion, and finds as a general law that the illuminating power of a flame is in proportion to atmospheric *pressure*. For instance, a lamp gives less light at the top of a mountain than at the bottom, because of the diminished pressure of the air at high elevations. And he finds reason to doubt the generally received theory that the light of luminous flames is due to the presence of solid particles —that is, of carbon. There are some very luminous flames in which, it is known, there cannot be any solid particles whatever; hence Dr Frankland concludes that the luminosity of gas and candle flames is an effect of radiation from dense but transparent hydrocarbon vapours. In one series of experiments, the burning of a mixture of hydrogen and carbonic oxide in oxygen was carried on under different pressures, up to a pressure of twenty atmospheres. The increase of brightness in accordance with increase of pressure was most remarkable; and it may be expected that these results, though of a high philosophical character, will in due time be turned to practical account.

A Frenchman, M. Le Roux, has discovered a way by which the brightness of the electric light may be largely augmented. He places a bar of magnesia, specially prepared, close behind the arc of light formed between the two charcoal points, and the light is thereby so well concentrated and reflected, that the illuminating power is increased in a surprising degree. But there is a difficulty in the way of bringing the light thus improved into general use: it is that the bar of magnesia by exposure to the intense action of the light becomes converted into a kind of glass, and loses its effect. If this difficulty could be overcome, M. Le Roux' electric light would be as much used as admired.

A paper, *On the Transmission of Power by Water-pressure*, has been read before the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, by Sir William Armstrong, in which it was explained that with a good head of water in an elevated tank, or in an accumulator, power may be transmitted to a distance, as it is by iron shafting. But for many purposes water in a pipe is preferable to shafting, inasmuch as it is perfectly controllable, and being uniform in its action, communicates no shocks to the machinery. At present there are about six thousand hydraulic machines in use, mostly in this country, and it is in docks and other establishments where there is much lifting, and loading and unloading to be done, that their use may best be seen. Twenty or more cranes may be working at once unaffected by each other. At the docks at Goole, on the Humber, these hydraulic cranes lift barges containing thirty-two tons of coal fairly out of the water, to a considerable height, where they are made to tip their load all at once into a coal-ship lying alongside. Another use for hydraulic machinery is to feed blast-furnaces. These furnaces are now built so big and tall, that the labour of wheeling up the ore and fuel to the mouth would be too severe and costly. The hydraulic lift, when properly arranged, does it by the turning of a cock. By the same simple operation, large holes can be punched through thick solid iron. At Newcastle-on-Tyne, the water-supply, as it runs down one of the hilly streets, flows through an engine, and prints a newspaper. In other parts of the same county, all the raising and lowering in mines is done by water-power. The 'lifts' in hotels and warehouses also rise and descend at the turning of a tap; and we have listened to the music of a magnificent organ, of which the bellows was blown by water-power. The water is ready for work at any moment, and makes no noise either when turned on or turned off. From this, it will be understood, that for many purposes water is preferable to steam.

In the United States, a considerable number of small machines from one to four horse-power, worked by heated air, are in use. They are the invention of a Swede by birth, Mr Ericsson, who is now endeavouring to find a way by which the direct heat of the sun may be used to set machinery in motion, without the use of coal or other fuel. He has satisfied himself that it can be done; and he estimates the heat falling, directly, on ten square feet of the earth's surface as more than equal to one horse-power; and the heat wasted on the roofs of Philadelphia would work five thousand steam-engines, each of twenty horse-power. This seems marvellous; but Mr Ericsson reckons that the heat radiated from ten square feet of the sun's surface would be sufficient 'to run an engine of 45,984 horse-power.' The inventor is very earnest in endeavours to reduce his theories to practice. Should he succeed, there will be an end to the melancholy forebodings which some people have entertained as regards the speedy consumption of all our coal. When the sun works our engines, manufacturers will have nothing to dread but cloudy weather.

Some readers will remember that in the observations of the total eclipse of the sun last summer, the red protuberances were among the principal objects of interest. Up to that time it had been thought that those remarkable objects could be seen only during an eclipse; but scarcely was it over when M. Janssen in India, and Mr Lockyer in this country, discovered that with a spectroscope of special construction they could be seen whenever the sun was shining. And now Mr Huggins, in a note to the Royal Society, makes known that he too has seen the red prominences in ordinary daylight, and that he has a method of examining them which gives better results than any hitherto

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obtained. The consequence is, that observations of these phenomena will become so numerous, that our knowledge of the circumsolar regions will be largely increased: and, as physicists know, there are many reasons why we ought to know more about the sun than we do at present. In addition to this, we notice that Mr Huggins has contrived a process by which he measures the amount of heat radiated to the earth from some of the principal stars.

Mr Ellery, government astronomer at Melbourne, has calculated the rate at which the great tidal wave occasioned by the earthquakes in Peru crossed the Pacific. The distance between South America and Australia is six thousand five hundred statute miles; the wave travelled across in thirty-two hours, being a rate of about two hundred miles an hour. What an idea this fact conveys of the tremendous force of the original shock!

Are we about to have a supply of home-grown sugar? It seems so; for Mr Duncan, an enterprising merchant of Mincing Lane, has laid out works and built a factory near the pleasant town of Lavenham, in Suffolk, for the manufacture of beet-root sugar. Sugar-growing is a profitable occupation in Belgium and the north of France; and it remains to be seen whether it can be made permanently profitable in this country. The farmers of Suffolk supplied Mr Duncan last year with 800 tons of Silesian beet; and this year they hope to increase the quantity to 4000 tons, for which the payment is to be one pound a ton. The 'works,' when in full operation, use up sixty tons of beet a day, during the sugar-making season, which commences at the end of September.

This is an experiment in which the whole nation may be said to be interested, for the annual consumption of sugar in the United Kingdom is nearly forty pounds a head, reckoning the entire population. If successful in Suffolk, it may be expected to answer in other counties, for seeds have been sown elsewhere, by way of experiment; and it appears that the roots grown in England and Scotland contain more sugar than those grown in Holland. There is much more sugar made in Europe (all from beet-root) than would commonly be imagined, the quantity being 630,000 tons, as shewn by the returns for the season 1867–68. The season begins October 1, and ends April 1. Of this great quantity, France manufactured 220,000 tons; Germany, 165,000; Russia, 97,500; Austria, 92,500; and Belgium, Poland, Sweden, and Holland, 55,000 tons. We observe, moreover, that endeavours are being made to introduce the manufacture into the United States, where the beet is unusually rich in sugar, and where the cost of imported sugar is eighty million dollars a year.

THE FOUR MOURNERS.

The bravest of them all lay slain;
The trumpet's blast appealed in vain
To ears that never should hear again.

Within the tent upon the floor,
There crouched three women weeping sore,
And one sat silent by the door.

First spake the eldest: 'O my son!
My course on earth was nearly run,
Couldst thou not stay till it was done?

'Then would I wait thee on the strand,
Once more to take thee by the hand,
A child again in that new land.

'And now Heaven's sun shines first on thee,
Alas! thou wilt not think of me,
How my last days will darkened be!'

Then spake the sister: 'Thou saidst true,
O mother dear! Thy days are few;
Short space is left for thee to rue.

'One brother had I—only one;
How will it be when thou art gone,
And I left here alone—alone!

'O for those happy hours again,
When he and I were children twain,
Sharing each little joy and pain!

'Together in the woods we played,
Beneath the checkered sun and shade,
And of wild berries garlands made.

'Together climbed the elm-tree tall,
And watched the shadows rise and fall,
And measured heights against the wall.

'Each trifling memory seems to start
To life again, and form a part
Of the great wound that wrings my heart.'

Then wailed the youngest of the three:
'Oh, little seems your grief to me,
Whose thoughts and memories wander free!

'My cloud is all too black and vast,
To see behind it, or forecast—
I have no future, and no past!

'My lord, my love, my life lies here!
No care have I—no joy, no fear—
Save the dead form upon this bier!'

And still the other sat silent by—
Her lips were mute, her eyes were dry;
No mortal heard her woeful cry:

'O God! more bitter and more deep
The gnawing pain, I secret keep,
Who have no right to moan or weep!

'My grief is silent—my love was vain;
Yet weary years shall wax and wane,
Smiles sit on others' brows again—

'His name be blazoned in the past,
Ere my heart slumbers—holding fast
Its hidden burden to the last!'

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ABOARD THE SEA-MEW.

IN TWENTY-TWO CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

I SHIPPED aboard the *Sea-mew*, full-rigged, trading from the port of London to New Zealand. Two more old shipmates of mine entered along with me; and we were just beginning to feel the breeze that would send us down Channel in less than no time. The skipper came aboard at Gravesend, and the rest of the passengers, and among 'em we had one poor chap who had to be whipped up in a chair, looking the while like as if he'd come aboard to find a hammock and a sailor's funeral. There was some petticoats, too, about him, and they had to be whipped up too, but I didn't take much notice, being hurried about here and ordered there, and the passengers all seeming to have an idea, that now they'd come aboard, all there was to do was to get in everybody's way, and stand wiping their eyes. They would get in your way and aggravate, and when they moved, go and stand somewhere wuss, till it was enough to make a saint swear; and I'm blest if I don't think that, being a man used to the sea, and a quick-tempered sort of a fellow, Peter hisself would have gone on 'most as bad as I did. What does a great fat fellow of two-and-forty want to go walloping down where the mate had told you to coil forty fathom o' rope, and then begin blubbering like a great gal? And what do people as have done nothing but grumble and cuss at the old country, go waving their handkerchiefs at it for, and then fall into one another's arms a-kissing and a-hugging, and just, too, when the deck 's in such a litter that the skipper and the mate are 'most raving mad?

It's a nice place, deck of a ship just before sailing; what with the lumber, and the crew being all raw, and half of 'em three parts, or quite drunk. We'd a nice lot, we had, aboard the *Sea-mew; for it* seemed to me, as soon as I saw them together, that the skipper had been having the pick of the docks, and choosing all them as nobody else wouldn't take aboard a ship. But it was in this way: there'd been a sort of an upset about pay, and half the merchant-sailors were on strike; and as the owners of the *Sea-mew* had advertised her to sail at a certain time, and it was ten days past that time, the skipper had been obliged to sign articles with any one he could get. They were all fresh ones to us; six-and-twenty of 'em, but mostly seemed to know one another, and how to handle a rope.

We'd a mixed freight—live-stock mostly, going out emigrating, and more live-stock to feed 'em with, and a young doctor to see as they was all well, and had their salts and senny reg'lar; and a great big chap as couldn't stand up down below, but was always chipping his head, and taking the shape out of his hat against what he called the ceiling. They said he was a nat'ralist, though he was about the longest, okkardest, corner-shaped, unnat'ral fellow I ever did see; and he'd got more live-stock in no end of great cages—cock-sparrows and tom-tits, and blackbirds and starnels, and all sorts o' little twittering things to introduce amongst the New Zealanders. Then there was Brummagem and Manchester and Sheffield goods, and plants and seeds in cases; and the deck that full, that, as I said before, it was enough to make any one swear, let alone a sailor.

'Tain't a nice time, the first week at sea; for, to begin with, it takes all that time to get the long-shore goings on shook out of the men, and them fit to work well together; then, if it happens to blow a bit, as it mostly does in the Channel, there's all the passengers badly, cabin and steerage, and their heads chock-full of shipwrecks; and when they ain't frightened of going to the bottom, calling the doctor a brute for not attending to 'em. Sea-sickness is bad enough, while it lasts, but folks needn't be so disagreeable about it, and every one think his case ten hundred times worse than any-body else's; but they will do it; and as for the fat chap as cried so about going away, he quite upset the young doctor, as they called Mr Ward; and if I'd been him, and been bothered as he was, I'd have give Mr Fatsides such a dose o' Daffy as would have sent him to sleep for a week.

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CHAPTER II.

'You 've put your foot in it, Sam Brown,' I says to my old shipmate when things was about knocked together, and we were bowling along well out of sight of land. We 'd been putting that and that together, and found out that for some months to come, let alone wind and weather, we 'd got our work cut out, the skipper being one of your reg'lar slave-drivers, that nothing can't satisfy, and the mate a sneak, as would do anything to please the captain. So 'You 've put your foot in it, Sam Brown,' I says; but he only grunted. Bill Smith, though—my other mate—turns a bit rusty, and says it was me as got them to sign the articles, and it was all my fault; for he was a bit sore, owing to a row he 'd been in that day.

But it was no use to growl, and say the ship was a bad one; we were in the ship, and bad captain, bad mate, bad crew, and bad victualling, there it all was, and there was no getting away from it.

'Never mind, lads; 'tain't bad pay,' I says.

'Pay!' says Bill Smith. 'I 'd forfeit to-morrow to be out of it, and—— Look ye there, Tom.'

I turned to look; and it was the passenger I 've spoken of before, him that was whipped up on deck, and now he was out for the first time for a walk, being a bright sunshiny time; while the petticoat as came on board with him was leading him about the deck.

'Looks bad,' I says.

'Yes,' says Bill. 'But I meant the lass. Just look at her.'

'What for?' I says.

'Fine lines,' growls Sam Brown, squinting at her, for he was a chap that could squint awful, and when he looked partic'lar at anything, his eyes used to get close together, and he had to turn his head first on one side and then on the other. He was such a quiet chap, and spoke so little, that I used to think his eyes tried to turn round and look inside his head, to see what he was thinking about. 'Fine lines,' he says, and then he shuts one eye up, and holds it close, while he has another look.

'Beautiful! ain't she?' says Bill.

'Gammon,' I says. 'Wax-doll. She 'd better not get wet, or she 'd melt. I wish they wouldn't have no women aboard.'

'Why?' says some one close behind me. And looking round, there was the young doctor and Tomtit, as we called him—the long chap as had all the birds.

'Why?' I says gruffly; 'because they 're in the way, and ain't no good, and consooms the ship's stores. Would my deck be littered here with hens and cocks singing out eight bells when 'tain't nothing of the kind; and a couple of cows as is always lowing to be milked, and then giving some thin blue stuff like scupper-washings; and a goat and ducks, till the place only wants an old turkey-cock and a jackass or two to be a reg'lar farmyard, 'stead of a ship's deck—would there be all these things aboard if it warn't for the women? Bother the women! I wish there wasn't a woman on the face of the blessed earth.'

'He was crossed in love when he was a young un, sir,' says Bill Smith with a grin.

'Women's right enough ashore,' says Sam Brown, and he squinted towards where the sick passenger was along with the petticoat, till both his eyes went out of sight behind his nose, which was rather thick in the bridge, and then he sighed, and went and sprinkled the sea with a little baccy-juice before coming back to the job we were at—scraping the chain-cable.

'One of our protectors wants to pay his respects to you, Miss Bell,' says Mr Ward, the young doctor, you know, for just then she was passing close by with the poor thin sick chap, who was her brother, and I saw her just bend her head as the doctor and Tomtit took off their hats to her.

'Sarvant, miss,' I says gruffly, getting on my legs too, for there was something about her as seemed to compel one to be civil like, being a tall bright-eyed girl, with red and white in her face, and a set o' teeth as couldn't ha' known what it was to want to be pulled out in their lives. 'Sarvant, miss,' I says, making a scrape, and not a bit took aback. 'I was only a-saying as wom—ladies ain't no business aboard ships.'

'And why not?' she said quietly.

''Cause all 's rough and ready, and folk's tongues gets running too free afore them,' I says. And then to myself: 'That 's one for you, Mr Jalap;' and then I turned towards the sick young man, whose sunken eyes looked brighter, and angry, and jealous like, as he held tight by his sister's arm, and he says: 'Come, Eady, let 's go below. The sailor is right.—Drink my health, my man;' and he threw me a shilling.

'That I will, sir,' I says, as he turned away, though I thought to myself it would want drinking a many times before I could do him any good.

The doctor looked rather black at me; but I wouldn't see it, and got down cross-legged at my work, while Tomtit and he lit their cigars, and began walking up and down the deck.

CHAPTER III.

What a wonderful deal a sailor can get to know if he only keeps his eyes and ears open! Of course, I mean aboard ship, where everything is, as you may say, close to your hand. Now, acting after this way, and being a rough, blunt sort of an old fellow—for I always looked old from the time I was forty—people would come and make friends with me, in a fashion, so that I got to know a deal. The doctor would have his chat on things in general, and give me cigars, and by degrees work round to the sick passenger and his case; and I soon could see that though he didn't care a dump about the sick passenger, he took a deal of interest in his case, and I could guess pretty well why. Then Tomtit would come and fold his back, so that he could lean his elbers on the bulwarks, and he 'd chatter about his birds, all the while smoothing his hair, and arranging his tie and collar, and brushing specks off his coat, as he kept looking towards the cabin-stairs, to see if some one was coming up; and when—being a thoroughly good-hearted, weak, soft Tommy sort of a chap—he 'd heave a great sigh, I used to shake my head at him, and say as I could see what was the matter with him, it was wonderful how friendly he 'd get.

'I wouldn't care if I had a few canaries on board,' he 'd say. 'They are such nice birds if you want to make a present to a lady.'

'Why not try a couple o' doves?' I says.

He looked at me as if he meant to do it through and through, but I don't think he got any further

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than the outside rind—mine being rather a thick skin, and I didn't let a single wrinkle squeeze up to look like a smile; so he says, after a minute's thought: 'You're right, Roberts,' he says; and that night, hang me, if he didn't send me to the cabin with a note, and a cage with a couple of turtle-doves in. He gave me half-a-crown for taking it, and he'd been busy all the afternoon touching up the cage with a bit of ship's paint, that wasn't half dry when I took it; but I brought it back again with me, with Mr and Miss Bell's compliments and thanks, but Mr Bell's health would not bear the noise of the birds.

The poor chap — Butterwell, his name was— looked awfully down when he saw me come back, but he wouldn't shew it more than he could help; he only said something about wishing he'd had canaries, and turning his back to me, began to whistle, and feed his other birds, of which he'd got quite five hundred in a place fitted up on purpose, though there was nearly always one or two dead of a morning, specially if the night had been rough.

Well, somehow, I got to see that Miss Bell was not without her admirers; while her brother, poor chap, clinging to her as the only being he had to love on earth, seemed to hate for a soul to speak to her, and whenever I saw him, he used to watch her every look. Not that he had any need, for she seemed almost to worship him; leading him about; reading to him for hours, till I've heard her husky and hoarse, and have gone and fetched a glass of lime-juice and water from the steward, to get a pleasant smile from her, and a nod from the sick man for what I had done.

'You're a lucky man, Roberts,' Mr Ward says to me one day when he had seen me fetch it, and the pay I got for my trouble.

'What for?' I says gruffly, for it wasn't no business of his. 'P'raps you'd like to change places, sir, eh?' But he only laughed, and the more rough I was, the better friends we kept.

There were many more passengers, of course, but I never saw that they were any different to other cargoes of emigrants as I had helped to take over: there was two or three of those young chaps that always go out to make fortunes, packed off by their friends because they don't know what to do with them at home; some young farmers, and labourers, and mechanics—some with wife and children, some without; children there was plenty of—always is where there's women; and one way and another there was plenty to make the ship uncomfortable, without a skipper who was a brute, and a mate a cowardly sneak. The crew were as bad a lot as ever ran round a capstan, but that was no reason why they were to be treated like dogs. If they'd been as good men as ever stepped, it would have been the same, for Bill Smith and Sam were A1 foremast-men; and while there was a sheet to haul taut, a sail to furl, or a bit of deck to holy-stone, I was ready to take my turn; but it was all the same, and I've seen the men bullied till they've gone scowling down below, and more than once I've said to Sam: 'There'll be foul weather yet, my lad, afore we get this voyage to an end.'

CHAPTER IV.

Now, as to ordinary weather, that was all as a sailor could wish for—bright skies, fine starn winds, and the ship bowling along her nine or ten knots an hour. We got into the warm belts, shoved up the awnings, and had our bits of fishing as chances come up; but for all that, I wasn't easy in my mind. I'd been so long at sea, and knocked about amongst so many sorts of people, and in such different weather, that appearances that would not have been noticed by some folks made a bit of an impression on me, and not without reason, as you'll say by-and-by. For instance, it didn't look well, so I thought, for a chap to out knife and threaten the captain, for hitting him on the head with a speaking-trumpet, though it might be only in a bit of a passion, still it didn't seem right; nor yet for the skipper to be always harassing the men when there was no need—piping all hands up to make or shorten sail, when the watch could have done it very well themselves, and then making the men do it again and again, because it wasn't what he called smart enough. You see, men don't take much notice of that sort of thing once, nor yet twice, but if it's kept up, they grumble, 'specially when they know they've been doing their best. Then the provisions were horrible, and enough to make any man discontented; water wasn't served out in sufficient quantity, and things got so bad at last that the men had meetings right forward of a night about the way they were served.

I knew a good deal and heard a good deal, but it didn't seem to be my place to go and tell tales, and besides, I never thought there'd be much the matter, more than a row, and perhaps a man or two put in irons, to be kept there till we got into port. I said so, in fact, to my mates Bill and Sam, 'and what's more,' I says, 'irons won't do for me, my lads, so let's make the best of things, and get a better ship as soon as we can.' Sam grunts, and Bill Smith said it was all right; so we went on with what was set us to do, and made as little trouble of it as we could.

But there was one chap aboard as the captain seemed quite to hate, and used to put upon him shameful. He was a thin wiry fellow, as yellow as a guinea, and looked as if he'd black blood in his veins; but he always swore as he had not. He'd got a Dutch sort of name, Van Haigh, but hailed somewhere out of one of the West Indy Islands, and had knocked about almost everywhere. Curious-looking chap he was, looked as if he'd always got his parlour-blinds half pulled down, and he'd peep at you sideways from underneath them in a queer cat-like sort of way. He was quite a swell sort of fellow in his way, only dirty as dirty, and that didn't do nothing towards setting off the big silver rings he had in his ears, and was uncommon proud of. We always used to call him Van for short; and against this chap the skipper always seemed to have a spite, bullying him about more than all the rest put together, till you might have thought his life would have been miserable—but not it: he always shewed his white teeth and grinned, pocketing all both the skipper and the mate gave him, till them pockets of his must have been full and nigh unto bursting. Once the captain knocked him down with a marlinespike, but he never drew no knives, not even when the mate kicked him, and told him to get up. He only grinned, but it was a queer sort of grin, and I didn't like the look of it.

These sort of rows used generally to take place when the passengers had gone down of a night, or before they came on deck of a morning. While before the cabin lot, Captain Harness was quite the

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gentleman, and it seemed to me that he had a sort of hankering after Miss Bell, like some more of them, or else he wouldn't have been so wonderfully civil about having Mr Bell's chair moved here and there, and wanting him to take wine, and things that Mr Ward said he was better without.

As to the fore-cabin passengers, they went on just about the same as fore-passengers mostly do: asked every day whether we were nearly there, played ship's billiards, and a bit or two of music; smoked a deal, and slept a deal more, and only did just so much work as they was obliged to. No doubt there was their little bits of squabbling, and courting, and so on going on; but my eyes were turned in another direction; and, soon after we 'd crossed the line, I couldn't help thinking how very sixy and seveny matters had growed. Instead of being friendly, there was quite an unpleasantness between Mr Ward and the Bells, for the sick man was as jealous as could be, and it was plain enough that he downright hated the doctor. As for Miss Bell, as far as I could see, she never even bowed to him, and he and Tomtit used to walk up and down the deck together, as if they were the fastest of friends. 'And why don't they bow to one another as they used?' I says to myself, as I lay in my hammock. 'Why don't you mind your own business and go to sleep?' says Common-sense; and as I was too tired to argufy, I made no answer, but went off sound.

CHAPTER V.

Now, if what I'm going to tell you had happened a week sooner, I should have been on the lookout for it, or, if it had come off a week later; but, like many more such things, it came when it wasn't expected, and my sails were took aback as much as anybody's.

Things had been going on more peaceably than usual—weather having been hot, with light steady wind, which just took us easily through the water with stunsails set alow and aloft. The heat had made the captain sleepy, and he shewed precious little on deck, while the mate, who always took his tone from the skipper, used just to give an order or two, and then make himself as comfortable as he could.

It was my watch one night with Sam Brown, Bill Smith, and a couple more. Hot! it was one of the hottest nights I ever knew, and we were lolling about over the sides, looking at the golden green water as it gently washed by the bows as we just parted it, making only way enough for the ship to answer her helm. Bill Smith had gone to take his trick at the wheel, and, looking along the deck, you could just make out his face by the binnacle-light shining up and around him. There was a faint glow, too, up from the cabin skylights, and from where the ship's lanterns flashed on the water, else it was a thick darkness everywhere, and us sailing through it, and seeming to get nearer and nearer to some great black heat, that made the perspiration stream out of you at every pore.

'Nuff to bake 'em down below, Sam,' I says, after we 'd been quiet for a good hour. 'I fancy if I was there, I should be for coming up and lying on the deck, where it 's cooler.'

'Cooler!' says one of them with us, 'why, the planks are hot yet.'

'But you can breathe,' I says.

'Well, yes,' says the other; 'you *can* get your breath.'

Then we were quite still again for a piece, when Sam gives me a shove, to call my attention to something.

'Well, what now?' I says.

'They 're a-coming on deck,' says Sam.

'They 're in the right of it,' I says; 'and if'—

I got no more out, for there was a hand clapped over my mouth, and the next moment I was at it in an up-and-down struggle with some one, but not so hard but that I heard Sam Brown go down like a bullock upon the deck; and then I shook myself free, ran to the mizzen-shrouds, and sprang up them like a cat; and, as soon as I was out of reach, leaned down and listened.

There was no mistake about it: the ship had been taken with hardly so much as a scuffle, and though I could not see more than a figure trot quickly by one of the skylights, I could hear that the hatches were being secured, and men posted there; and for a minute I felt sure that we had been boarded in the darkness, and that I, one of the principal men in the watch, had kept a bad look-out. Directly after, though, there came a bit more scuffling and an oath or two, and I heard a voice that I knew for Bill Smith's, and another that I could tell was Van's; and then, like a light, it all came upon me that while we had been watching out-board, there was an enemy in the ship, and the men had risen.

I wouldn't have it for a bit, feeling sure that I must have known of it; but I was obliged to give in, for I heard next in the darkness a hammering at the cabin doors, and the skipper's voice shouting to be let out; and then came the mate's, backing him up; then a pistol-shot or two, and the shivering of glass, like as if the cabin skylight had been broken; and then came Van's shrill voice, giving orders, and threatening; and from the way the man spoke, I knew in a minute that there had been a chained devil amongst us, and that he had broken loose.

As soon as I could pull myself together a bit, and get to think, I got out my box, opens it and my knife, cuts a fresh bit of baccy, and then taking a good hold of the stay I was on, began to wonder what I'd better do next. Staying where I was did very well for the present; but it would not be such a great while before daybreak, and then I knew they would see me, and, if I didn't come down, shoot me like a dog. I felt sure that they had done for my two poor mates, for I could not hear a sound of them; and seeing that joining the enemy below was out of the question, what I had to do was to get to them in the cabin. But how?

There I was, perched up close to the top, with the yard swinging gently to and fro; and between me and those I wanted to join, there was the enemy. I felt puzzled; and in the midst of my thought, listening the while as I was to the muttering of voices I heard below, I snapped to the lid of the steel box I had in my hand, and in the still night it sounded quite sharp and clear.

'What a fool!' I said to myself, and crept in closer to the mast, for the voices below ceased, and two pistol-bullets came whistling through the rigging. Then there was a sharp whispering, and a couple more shots were fired; but I did not move, for it would have been like directing them where to aim. Then came Van's voice, as he

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shouted: 'Fetch him down!' And I knew from the way in which the rigging trembled that some of the enemy were coming up the shrouds to leeward and windward too.

'Hunt him overboard, if he won't give in,' shouted Van, and I set my teeth as I heard him; but there was no time to spare, and feeling about for a sheet, I got hold of it, meaning to swing myself out clear, and hang quite still, while they passed aloft, and then try for some hiding-place where I could gain the deck. I held on tight for a moment, and listened; and then in the darkness I could hear some one coming nearer and nearer, when, letting go with my feet, I swung gently off, and the next instant brushed up against something, when my heart gave a great bound, for I had found the way to get down to them in the cabin.

CHAPTER VI.

'It may come to a fight though, after all, and a prick will keep some of them at a distance,' I says to myself, and getting my legs well round the sheet, I got hold of my knife, and opened it with my teeth, before making use of the chance that had shewn itself.

Perhaps it isn't every one who knows what a wind-sail is, so I'll tell you: it's a contrivance like a great canvas stocking, six or seven feet round, and twenty or thirty long; and by letting one end of this hang down through the cabin hatch or skylight, and having the other bowsed up in the rigging, you have like a great open pipe bringing you down a reg'lar stream of cool air in the hot weather.

Now it was just against the top end of this that I had brushed; and as it seemed to me all I had to do was to slip in, check myself all I could, and then go down with a run amongst friends, where, if not safe, I should certainly share their fate, whatever it might be, besides, perhaps, being of some use.

Fortunately, I had the rope, and hauling myself up a bit, after two or three tries, I got my legs in, lowered away quickly, and came down pretty smartly, not, as I meant, in the chief-cabin, but upon the deck, where I was now struggling to get loose, like a monkey in a biscuit-bag, for they had done what I had not reckoned upon, dragged up the end of the wind-sail, and shut down the cabin skylight, most likely when I heard the shots and breaking glass.

It was lucky for me that it was dark, for though the noise I made brought them round me, I had time first to slit the canvas and slip out, panting, and not knowing which way to turn. I knew they dare not fire, for fear of hitting one another, and starting off, I ran them once right round the deck, keeping as much as I could under the bulwarks. The second time round I came right against one fellow, and sent him down head over heels; but I knew it couldn't last, and that in spite of doubling they must have me. I could hear panting and voices all round, and on leaving off running, and creeping cautiously about, more than once I felt some one pass close by me—regularly felt them, they were so close. Once I thought of getting into the chains, but I knew if I did they would see me as soon as it was daybreak. Then I thought I might just as well jump overboard, and make an end of it, as be pitched over; directly after, I fancied I could crawl under the spare sail that covered the long-boat, and lie there. Last of all, I made for the poop, meaning to try and climb down to one of the cabin windows, but I stopped halfway, on account of the binnacle-light, and crept back towards the fore-part, to see if I could get down to the fore-cabin passengers. But it was of no use, and the only wonder was that I did not run right into some one's arms; but the chances, perhaps, were not, after all, so very much against me, and I kept clear till they grew savage, and I could hear that they were cutting about at me with either knives or cutlasses; and in spite of my trouble then, I could not help wondering how they had come by their arms, for, of course, I could not know then how Van had stolen them from the cabin while the skipper was asleep.

'I may as well knock under,' I said to myself, and I was about to give up, meaning first to give 'em one more round, when I stumbled. Twice over I had felt my bare feet slip upon the deck, in what seemed blood, and had shuddered as I thought of how I should leave my footmarks all over the clean white boards; but this time I stumbled over what seemed to be a body, and should have fallen, if I had not gathered up my strength for a jump, and thrown myself forward, when, as if in one and the same moment, there was a crash as of breaking glass, a heavy fall, and then a foot was upon my throat, and a pistol held to my head.

CHAPTER VII.

I was that shaken and confused by my fall, that for a moment I could not speak, and when I could say a few words, I did not know who I was speaking to, expecting that it was Van, till a voice I seemed to know whispered: 'If you attempt to move, I fire.'

'I ain't going to move, Mr Ward,' I says at last: 'it's been too hard work to get here; but if you'll pynt your pistol up at the skylight, it'll be better, or some one else will be tumbling down after me. Only wish Sam Brown would.'

'Pitched me down more'n half a hour ago,' growled a voice I knew.

'What's come of Bill Smith?' I says.

'Lyin' on the deck with his head split,' says Sam, 'if they ain't pitched him overboard.'

Then I heard a whispering consultation going on, which seemed to be about whether I was to be trusted, when Mr Ward seemed to be taking my part, and then the skipper whispers to me: 'If you'll be faithful to us, Roberts, you shall be well rewarded; but if you play fast and loose, mind, we are well armed, and there will be no mercy for you.'

'Who's playing fast and loose?' I says gruffly as old Sam. 'Ain't I been cut at, and shot at, and then pitched neck and crop through the cabin skylight! If that's your fast and loose, give me slow and tight for a game, I says; but mind you, it's my opinion that there's something else to do but play, for them beggars mean mischief.'

'I'll be answerable for him, Captain Harness,' says Mr Ward; and though all this went on in whispers, there wasn't a face to be seen, every light having been put out. 'You may trust him, he's no spy.'

'Spy be hanged!' I says. 'Who's going to play spy down here, in a place as is dark as an empty pitch-kettle in a ship's hold! Don't I tell you I've

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had to cut and run for my life, and what more do you want?'

'Nothing, my man,' says Mr Ward; 'only your help as a good and true British sailor, for here are women and children for us to protect.'

'However shall I get to my birds?' some one says from out of the darkness.

'Birds!' I says: 'you won't want no more birds, sir, for it 's my impression as we 're going to be kept caged up ourselves now.'

Just then I seemed to catch just a faint glimpse of a face from out of the darkness, then it was gone again, and half a minute after I got another glimpse, and then another, when it was plain enough that the day was breaking; and by degrees the pale light stole down through the skylight, till the anxious faces of all the passengers, with the two officers and Sam Brown, was plain enough to see; and strange, and haggard, and queer they looked; but for all that, there was an air of determination amongst them, that shewed they meant mischief; and I soon gathered from Mr Ward's words that he was spurring the captain on to try and retake the ship.

'I 'm afraid it would only be a sacrifice of life, if I did,' said the skipper.

'It would be a sacrifice of duty, if you did not sir,' says Mr Ward warmly.

'Perhaps you 'd better retake her yourself, sir,' says the skipper sulkily.

'I certainly shall try, sir, if you do not do your duty to protect these helpless women. But we have a right to demand your assistance, and we do; while I have the word of every man present that he will fight to the last gasp for those who need our protection.'

'I cannot fight, but I can load for you,' said a voice from behind; and looking round, as many of us did, there stood Mr Bell, pale as a ghost, but quite calm, and leaning upon his sister's arm; while, if I could have seen anything in a woman to admire, I should have said she looked beautiful just then—being quite pale and calm—like the sea of a still morning before the sun rises.

'There 's something to fight for there,' says Sam in my ear.

'Why didn't they all stop at home?' I says. 'Just look what a mess they 've got themselves in through being aboard ship, which is the last place as they should be in.'

What Mr Ward had said seemed to have warmed the captain up; for sooner than see another take his place, he set to, and began to hunt out what arms he could find, after placing Mr Ward to guard the broken skylight, which he did with a revolver and a thin skewer of a thing out of a walking-stick, and it put me in mind of what I have read about some one being put in the fore-front of the battle; but the young man never said a word; and then, after a bit of a rummage, the captain came back to serve out what arms he could get hold of, but that wasn't many, for the enemy had pretty well emptied the locker where they were kept. A precious poor lot there was left for us to defend ourselves and a whole tribe of women and children; my share being an empty pistol, which didn't seem to be so much use as a fellow's fist, that being a handy sort of weapon in a tussle.

Everything was done quiet as could be, so as not to let them on deck know what we were doing; but as soon as the arming part was finished, and I looked round, I could see that the game was up, for two more pistols, two cutlashes, and a couple of guns—sporting-guns, that two of the passengers had used to shoot sea-birds with—was all we could muster.

As is always the case when it 's wanted, neither of these passengers had any more powder; and when Mr Ward's little pistol-flask had been passed round once, there was not another charge left; but the captain had gone to get more, and we were expecting him back, piling up hammocks and bedding the while, to keep the mutineers off, and to have something to fight from behind. I was doing all I could, after shoving a good charge of powder and a whole handful of small-shot into my pistol, when Mr Ward beckons to me and whispers: 'Go and see why he don't come back: it 's time to be on the alert, for they are moving on deck.'

I stepped lightly off—my feet being bare, making no noise on the planks—when coming upon the captain quickly, I saw him just putting down a water-can, and he turned round to me, looking pale as a sheet, as he says: 'It 's no use, my lad; resistance would be vain, for they 've contrived to wet what powder we had. Look at it.'

He pointed to the little keg and a small case of cartridges, and sure enough they were all dripping wet, while it seemed rather surprising that the wetting looked so fresh. But I did not say so, only that Mr Ward hoped he 'd make haste.

'Curse Mr Ward!' he muttered; and then he went on first, and I followed with my cheeks blown out, as if I was going to whistle, but I didn't make a sound for all that.

'I fear that we must give up, Mr Ward,' says the skipper, 'for the powder is all wet.'

There was a regular groan of dismay at the news, and one woman gave a sort of sob, else they were still as mice, and the children too behaving wonderful.

'Who talks of giving up?' says Mr Bell, his pale face flushing up as he spoke, holding one hand to his side. 'Do you call yourselves men to hint at such a thing? I am no man now, only a broken, wasted shadow of a man, or, by the God who made me, Captain Harness, I 'd strike you down! Look at these women, men! think of their fate if those scoundrels get the upper hand—completely—Mr Ward—you—as a gentleman—my sister—God help'——

The poor young fellow staggered, and would have fallen, for the blood was trickling down upon his shirt-front—gushing from his lips; but Mr Ward saved him, springing forward as a cry burst from Miss Bell; and he was laid upon a mattress in one of the cabins fainting—dying, it seemed to me.

Then there was a murmur amongst the passengers, of such a nature that Captain Harness found he must make some show of a fight, or it would be done without him; and accordingly he took hold of a very blunt cutlash, looking very pale, but making-believe to tuck up the wristband of his shirt, to have free play for killing six or seven of the mutineers.

As for the passengers, all mustered, there was about eighteen of them; and had they been well armed, numbers being about equal, I don't think we should have had much the worst of it; but ever so many of them had no arms at all, and I began to turn over in my mind what was to be

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done. I had a pretty good jack-knife; and not having much faith in the pistol, I was about to trust to the bit of steel, same as Sam Brown, who had one with a spring-back and a good seven-inch blade, so I says to Tomtit: 'P'r'aps you'd like the pistol, sir;' and he took it quietly and earnestly, tapping the back, to make sure the powder was up the nipple, and I thought to myself, that's in the right hands, anyhow.

'Are you ready?' says the skipper; for they were evidently collecting up above, and some one fired a pistol down the skylight, but none of us was hit.

'Not quite, sir,' I says.—'Steward, suppose you hand out some of them knives o' yours; and I'll trouble you for the big beef-carver, as I spoke first.'

Mr Ward turned round and smiled at me; and I gave him a nod, turned up my sleeve too, and then laid hold of the big carver, which did not make such a bad weapon, being new, sharp-pointed, and stiff; while my idea had put a knife into a dozen hands that before had nothing to shew.

'Pile more mattresses and hammocks up,' said Mr Ward; for it was plain that neither the skipper nor Mr Wallace meant to do much towards what was going to take place; and then I saw the doctor give one look towards where Mr Bell was lying, and run across, as if to see how he was; but he hurriedly caught hold of Miss Bell's hand, and I could see that he spoke, while, as she drew her hand hastily away, she gave a strange frightened sort of look at him. Next moment he was back at my side, just as the cabin-hatch was flung open, and the shuffling of feet told that the mutineers meant to make their rush.

OUR PUBLIC STATUES.

We certainly cannot compliment ourselves, or expect to be complimented by others, on our success in regard to public statues. We can doubtless make a statue, and a good one too; or rather, our sculptors can when left to their own genius; but there is nearly always something or other to bring trouble and disappointment in connection with their efforts. If a statue is to be paid for, wholly or in part, out of the public purse, Lords and Commons insist on having a voice in the matter; there are committees and commissions; there are boards and departments; there are referees and judges. As all these worthy tribunals are composed of worthy people claiming to have a taste, the upshot is that some of them check the rest, and are checked in turn, until a general checkmate is effected.

And yet our public statues comprise some fine works, executed by sculptors whose names will live. There *ought* to be something good provided for us from the chisels of Chantrey, Baily, Wyatt, Westmacott, Marshall, Foley, Bell, M'Dowell, and Marochetti; and selecting in the metropolis such statues as are under the charge of that much-harassed official, the Chief Commissioner of Works and Buildings, we find them (from a recently published parliamentary paper) to be about forty in number. There are other statues, it is true, which have been erected at the public expense, or from the public purse in aid of private subscriptions, and placed in royal or national palaces, in St Paul's, or in Westminster Abbey; but these do not come under our present notice.

Most of these forty have an obscure biography, and are honoured by very few glances from the public eye; but the history of some of them is curious and notable.

The equestrian statue of Charles I. at Charing Cross is among the best placed and the best looking of the whole. Modelled by Lesueur, about 1638, on commission from the Earl of Arundel, it was cast in bronze, and set up on its pedestal. When the hapless monarch had been consigned to the block, his statue became as unpopular as himself; it was taken down, by order of the revolutionary parliament, and broken up; or rather, it was sold to one Rivers, a brazier in Holborn, with strict injunctions that it should be broken up. But Rivers was either a royalist or a sly-boots; he kept the statue intact, buried it underground, and drove a brisk trade in bronze-handled knives and forks, pretending that the bronze was derived from the statue. Long after the season of turmoil, when the royalists and Charles II. were in power and in fashion, the bronze statue came forth into light, and was set up in 1674 on the present pedestal, which was executed by Grinling Gibbons. The poet Waller praised the king and the statue with most courtly panegyric; but Andrew Marvell contrived to make a good deal of fun out of both. Sir Robert Vyner, Lord Mayor of London, about that time put up a statue of Charles II. at Stocks' Market, on the spot where the Mansion House now stands; and as Marvell had not much more love for the one monarch than for the other, he wrote a satirical dialogue, purporting to be held between the two bronze horses. Each horse reviled the monarch who bestrode the *other* horse—the one attacking the profligacy of Charles II., the other the despotism of Charles I. Charing Cross, making an onslaught on Stocks' Market, said, among other bitter things, it was wondrous

> That he should be styled Defender of the Faith,
> Who believes not a word that the Word of God saith!
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Though he changed his religion, I hope he's so civil
> Not to think his own father is gone to the devil.

—and many other pretty things of the same kind. The sword held by Charles I., in the statue at Charing Cross, is a modern one. The odd story concerning the substitution of the new sword for the old, we will take from Chambers's *Book of Days*: 'In *Notes and Queries* for 1850, Mr Planché asked: "When did the *real* sword of Charles I.'s time, which but a few years back hung at the side of that monarch's equestrian figure at Charing Cross, disappear; and what has become of it? This question was put, at my suggestion, to the official authorities by the Secretary of the British Archæological Association; but no information could be obtained on the subject. That the sword *was* a real one of that period, I state upon the authority of my learned friend, the late Sir Samuel Meyrick, who had ascertained the fact, and pointed out to me its loss." To this query, Mr Street shortly afterwards replied: "The sword disappeared about the time of the coronation of her present Majesty, when some scaffolding was erected about the statue, which afforded great facilities for removing the rapier (for such it was); and I always understood that it found its way, by some means or other, to the museum (so called) of the notorious Captain D——; where, in company with the wand of the

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Great Wizard of the North, and other well-known articles, it was carefully labelled and numbered, and a little account appended of the circumstance of its acquisition and removal." The editor of *Notes and Queries* pointedly added: "The age of chivalry is certainly past, otherwise the idea of *disarming a statue* would never have entered the head of any man of arms even in his most frolicsome mood." We may conclude, then, that the *present* sword of this remarkable statue is a modern substitute.'

None of our other statues come up to this of Charles I., in what may be called sensational incidents; though several among them have been much talked about. In the open quadrangle of Whitehall Yard or Gardens is Grinling Gibbons's statue of James II., set up in 1686. Queen Anne is to be seen in all her glory in two squares named expressly in her honour—Queen Square, Westminster, and Queen Square, Bloomsbury—by whom executed, 'your deponent knoweth not.' George II. is seen by a few, and only a few, Londoners, in a place once very fashionable and lively, but now among the most unlively quadrangles in the metropolis, Golden Square. George III., of glorious memory, has more than two effigies, we imagine, within metropolitan limits; but those under the command of the Board of Works are the one by Bacon in the quadrangle of Somerset House, and Wyatt's 'pigtail statue' in Pall-Mall East. The latter has been a good deal laughed at; for royal George's pigtail stands out horizontally in a most mirth-provoking way. When this statue was first cast, in 1836, permission was obtained to set it up in the triangular space of ground where Pall-Mall East and Cockspur Street meet—not a bad place for a statue, all things considered. But certain clauses in the leases of certain houses near at hand provided that the said triangular space should be left unoccupied; and the inhabitants objected to the pigtail statue as an ugly sight. The affair was brought before the Vice-chancellor's Court, and the Solicitor-general urged that the Pall-Mall-Easters ought to be proud at having so good a statue of so good a king—but they did not seem to see it. The Vice-chancellor decided that the leases entitled the inhabitants to expel the statue from the selected spot; but the Lord Chancellor, on appeal, decided that the leases did *not* give this power. And so the statue remained, to stand its chance of being welcomed as a work of high art. If the pig-tail would wag a little—but it won't; it only stands out to invite the east wind.

Coming down to the time of George the Magnificent, we find Chantrey's equestrian statue of that monarch, at the north-east corner of Trafalgar Square—set up, not during George's time, but in 1845. Several statues of notabilities are to be met with in the squares of London, not included in the present list, because they are not under the supervision of the Board of Works—such as those of the Duke of Cumberland, in Cavendish Square; Lord George Bentinck, also in Cavendish Square; the Duke of Bedford, in Russell Square; Charles James Fox, in Bloomsbury Square; William Pitt, in Hanover Square; the statue of the Queen, in the Royal Exchange; Sir Robert Peel, in Cheapside; the Duke of York (stuck up so high, as a wag suggested, to be 'out of the reach of his creditors'), and the Guards' Memorial, in Waterloo Place; Lord Herbert of Lea, in front of the War-office; and, latest of all, Richard Cobden, in Camden Town.

As to the Great Duke, the controversies concerning his statues have been almost interminable. Passing by Milnes's, on Tower Green, and Chantrey's, in front of the Royal Exchange (which have passed pretty well through their troubles), there is at the present time in preparation a statue, tomb, sarcophagus, mausoleum, or something of the kind, which is to be placed in or under St Paul's Cathedral. Money has been spent upon it somewhat lavishly; but hardly any of us can tell who is executing it, how long it has been in hand, when it will be finished, what will be the ultimate cost, or what it will be like when done. Then there is the Achilles Statue in Hyde Park, erected in honour of the Duke in 1822. It was a ladies' present to the nation, and was, as the inscription tells us, 'Inscribed by the Women of England to Arthur Duke of Wellington and his brave companions in arms.' It was cast by Sir Richard Westmacott from cannon taken in the victories of Salamanca, Vittoria, Toulouse, and Waterloo, at a cost of ten thousand pounds. Besides adverse and somewhat indecorous criticisms on the practice of adopting the nude antique in celebration of modern heroes, this statue has been called a misnomer; it is not Achilles at all, but merely a copy from one of the unnamed antiques at Rome. But the most stormy 'Duke' we have had is that which surmounts the arch at the end of Constitution Hill, Hyde Park Corner. When Mr Wyatt had completed it, the question arose where to place this Brobdingnagian work of art. It is the largest equestrian statue ever cast in this country; and it took about twenty of Barclay and Perkins's magnificent horses—in lieu of all the Queen's horses and all the Queen's men—to draw it from the sculptor's studio (or rather from the caster's foundry) to its place of destination. What a battle there was! Commissioners of Works urged how grand it would look to have the Great Duke's effigy just opposite the Great Duke's mansion, and at the end of the fine drive leading from the royal palace. The architect, on the other hand, protested that his arch was never intended to support a gigantic equestrian statue; and he was backed by connoisseurs, who denounced the bad taste of the whole affair. But the 'Works' conquered; and, as we all know, the bronze Duke has remained there ever since, pointing to something (nobody knows exactly what), and looking very funny in his cocked-hat and cloak.

Then, again, there is Nelson. None under middle-aged folk can remember the day when that Trafalgar Square statue and column were first begun. It was thirty years ago; and the work is not yet really finished! Mr Railton designed the column itself, which was built very slowly. It is admitted to be a good thing of the kind; but then came a question whether a Corinthian column would form a proper support for a statue of a naval hero. After abundant wrangling on all sides, this question was decided in the affirmative; and Mr Baily was employed to chisel a statue of Nelson in granite. It really matters not much whether the statue is a good one; for it is perched up so high that excellences and defects are all one. The money went quite as fast as it came in; and parliament was invited to come to the aid of private subscriptions, in order that the bas-reliefs on the four sides of the pedestal, and the

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four lions at the corners, might be finished. The four bas-reliefs were, in the lapse of years, executed (by Carew, Woodington, Ternouth, and Watson); the enormous lions, by Sir Edwin Landseer, were finished, and set in their places; the critics renewed the criticisms which they had commenced more than a quarter of a century before; and people are still prone to ask whether the forty thousand pounds sunk in the Nelson Column and its appendages were well invested.

Sir Charles James Napier's statue in Trafalgar Square, by Adams, and Sir Henry Havelock's in the same locality, by Behnes, were set up about ten years ago—paid for by private subscriptions, but honoured with a sort of governmental care and recognition. Then there are Marshall's statue of Dr Jenner, in Kensington Gardens; Noble's Sir John M'Grigor, in the grounds of Chelsea Hospital; the same sculptor's statue of Sir John Franklin, in the garden of Carlton House Terrace; and Foley's Sir Charles Barry, in or near the gorgeous legislative palace which that architect built. As to Baron Marochetti's Richard Cœur-de-Lion, in Palace Yard, one does not quite see the connection between the man and the building in front of which he is placed, however much we may admire the sword pointing bolt upright. The statues of Canning and Peel, in the open space near St Margaret's Church, have been subjects of furious war, honourable members having almost come to blows about them—in relation to the artistic fitness of the sites; indeed, it is not improbable that, by the time this sheet reaches the reader's hands, Sir Robert will have been dethroned altogether, pending the choice of a new locality for him. As to the six statues of kings, in Westminster Hall, intrusted, in 1867, to Thorneycroft, Weekes, Woolner, and Theed, we must wait a little longer before deciding whether to quarrel about them or not. And as to the statues of Hampden, Selden, Walpole, Falkland, Clarendon, Somers, Chatham, Mansfield, Fox, Pitt, Grattan, and Burke, in St Stephen's Gallery, there has been no end of grumbling; because, neither in this Gallery nor in Westminster Hall is there a statue of Oliver Cromwell—which, as regards our national history, is something like leaving out one whole section from Hume, and a good many sections from Carlyle.

LITTLE VENICE.

When the first Spaniards who came to the American coast, the famous (and infamous) Conquistadores, discovered the territory north of the Brazil, they found the Maracaibo tribe living in huts which were built on piles in a lake. The similarity of this primitive architecture to the style of beautiful Venice suggested to the invaders, who had a turn for poetical nomenclature, to name the new 'annexation' Venezuela, or Little Venice. The term, which was more pretty than appropriate even then, is an absurd misnomer now, when it has been extended to a region 'four times the size of Prussia, which comprehends a forest larger than France, steppes like those of Gobi, and mountain tracts which it would take many Switzerlands to match.'* Probably very few people who have not been there know much about Venezuela. The charm of the unknown hangs around the South American republics in an unusual degree, considering how very high in the sky is the sun of universal knowledge at this time of day. People know that they are tremendously big places, in one sense, but conceive that they are very little in another; and outside that not very sound or sagacious generalisation, they have a vague notion that the history of these immense tracts of the beautiful earth is roughly composed of revolutions, civil and other wars, a bewildering succession of 'presidents,' shaky public credit; loans, attended with difficulty and distrust; hovering wild Indians, popularly known, or rather unknown, as 'tribes;' heat, earthquakes, bull-fights, bell-ringings, 'processions,' Spanish manners, and easy morals. As far as Venezuela is concerned, Mr Eastwick gives his compatriots an opportunity of learning all about life in that part of the world, which they may avail themselves of, without any apprehension of finding the process merely useful.

Landing at La Guaira, which he declares to be 'the hottest place in the world'—a distinction which tropical tourists claim for many other localities—he first, of course, abuses the mosquitoes, and then acknowledges that the port, otherwise detestable, is one of the most picturesque places imaginable, with its huge blue, black, and green masses of rock heaped up into the clouds, forming a mountain, rising abruptly from the sea to a height of eight thousand feet. La Guaira is a dirty place, where nobody ever takes any exercise, and where, 'as there are no Englishmen, outdoor amusements are unknown;' so the traveller started for Carácas, and had his first experience of a Venezuelan mountain-road. After an ascent of a thousand feet, the heat is less unbearable; but the speed is terrific, and the recklessness of the drivers great. Here is a pleasant anecdote: 'The turns were so abrupt as to be quite invisible while one was approaching the precipice, from which they diverged almost at right angles. We seemed to be galloping straight into the abyss, and we did reach its very brink, and then swept round by a turn in the road, which only at that moment shewed itself. There are similar roads over the mountains in Peru, and it is said that a late president of that country got so alarmed on one occasion, that he shouted to the youth who was driving to stop. The *mozo*, however, rather enjoying the joke, drove on faster than ever, till the president, drawing out a pistol, called to him that he would shoot him dead unless he pulled up instantly. This was a hint not to be disregarded, so the youth obeyed, but turned round and said, with the usual freedom or impudence of the country: "Truly, you're a fine fellow to be president of Peru, if you are afraid of such a trifle as this."'

Mr Eastwick arrived at Carácas in the midst of a *fiesta*, which indeed it would seem difficult to avoid. South American Catholicism is very joyous and buoyant in its manifestations. Bell-ringing and fireworks are perpetually going on; and the women, who, at Carácas, are remarkably beautiful and graceful, are perpetually meeting together, and walking to the churches in bevies, a religious exercise which is regarded with much approbation by the male sex. The Venezuelan ladies have dark complexions and little bloom, but they 'whip creation,' according to enthusiastic Yankee evidence, in the attractive particulars of large black eyes, brilliantly

* *Venezuela, or Sketches of Life in a South American Republic; with the History of the Loan of 1864.* By Edward B. Eastwick, C.B., F.R.S., &c. London: Chapman and Hall.

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white teeth, slight waists, and faultless feet and ankles. The site of the Venezuelan capital is both strong and beautiful, but Valencia would be a better seat of government, as it possesses the richest soil and the best seaport in South America. The environs of the capital are sadly interesting, by reason of the traces of the awful earthquake of 1812, which did its work with suddenness almost as appalling as that which destroyed Manila. There is much simple force in this description: 'On Holy Thursday, 26th March 1812, the churches were crowded with ladies dressed in their gayest attire. The chapels of the convents were filled with nuns, the streets with people from the neighbouring villages. At the barracks of San Carlos, a regiment of six hundred men were mustering under the walls. There was not a cloud in the sky, nor a thought of danger in the heart of any one. Suddenly the earth seemed to move upward, the church bells tolled, and a tremendous subterranean noise was heard. The perpendicular motion lasted four seconds, and was instantly succeeded by a violent undulatory movement, which continued six seconds more. In those ten seconds that great city, with fifty thousand inhabitants, had become a heap of blood-stained ruins. The churches of Alta Gracia and Trinidad, with towers one hundred and fifty-one feet high, were so completely levelled, that in their place only shapeless mounds remained, spread out to a great distance, but not more than five feet high. Every convent was destroyed, and of the inmates scarcely one escaped. The barrack of San Carlos was hurled forward from its base, and of the six hundred soldiers mustering below its walls, not a man was left alive. A vast cloud of dust rose up to heaven, and with it ascended the shrieks of more than twenty thousand human beings dying or wounded in the ruins. Great rocks came thundering down from the mountains, and at intervals explosions, like the discharge of innumerable pieces of artillery, were heard beneath the earth.' No wonder that the survivors were so terrified that they could not go to their customary work for long afterwards, but were continually absorbed with prayer and religious exercises. But one would like to know who was the individual who, amid the horror and the appalling danger of the hour, timed the earthquake so neatly as to know it lasted just ten seconds.

Two objects of interest are to be found in the Cerro d'Avila, near the capital: the first is the Catholic cemetery, the finest in South America; and the second is the Torna, or reservoir, which supplies the city with water. The Torna is situated in a thickly wooded ravine, and a very narrow path leads to it, surmounted by a rocky terrace, which is a favourite promenade for snakes. It is not uncommon to see a reunion of forty or fifty rattlesnakes and other serpents taking the air and the sun in that spot. Wages are very high in Carácas, trade is good, the people have a taste for amusement, and altogether Mr Eastwick considers that 'if it were not for earthquakes, epidemics, insect plagues, triennial revolutions, and bell-ringing, there would be few more desirable localities for a residence.'

Republicanism finds its full expression in Venezuela, not always satisfactorily to the visitor accustomed to other institutions. Little Venice is the paradise of servants, or rather, as Mr Eastwick has it, of 'the vagrant ladies and gentlemen who pay you short visits to replenish their purses and wardrobes, leave you without notice, and severely repress any attempt to communicate with them as to your domestic arrangements.' You may talk with them on general subjects, such as the weather or the theatre, and on politics you may be as expansive as you please; for where any one may become a general or a president in a few days, that subject is universally interesting. The theory that one man is as good as another appears to have acquired in practice in this happy land the Irish corollary of 'and better,' judging from the following amusing anecdotes: 'In one of the best houses where I was a guest, the gentleman who cleaned the boots always came into my room with his hat on, and a cigar in his mouth; and another gentleman, whom I had engaged to assist Juan, left me the day after his arrival, on being refused the custody of my keys and purse, which he candidly stated was the only duty he felt equal to. On my sitting down to play chess with the wife of the president of one of the states, half-a-dozen female servants, of every shade, from tawny twilight to black night, surrounded the table, and began to watch the game. The first time I went to a tailor, I was accompanied by a Creole friend, who undertook to shew me the best place. We had to wait some time before the gentleman of the shop appeared. When he did, he came in with the inevitable cigar in his mouth. He raised his hat politely to my friend, walked straight up to me, shook hands, and asked me how I did. He then sat down on the counter, put various questions to me regarding my coming to Venezuela, talked on general subjects, and at the end of a quarter of an hour intimated that he was ready to oblige me if I wanted a coat. This tailor was an officer in the army, and coming in on one occasion to measure a friend of mine, wore his uniform and spurs.'

Public honour and honesty do not attain to a high standard. There is too much adventuring, too little stability, and not enough grave, dignified public opinion. Perception of the progress of the United States, and jealousy of that progress, do not suffice to inspire the Venezuelans with energy and steadiness enough to enable them to emulate it; and education is at a very low ebb. The country, with great resources, is wretchedly poor, and is eternally borrowing. It is difficult to discern the objects of expense. 'You Venezuelans,' said Mr Eastwick to a well-informed native of Carácas, 'are not extravagant. Your soil is the richest in the world, and has never been trodden by an invader since the Spaniard was driven out. Then why are you always borrowing from other countries? How is it, when the northern republic has made such progress, the population here is all but stationary; the seas and rivers are without steamers, the country without roads, and commerce languishing?' In a condensation of the Creole's reply may be found a sketch of all which Mr Eastwick's book advances. As to the superiority of North America, he explained it first by the difference in 'the breed,' by the active and mercurial temperament of the 'Yank,' and by the fact, that long before Lexington and Bunker's Hill, the Northerns were fit for self-government; while the Southerns are not fit for it now. The Spaniards kept their subjects ignorant. There were no schools; and the first printing-press was set up at Carácas in 1816. The Spaniards did nothing to introduce the cultivation of any plant, or improve farming.

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The culture of the vine and the olive was prohibited, and that of tobacco was made a crown monopoly. Emigration was all but prevented. Under the circumstances, it is rather a wonder that the republic should exist at all, than that it should have made so little progress. Mr Eastwick enters very fully and lucidly into the causes of the chronic impecuniosity of the country; and sad and serious as the facts are, it is impossible not to feel some amusement at the coolness and ingenuity with which the robbery of the public is carried on. It is not too much to say that all the revolutions at Venezuela commence at the custom-houses. 'Owing to the frauds of the officials, the revenue falls short; to make up the deficiency, the customs are raised, until the necessaries of life are too dear for men of small means. Thus discontent is sown broadcast; and discontent leads to conspiracies.' According to the published returns, the Venezuelans must be the dirtiest in the world with any pretensions to civilisation, since it is officially made out that a quarter of an ounce of soap in a week is all that each person uses. The province of Carácas alone consumes a hundred barrels of flour a day; but according to the custom-house returns, the daily consumption of all Venezuela does not reach sixty-nine barrels. Under such circumstances, it is no wonder that the public treasury is empty, and that money has to be borrowed in foreign markets. A large portion of Mr Eastwick's book refers to the proceedings respecting the Venezuelan loan of 1864, for which he was commissioner.

Arrived at Valencia, the stranger is struck with the strictly republican style in which the business of the government is carried on, the council meeting in a plain room, without one superfluous article of furniture, while external loiterers lean on the window-sills, and stare at the debaters. The Valencians seem to be happy, idle, and ignorant people, with a splendid faculty for basking in the sun, and plenty of sun to bask in. Looking down on the city from the Morro, Mr Eastwick asked himself how it was that in three centuries it had made so little progress in wealth, population, and importance, endowed as it is with a healthy and beautiful site, a soil unmatched for fertility, a position on one of the great high-roads of South American commerce, and near the unrivalled harbour of Puerto Cabello.

A broad expanse of beautiful vegetation stretches on all sides around the beautiful lake of Taricagua, the principal ornament of one of the loveliest scenes in the world. Looking across its breadth, towards the city, one sees 'a glittering expanse of silver water, studded with fairy islets, rich masses of foliage of every hue, a city in the distance that seems built of white marble, and hills that gradually swell into blue mountains.' Ascending the mountains, the traveller still sees the beautiful lake, until the grand forests intervene, and the scene then assumes another aspect of the Protean, but omnipresent beauty of the tropical countries. In one of the mountain ridges, after he had left far behind him the famous valley of Araguas, the traveller was caught in a sudden shower of the fierce, pelting, sweeping rain which he had experience of in similar regions. He and his attendant looked about for shelter, and found it, under these circumstances—the only story of a sinister sound, the only trace of grimness in a remarkably pleasant book. 'Seeing a low hut on the side of the road, we made up to it, and knocked. The door was opened by a short but very squarely built woman of middle age and forbidding appearance, who objected strongly to our entering. However, the storm looked even uglier than she did, so we would not take a denial, but went in, and seated ourselves on a rude bench. I asked her how she could live alone in such a wild forest. She said she had had a friend, who had been killed by a snake, but that she was not afraid to remain, though alone. She added that she should very likely be bitten by a snake too, for serpents of all kinds were most numerous, especially *cascabels* (rattlesnakes). There were also *tigres* (panthers), she said, but she did not fear them much. It afterwards occurred to me that she was probably a leper, and consequently safe from human savages, and necessarily an outcast.'

A simple, plain picture of one of the most melancholy conditions of existence possible to a human being—a whole tragedy in a few lines, the story of a life of fear, privation, and utter solitude.

The resources of Venezuela, as regards mineral and vegetable wealth, are enormous. The gold-fields in Guayana are probably among the largest in the world. Between Arva and Nirgua, there is a silver mine. The Quebrada mines, of red copper, yield an ore superior to that of Sweden, Chili, or Australia. There are several other valuable copper-mines. Iron is abundant in Panina, in Guayana. Tin mines are numerous, and lead mines exist in Tocuyo. Coal is found in Coro. Trujillo and Cumaná have rich mines of petroleum, and there is a valuable salt mine at Aragua; a sulphur mine at Avechez, and abundance of earth suitable for porcelain. Garnets are found in the Silla Mountain, near La Guaira; and along the sierra of the coast are inexhaustible supplies of marble, granite, slate, rock-crystal, gypsum, and lime. The vegetable wealth of Venezuela is almost incalculable, its items are beyond counting. Coffee, cocoa, cotton, sugar-cane, tobacco, and indigo are among the chief; and of the extraordinarily abundant coffee-crop, twenty per cent. is generally lost for want of hands to get in the harvest. Among the innumerable treasures of the beautiful tropical forests, the following trees are especially worthy of mention: 'First, the palms, which grow at any altitude, from the level of the sea to three thousand three hundred feet above it. They yield fruit, a vegetable like the cabbage, oil, cordage, thread, hats, roofs for the cottages of the Indians, rafters, wine, ship-timber, wax, mats, bread, soup, sieves and baskets, and many other things useful for man, in number at least a hundred. The tuma, or cactus, valuable for its pleasant fruit, its repulsive spicula, which render it the best of all hedges, and as being the abode of the cochineal insect, which is also found on the pear tree. The candela supplies tallow for candles, oil for lamps, and a beverage, made from its toasted fruit. More curious still, perhaps most wonderful of all trees, is the *palo de Lecha*, or milk-tree, which supplies a milk like that of cows, but thicker; analysed, this product is found to consist of water, animal milk, and wax as pure as that of bees. Mixed with cotton, this milk is used for candles. To the parched traveller, the *bejuco de agua* supplies the place of wells and fountains, for from each yard of it a pint-bottle of water can be obtained. Not less useful in its own peculiar locality is the *frailejou*, which grows at the height of thirteen thousand

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five hundred feet above the sea, in the region of the icy wastes called Parámos. Even in these wildernesses of death, the *frailejou* keeps the human body warm. It yields a turpentine superior to that of Venice.'

This is but a faint outline of the subjects treated by Mr Eastwick in his entertaining and instructive work. The effect of that book is to fill the mind with wondering admiration of the rich and majestic beauty, and the stupendous 'potentialities' of the republics, but also to recall to the memory, as applicable to Venezuela, the memorable Irish lamentation: 'Ah, then, but the world would be a lovely place, if it wasn't for the people that 's in it!'

PAWNBROKING IN SCOTLAND.

At the present time, the hue and cry of free-trade has been raised by that conspicuous class, the pawnbrokers, who no doubt are encouraged by the Report of the government commissioner recently appointed to inquire into the state of pawnbroking in Ireland, in which some relaxative measures are suggested for the carrying on of this trade in that country. The British pawnbroker wants the period which he is required to keep all pledges reduced from twelve months to six months; and in the event of free-trade not being conceded, wishes an increase of five per cent. to the present rate of interest allowed him—the present rate being twenty per cent. In other language, the accommodating 'uncle' wants for his careful trust of his nephew's Sunday suit of clothes, upon which he has advanced one pound, five shillings per annum instead of four shillings, as formerly, and to be paid every six months instead of yearly; certainly a radical difference.

Let us glance at pawnbroking as it is at the present. This business, though long sanctioned by parliament, and carried on in Britain, did not so rapidly expand until the statute was passed, 39 and 40 George III., which requires them to take out a licence, for which they pay L.7, 10s.; to enter all pledges in a book, stating the name and address of the pledger; and to furnish a duplicate for every distinct pledge, but for which they are now allowed one halfpenny, deducted from the amount at the time of pledging, when the sum lent is under ten shillings. The pawnbroker is forbidden to take any pledge from persons under twelve years of age; but by a certain Police Act adopted in many burghs, the age is sixteen. Nor is he allowed to receive a pledge from a person intoxicated; neither durst he receive goods in an unfinished state; parties having goods in pawn can have them, at the expiry of the twelve months, kept over for three months longer by giving notice in writing, or by taking a witness; and all pledges on which there has been advanced more than ten shillings, are, if forfeited, required to be sold by public auction, and the surplus, if any, handed over to the late owner, after deduction of expenses and payment of interest. To enable parties to know the proper rates of interest and charges for duplicates, a statement in legible characters has to be exhibited in a proper situation in the establishment. These, with many others, are enactments of parliament for the guidance of this business; but they are of little use, from the want of machinery to have them strictly enforced.

The pawnbroker in Scotland is to be found in any town or village which can number three or four thousand, and even in places which boast of a less population, if there happen to be any manufactories in the district; and should the three balls be absent, you will invariably find a host of brokers, or 'wee pawns,' as they are termed. Let us briefly notice the increase of pawning, from the extent of facilities offered for this traffic. We will suppose a community with a population of between three and four thousand, in the midst of which there are already located two pawnbrokers' establishments, each taking in, on an average, two thousand five hundred pledges per month, which gives five thousand received by the two establishments. A third person embarks in the business, and after being, say, six months in the 'trade,' receives two thousand pledges per month. We should conclude that, if the third pawnbroker receives pledges to that extent, the amount of pledges now received by the others must be diminished to a corresponding degree. But such is not the case; they rarely suffer any reduction, or if so, but to a comparatively small extent. Consult their stock-books, and you will observe that though they may be in the habit of receiving a few less pledges per month, their pledge stock, or, in other words, the amount of pledges remaining on their respective shelves, was never higher than at this period. Nor is it difficult to understand how such is the case. The pawning class avail themselves of every facility to ease themselves of most articles that can be converted into cash; and my old 'uncle,' who was wont to be careful in his dealings with his indefatigable 'nephews' and 'nieces,' suddenly turns quite affectionate, from the pressure of his more youthful brother in trade, and now receives from his nephew a pair of indifferent trousers which were formerly rejected, or tells 'John' to enter for his niece ninepence on a tartan handkerchief, which but a week ago he 'could not touch at all.'

Pawnbroking might be called a bank of deposit, as a considerable number of the articles pawned remain so for years, the owner, at the expiry of every twelve months, paying the interest on the sum advanced. This is what is designated 'renewing the ticket.' There is scarcely one of the habitual pawners but who has got goods lodged with the pawnbroker for a number of years. It is a difficult matter for the pawners, when once entangled in the meshes, to get clear again; that is, to be able to muster sufficient cash at once to get their goods redeemed—neither do they care to lose them, as they are often associated with family ties, or they have paid for them at some 'club shop' a large sum, and set a value on them which they really do not possess. The writer of this article knows an instance in which a poor man had a coat pledged for the long period of *eighteen years;* and often in such cases the pawner loses his goods in the end, thus contributing a sum of money yearly in no way advantageous to himself; and, on the other hand, the goods have been so much deteriorated in value, more especially if they be what is known as soft goods, that the pawnbroker rarely realises the sum he had originally advanced on them. The amount of pledges forfeited, as indicated by the pawnbroker's books, averages about six or seven in every hundred. It should, however, be understood that the quantum one hundred, in which six or seven are represented as being forfeited, includes pledges which have

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been repeatedly pawned. Of the actual number of distinct pledges which have been pawned only once, probably the number forfeited will be over twenty per cent. But this again varies according to the nature of the town and locality; in manufacturing districts, the number forfeited being considerably less than in other districts. The number of pledges received by the pawnbroker in Scotland varies from one thousand to six thousand per month, and even reaches in one or two establishments as high as ten thousand; but the average is three thousand. It need hardly be said that these pledge stocks consist of a very miscellaneous collection, the great bulk, however, being wearing apparel, blankets, and other soft goods. Next in the list come watches and jewellery, books, workmen's tools, musical instruments, and in reality everything from a 'needle to an anchor.' Certainly a very liberal idea as to the multiplicity of articles received by the pawnbroker was evinced on the part of a poor man from a country district in the north, who, with an air of simplicity, inquired at the pawnbroker if he had 'ony way for a coo.' I may state another case, as illustrating what desperate shifts may be resorted to to raise the needful. One afternoon, in a certain establishment, a commotion of a peculiar character was heard in the lobby by the assistants, amidst which they could distinctly recognise the noise of something unstrapping. Their wonder was soon set at rest by the apparition of a wooden leg; but though the probability of its redemption was backed up by the owner asserting 'he couldn't want it,' it, however, like the cow, was declined.

The main support of the pawnbroker is 'the weekly pledger,' whose custom is to pledge the Sunday clothes on Monday, and on receipt of the pay on Saturday, to redeem them. Generally, in establishments 'taking in' one thousand pledges in the week, nearly one half of these are pledged on the Monday. It has erroneously been set forth that the pawnbroker's shop affords facilities for theft, but this is really not the case, as comparatively few pledges received by the pawnbroker turn out to be stolen, and it is but giving him justice to state that very many cases are detected solely through his instrumentality. The fact of his having to lose the money advanced on stolen goods, stimulates a wholesome discretion in regard to the goods he takes in pawn. It is also currently believed that the pawnbroker makes a large revenue out of the forfeited pledges; this is a fallacious idea. Forfeited pledges, taking them all over, are a decided loss to him; perhaps in a few country towns, where no competition exists, it may be otherwise, but in the majority of establishments the loss on this head comes to be a serious item.

The systematic evasions of the law, in regard to pawnbroking, by the pawnbroker are notorious; and the ignorance of the mass of his customers, and the exposure prosecution would entail to the respectable pawner, secure the lawless trafficker. As may be supposed, it is in the rates of profit that the pawnbroker chiefly evades the Pawnbrokers' Act; for instance, the pledger is only entitled to pay one halfpenny for the duplicate, when under ten shillings; however, he is generally charged one penny when the sum advanced is six or seven shillings; and as the sum advances, an overcharge is made in the same ratio. In the case of interest, it is expressly stated 'that in all cases where any intermediate sum lent upon any pawn or pledge shall exceed the sum of two shillings and sixpence, and not exceed the sum of forty shillings, the person lending the same shall and may take by way of profit, as aforesaid, at and after the rate of fourpence, and no more, for the loan of twenty shillings by the calendar month, including the current month as aforesaid.' This section of the act is evaded to a great extent. In the first instance, we will suppose the pawner is wanting to redeem a pledge on which there has been advanced three shillings, while the pledge has been deposited one year. He will, in nine cases out of ten, be charged from ninepence, even, in some cases, to as much as one shilling, for interest; the statutory sum being sevenpence-farthing (which is giving the pawnbroker the benefit of the fraction); being, in the extreme case, an overcharge of thirteen per cent. Or, suppose five shillings and sixpence had been lent on the pledge, the person redeeming the pledge would have been charged even as much as one shilling and sixpence for interest; the statutory sum being about one shilling and a penny-farthing; while, singular to say, the pawnbroker never overcharges on an aliquot sum, that is, on two shillings and sixpence, five shillings, seven shillings and sixpence, &c., but just charges at the neat rate per month of one halfpenny, one penny, three-halfpence. By the fifth section of the Pawnbrokers' Act it is enacted, 'that in all cases where the party, or parties, entitled to, and applying for the redemption of goods pawned within the space of seven days after the expiration of the first calendar month after the same shall have been pledged, he, she, or they shall and may be at liberty to redeem the same without paying anything by way of profit to the pawnbroker for the said seven days, or such part thereof as shall then have elapsed;' and should the pledge be more than seven days entered into another month, and less than fourteen days, the pawnbroker is only allowed to take half a month's interest, in addition to the interest for the other complete months the pledge may have been in pawn. But this section might never have been in the act for all the consideration it receives from the pawnbroker. He considers himself liberal if he lets the pawner escape without paying another *whole* month's interest, if the pledge he is redeeming be two days more than a complete month. With regard to that section in which it is required that forfeited pledges on which more than ten shillings have been advanced, are to be sold by public auction, and the overplus paid to the owner, there have not been twenty cases in the same number of years in which this stipulation has been fulfilled. But, in reality, this is totally unworkable, as few pledgers give their correct address, and as few pledges realise, when sold, an overplus, when the interest is added to the principal, and payment of auctioneer's commission is made. Another clause in the act is generally evaded—it being required that a table of the rates of interest, as also the charges allowed for duplicates, be fixed in some conspicuous part of the pawnbroker's establishment. Possibly, by great industry, a 'table' may be discovered in some part of the interior; but printed in such small type, and in such a mutilated condition, that it would be a physical impossibility to decipher it, or even if near enough, to understand it. Indeed there is not a clause in the whole Pawnbrokers' Act but what is ingeniously evaded. These facts may appear startling, and lead to the impression

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that pawnbroking must be a singularly lucrative business; but such is not borne out by facts. At the present time, there are about three hundred and forty pawnbroking offices in Scotland, each carried on with a capital varying from one thousand pounds to five thousand pounds; and in one or two exceptional establishments, a much larger capital is employed, but the average capital is about fifteen hundred or sixteen hundred pounds. Now, the net sum realised varies from fourteen to twenty per cent., never higher; and in the one or two joint-stock establishments that exist, never more than six or seven per cent. of a dividend is declared. Would the draper, grocer, or ironmonger, or indeed any tradesman, believe he was making a fortune with the same returns, considering the amount of capital invested?

The attempts made to establish pawnbroking offices in this country on the French system have proved a failure. The reason for this is that an establishment of this kind, carried on by a company, though charging a reduced rate of interest, cannot successfully compete with another carried on by private enterprise, because the former is generally managed in too formal a system, and values the pledges with too much nicety to receive the appreciation of that portion of the pawners who constitute the staple of the pawnbroking establishments, who prefer a higher advance for the time being to a low rate of interest, and cannot therefore get a sufficient sum invested in stock proportionate to the expense incurred in carrying on such establishments. But abolish private pawnbroking establishments, and the Mont de Piété here would, of course, be moderately remunerative. So exclusive a system would not, however, be consonant with our ideas of liberty. On the other hand, the proposal made by some interested parties to make pawnbroking a 'free-trade,' cannot for a moment be entertained. In short, for this matter there are the two extremes, both evils.

With respect to the shortening of the term of forfeiture from twelve to six months, much can be said in its favour. It is found, as might be expected from habitual pawners, that that class of property of which they are in no immediate want is very often left deposited with the pawnbroker to the very last day which it is required by law to be retained. Now, at the present rate of interest, the amount required at this period for redemption comes to be considerable, and many articles are allowed to be forfeited, which, had the interest been not so heavy, would have been redeemed. Another important matter with regard to this point is, that 'soft goods' get much deteriorated in value by being stored up for the long period of one year, more especially as the pawnbroker is compelled to economise his warehouse space, and, to facilitate delivery, each pledge has to be tightly tied up, which prevents the free admission of air. It should be considered, also, that the goods thus kept up get less in value by the changes of fashion, and goods forfeited of this class come to be a hardship to the pawnbroker, who, perhaps from the pressure of competition, has been compelled to advance the general market value at the time of taking in the pledge. Thus, had the forfeiture been six instead of twelve months, and, as it is found that generally winter goods are pledged in the beginning of spring, the pawnbroker would have been enabled to have sold his forfeited pledges of that class in the ensuing winter; but, under the present forfeiture, he is compelled to keep them for another season, for with winter goods, sales will not be effected in summer. Now, it will be apparent that had the forfeiture been modified, this class of goods being 'turned over' six months earlier, the pawnbroker would have been enabled to have given the pledger even a higher advance at the time of pledging.

A matter of particular importance to strike at the root of overcharging would be to compel the pawnbroker to print on the back of each ticket the rates of interest allowed to be charged for intermediate sums under two pounds, and particularly to cause the pawnbroker to give with each distinct pledge at the time of redeeming, a printed form, bearing the pawnbroker's address, filled up with the date of pledge, sum advanced, and interest charged, written in plain and intelligible handwriting; and that under a penalty for any wilful false filling up, or failing to grant such a form. As this would entail a considerable extra labour, and not a little extra expense to the pawnbroker, it would be but just to grant him some small remuneration for his trouble; government might sanction the charge of one penny for each duplicate above two shillings and sixpence, instead of one halfpenny, as at present. With respect to brokers' shops or 'wee pawns,' they should be taken under the strict surveillance of the municipal authorities, and no establishments that have back-doors, or where the owner lives on the premises, should be tolerated.

These are matters which affect our social system deeply. The pawnbroker's shop, that has in many a case stripped the child of its clothing, and emptied the house of its furniture, at the same time has enabled many good folks, struggling with poverty, to tide over difficulties till better times came. Such legislation, therefore, is demanded, as, while it will not shut the door on those that require sometimes to enter in, will not at the same time foster dissipation and encourage habits of thriftlessness.

FORTY SHILLINGS AND COSTS.

I HAD been all day trying to get from Aveminster to Chelchester by a country line, a London line, and a branch line of railway. In the first place, as the country line only ran three trains a day, passenger and goods together, necessitating weary shuntings at every station, we could hardly be said to have made a good start. In the next place, the strategic arrangement whereby the London line managed invariably to start its trains five minutes before the arrival of the 'up'-country train, making us wait for two hours at Marlbury Junction, to spite the country company, scarcely tended to rapid progress. In the third place, as it always happens to be the aim of a traffic-manager to endeavour to drive passengers on to the main line, and to visit with all possible retributive delays the hostile British public when it *will* travel on a branch, we could not be considered to have made up for lost time on the branch. In the fourth place, it didn't help us forward to be compelled to travel one hundred and twenty-seven miles round-about in a parabola, in order to reach Chelchester, which, at starting, was only fifty-eight miles from Aveminster. In the fifth and last place, we were not

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got to Chelchester yet; and it would have been money in my pocket if I never had.

'Swinbro'—Swinbro'. Change here for Marchmont and Nutchley. Change here!'

Almost time for a change, I reflected, considering I had been nine hours out on a journey of fifty-eight miles, and was still far off from my destination. Looking out from my window of a first-class compartment, I saw it was a cheerless, drizzling night, and the railway porters were steaming in the misty air as they hurried to and fro past the gleam of the lamps. Remonstrating with the guard respecting our train being nearly an hour late, and the time past eleven at night, he soothed my irritation by telling me gruffly I had no business on a branch line, if I wanted to go anywhere; and if I would go to out-of-the-way places like Chelchester, I must be very thankful if the company put themselves to the expense of taking me there at all, considering branches didn't pay to work as a rule.

A solitary passenger then entered my carriage, or rather was banged into it by the guard. Another minute, and the guard had banged himself into his van, emitting the growl: 'Change here!' Our fiery and restive iron steed, no doubt weary with its headlong career of full twelve miles an hour, gave a heroic neigh of triumph, resembling a feeble crow, in emulation of past exploits, in days long before it was condemned to transportation on a branch, and dragged us off into the bleak night.

My companion was a tall, thin, middle-aged man, with a face lean and withered like a shrivelled apple, concluded below the chin by a stiff satin cravat. In a dress, tight-fitting, and of ancient and faded black, he looked altogether like a man who had run very much to seed, which perhaps accounted for the luxuriant growth of his arms and legs. Observing his clothes steaming with the damp air, I began to realise it was very chilly. It certainly was.

'Quite a change in the weather,' I remarked. 'Very cold to-night, is it not?'

'Don't feel the cold myself. Perhaps you would like *to change places with me*. There is no draught here.'

I replied I should be very pleased to do so, if not to his inconvenience; and accordingly we changed seats.

It *was* cold, and no mistake. I must have taken a chill, for I felt the cold creeping over me in a most unaccountable manner.

Looking at my companion on the opposite seat, on whom the lamp-light now shone full, I saw that his face was not so thin, nor his features so withered, as I had at first supposed; and I must have made a mistake as to his age, for he was by no means so old as I had previously judged. How cold it was to be sure! As I continued to look at him, I noticed his aspect changed momently—that he was growing younger; that the wrinkles in his face were filling out, and smoothing down; and that he was gradually becoming like some one I had seen before. As his cheeks grew round and ruddy, and his hair changed from gray to brown, before my very eyes, I became in such a state of nervous agitation, I endeavoured to cry out, but could not. I was paralysed with the cold—cold that seemed to make my limbs rigid, and numb my vitals; for I saw the man sitting before me was no longer a stranger—no mere friend or acquaintance: he had become ME!

I held up my hands, to try and shut out the sight, and as I did so, saw they were withered, and thin, and old. I pressed them on my brow, to see if I were dreaming; but I found it shrivelled, and seamed, and puckered. And I knew that this man, this fiend, had stolen my body, and given me his. Maddened with the discovery, I rose to my feet—*his* feet—which swayed beneath me, and I struck wildly at the vision of myself on the other seat. But I found my arms light as vapour, for they passed over his body, which went through them, giving me the impression of pain. It was a body of shade that had been given me for my own body of flesh and blood, which this wretch had stolen. By some sorcery or other, we had indeed changed places.

'Sorcerer-demon!' I cried out, only to hear myself speaking with his sharp, cracked voice. When I saw *myself* sitting opposite to me, coolly addressing me in my own voice, I could no longer credit my senses, if indeed I had any of them at all left of my own.

'Daresay you think you are speaking loud now,' he said.

I answered by calling the guard as loudly as I could halloo.

'Ah, you might call a good deal louder than that, if the carriage were full of passengers, and they could no more hear you than they could *see* you,' he continued, chuckling and screwing up my features into a hideously knowing grin, such as I could never have made them assume. 'You see, my friend, yours is a body of air, of shadow, insensible, impalpable to all but myself, just as it was to all but you when I entered the carriage. You wish, perhaps, to know who I am? Well, two years ago to-night, I was a passenger by this very up-mail. There was a collision with a stupid down-goods, you see, and the result was that several passengers were injured. One of them was—well, it's no use mincing matters—killed on the spot. Quite so: it was I. Yes, I am what you call a ghost, though we consider the word rather *infra dig.* amongst ourselves, and have a better term for it. Now I have told you what I am, you will like to know what I want? Very good. You shall see.'

The ghost in my body then began to feel in my pockets, from which he drew out my meerschaum, loaded it from my pouch, and lighted it with one of my Vesuvians.

'Ah,' he proceeded, whiffing the weed rapidly, 'you smoke very good stuff—Golden Leaf and Returns: not a bad mixture, though I prefer a little Latakia with it myself.—Not at all a bad body yours either,' he went on, eyeing the form in which he was sitting—'not at all a bad body; and it fits me to a T, only a little short in the arms. By the way, I find one of your front teeth a little loose, so don't say I did that, when you come to yourself again; and your nose is a little long for me, but I daresay it blows none the worse for that.' I shuddered as I saw him take out my handkerchief, and use it on that cherished organ of mine.

'Yes, I daresay now you feel the cold a little; I did at first; but it's nothing when you are used to it. I find your body very hot—being heavier than I am accustomed to wear; but it won't be for long. I require it "positively for this night only," as you say in your playbills; and will return it uninjured by the time we get to Chelchester. By the by, let me beg you to be a little

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careful how you throw your arms about so much as you did just now, for my body is of a more delicate construction than yours; and being so thin in substance, I am afraid you will scag it under the armpits. You will observe, ladies and gentlemen,' he went on in lecturer's style, 'that if I take a lighted Vesuvian, and insert it in the cornea of the patient's eye, he will feel no pain.' Saying this, my dreadful companion proceeded to illustrate his remark by making a dive at my shadowy eye with a burning match. I felt no pain as the match burned in my head, certainly.

'You will allow, after all you see, that my shape has its advantages,' the ghost proceeded; 'but it also has its disadvantages. Try the pipe now.' I tried to take the pipe; it dropped through my vapoury fingers. He placed it in my mouth; I could not hold it, nor get a whiff from it. 'Precisely so,' said the ghost. 'Now, this is just what has brought me here to-night. A great smoker all my life, doing my six pipes a day regularly, I have been defunct these two years—and during all that time I haven't had a smoke! not a blessed draw! I miss my 'bacco dreadful. There is provision made for smokers, down with us, you will understand; but we are governed by a Board of Directors, whose incapacity quite equals that of most of your City Boards. There is a stock of bodies kept on purpose for smokers, so that, if you want a pipe, you must go into one of the bodies to enjoy it. But, if you will believe me, the supply is so notoriously insufficient to meet the demand, that there is no chance whatever for a new ghost to get a smoke. When I entered the Society, all the bodies were out in use, and booked for three years in advance. My name has been down on the books for two years, and there is no likelihood of my getting a body allotted me under another twelvemonth. Fancy two years without a smoke! Why, sir, the incompetence of our Board is positively wooden. I can only explain the reason why we put up with such gross mismanagement in the other world, because we have become so used to it in this. Our constitutions, however, are being undermined to that extent, that the Board has at last been coerced by popular feeling into passing a measure empowering ghosts to render themselves visible to single individuals at a time, in order that they may effect an exchange of bodies for short periods, always with the consent of the person in question, for the purpose of indulging in a habit which the directors "cannot, however, but characterise as pernicious and injurious." Under this new act I obtained your body.'

'You never had my consent, fiend!' I cried.

'It is vulgar to call names, my friend,' the ghost replied, smoothing my moustache with my fingers; 'but you are trifling. I asked you to *change places* with me, and you agreed, as you must be well aware.—But, dear me, here we are at Chelchester: however, I *must* finish my pipe—think of two years, and not a blessed draw, my friend!'

The train was pulling up. My companion leaned out of window, puffing fast and furious.

'Plenty of time to change bodies,' he said: 'it shall be done in an instant, as soon as the train stops.' And he continued leaning out, and whiffing away great clouds of smoke, till we came to the platform. He hurriedly knocked out the ashes of the tobacco on the door-rail, as the guard cried: 'Change here—change here; all change here, if you please.'

A sudden glow of warmth seemed to pass over me as I rubbed my eyes, and found, to my great delight, my own smooth hands against my very own unwrinkled cheeks. I looked up for my companion—he was gone—I was alone in the carriage.

I was greatly surprised, when I got on the platform, at being asked for my card by a very officious person; still more so, on receiving a magistrate's summons in the morning. The officious person deposed that he was the Secretary of the Anti-tobacco Alliance, and applied for a conviction against the undersigned, under one of the by-laws of the company, for smoking in a railway carriage, the property of the D. E. F. G. Company, contrary to their regulations. He declared to have seen me (only think!)—*me* leaning out of the carriage as it came into the Chelchester Station, smoking a meerschaum pipe! The guard gave evidence that the carriage certainly smelled very strongly of tobacco on arriving at Chelchester, and that I was the *only* first-class passenger. A meerschaum pipe, answering the officious person's description, was found on my person. Case was clear. Fined forty shillings and costs. Nay, more—the case of smoking in a railway carriage has been gibbeted at all the stations on the line—where I am hung up as a caution and warning to the British Public, in a solemn black frame, with my name and address, and the amount of the penalty enforced, at full length!

It would have been useless to attempt to dispute the case before the magistrates. It is something to have set one's-self right with the public.

AN OLD STORY.

Now is seen the kindly power
Of April sun and April shower;
Now the blade begins to shoot
From the wakened warmèd root.
Oh, how tender, yet how strong,
Is every little light-green tongue,
That, rustling in the rustling breeze,
Maketh chorus with the trees,
With birds and water, as they sing
That sweet as ever comes the Spring!
See, in soft grass interset,
The primrose and the violet,
The violet dark, the primrose bright,
But clinging close as day and night.
See, in the mead is springing up
The polished-yellow buttercup;
So thickly springing, that the wold
Shines like a tossing lake of gold.
The waterfall in changing flashes,
Now gold, now silver, downward dashes,
Till further on the stream anew
Runs on, a vein of brightest blue.
The air is filled with myriad notes,
Sent from a thousand little throats.
Above the general chirp is strong
The blackbird's and the thrush's song.
Spring's messenger, with loud ado,
Proclaims her with 'Cuckoo, cuckoo,
Cuckoo, cuckoo,' from yonder tree
In constant quaint monotony;
And with the rest we're fain to sing
That sweet as ever comes the Spring!

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SAVAGES I HAVE KNOWN.

THE NEGRO.

My recollections of savagery on the Spanish Main are so numerous and so varied that I find myself really embarrassed in making a selection. In a certain sense of the word, nine in ten of the population between the Gulf of Mexico and the borders of Peru might be called savages, excepting here and there the dwellers in a little oasis of civilisation, such as Vera Cruz, Greytown, and Aspinwall on one coast, San Juan del Sur and Panama on the other. But it is of real barbarians I propose to treat, not of that very large class who may be conventionally so defined. Of such, then, there are three types noticeable in Spanish America —the Indian, commonest; the meztizo, or ladrone, the mixed blood; and the negro, exceedingly rare. I shall take the third of these for my first example.

All through Central America, from the States' frontier to the Panama Railway, exclusive of the population dwelling on the latter boundary, negroes of pure blood are not common. There never was any large proportion of slaves in that quarter of the world, except in Mexico and San Salvador; and, to their honour be it told, the very first act of these despised republics, when, in 1821, the blighting authority of Spain was overturned, declared slavery or peonage in any form opposed to the rights of man and the will of God. This act, however, though a just cause of pride to the people of Central America, was doubtless facilitated in its passage by the fact that very few persons were held in such bondage, and by the absence of any powerful interest hostile to it. From one reason or another, the negro seems not to have been regarded here with that antipathy commonly found in a white population brought closely into contact with him. His freedom proclaimed, he was immediately '*miscegenated*,' as the Yankees say; and though the marks of his blood are common enough among all classes of society, the thoroughbred African himself has become rare. On the Atlantic coast, indeed, are found a few small colonies of emigrants, creole blacks from St Thomas and Jamaica; and here and there is a settlement of that curious and interesting race, the Carib, of which people I am bound to declare that its males rival the Chinese in industry, and in honesty surpass all the world; while its females are so invariably chaste as to have given a proverb to the dissolute population, which their good example cannot shame into decency or good conduct. Whatever was the blood of these Caribs when deported, in 1796, to the island of St Vincent, by the English governor of Belize, they are now undistinguishable in any way from the pure negro stock, and the name of 'Carib' still clinging to them is obviously a false description. Nevertheless, they are not likely to surrender it, for that name now carries a dignity and repute more valuable than passports or testimonials. 'I Carib man, sah!' says a black fellow who comes for employment, standing upright before you, with a conscious pride of race and good name in his eyes; and if, on inquiry, his boast is found to be the truth, it only remains to settle wages and terms. A Carib's honesty and skill are among the self-evident verities of nature. But I must not dwell on this people, most interesting though it be, for not among such does one find a savage.

But Joe, or Joe'm, as he called himself, was undoubtedly a savage. Perhaps I ought to say something of my hero's birth and parentage, and I would with pleasure if I only knew anything. It is possible poor Joe had vague recollections of 'where his rude hut by the Niger lay,' but nobody seemed to care much about the matter, nor about any other sentimental feelings of Joe; indeed, summoning my memory to account, I am almost ashamed to find how very little I knew of the honest fellow in his capacity of individual. Joe was to me a realisation, an embodiment of the wood-spirit; he was more like to 'Man, the King of Animals,' than any shikari I ever met. To see Joe stalking through the dim aisles of forest, his

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lithe figure, clad in flannel rags patched with fur, bending and swaying as though twisted with colic; his great feet treading noiselessly among rotten sticks and dry leaves; his eyes rolling round and round beneath ferocious brows; his thick lips twisting and twining all the while—to see Joe thus was to behold a somewhat startling apparition. But yet more impressive was my guide when his quick hearing thought to catch the 'chump, chump, chumping' of a wild boar's tusks against a tree-trunk, half a mile away. When that sound reached him, he paused suddenly, and his great shapeless ears literally erected themselves like those of a dog. He always leaned against a tree to listen, closed his eyes, opened his mouth, and, as one could see, concentrated every faculty of his strange mind on the one sense of hearing. His ears really moved. Then, if the distant sound proved to be no fancy, it was grand to watch Joe's stealthy action: no wild beast could move more silently, or with a keener instinct of the best approach. I was never tired of contemplating my guide, and to this intense admiration of Joe in his business capacity it is, I think, to be attributed that I inquired so little of his private life. My talks with him were almost exclusively of game and wild adventure. But beyond doubt, now that the question occurs to me, Joe must have had a local habitation, if not a home, somewhere. I put the home in doubt, because that sacred word implies the presence of a wife, or at least of woman in some capacity; and I chance to know that this indefatigable hunter had but a desolate hearth, wherever it might be, for I remember well a conversation I had with him on this subject.

He was telling me something of his history, as we sat upon a fallen cotton-tree. Joe's language was the most extraordinary patois I ever heard, and utterly impossible to be rendered; in mentioning that 'woman' was pronounced by him as 'wah'n,' with a strong aspirate, I shall give not the most curious example of his utterance. He had been telling me how he was born, no one knew where, in the interior of Africa: that he was captured, he didn't know why or by whom, and taken as a slave down to the coast: that he was there embarked, after an unknown time, aboard a ship of undiscovered nationality: that the ship was captured at sea, under circumstances of which he had not been able to get any explanation: that in process of time, by events entirely outside his control or knowledge, he had been landed at a spot which, since he left it, had been identified to him as Sierra Leone, or Sarah Leh'n, as Joe preferred to call it: that people 'had talked to him' there (here Joe evidently alluded to the missionaries): that he had been very happy, hunting in the woods and otherwise following his vocation, poor savage, until a gentleman of an unknown nationality had taken possession of him for unknown purposes and by unknown rights, and carried him to sea again, much to Joe's horror; for he had a wild-beast memory of anything that had been disagreeable or hurtful to him: that when a few days were passed, he was set to do tasks wholly opposed to his instincts, and was cruelly treated on failure: that, once more, he was rescued 'by an English captain, bless him!'—Joe began to know his friends and foes a little now, after an education of kicks and oaths!—and was landed, at his own request, in one of the West India isles, whence he had found his way to the mainland, where game is plentiful.

This was Joe's story—confused, inexplicable, a very chaos of incident unintelligible, but, in truth, the most pathetic tale ever I heard. To me, sitting, as is my wont from time to time, with the portrait of this poor fellow in hand, the blood seems suddenly to rise and boil at my heart, thinking of the story. I recall the broken sentences in which he told it—the rambling, muddled style; the down-trodden attitude he unconsciously assumed, as memory brought back those days of uncomprehended suffering. It was, I think, Joe's utter inability to understand why, how, where these things happened to him, which gave such a terrible pathos to the tale. He, made in God's image, a man most brave and true and kindly, had been buffeted about the world, with no more comprehension of cause or reason than has a dog; nay, not so much, for he knew not friends from foes. Untold, untellable suffering and misery surround us on every side; but civilised beings understand their woes, can explain them, and, if the chance come, rise out of them. But this poor negro, forced from his home, from all with whom he could communicate, thrust at one fell instant from his barbarous quietude beside some African river into our enlightened, civilised, horrible world, was as utterly lost and dumfoundered as though he had died by violence, and his soul had risen in another state of being. There is a tale of some chivalrous young Frenchman who so heated his indignant blood with the perusal of Spanish cruelties, that then and there he sallied out to avenge the crime of past generations on the offspring of the evil-doers. Such a wild impulse stirs in me sometimes as I think of poor Joe's wrongs.

However, it is not my hero's history I have to tell, but his character and tone of thought I would describe. We were sitting on the trunk of a cotton-tree, as aforesaid. 'Are you married, Joe?' I asked, between two bites of a 'tortilla.'

(Already I have announced my incapacity to render the negro's patois; I don't attempt it.) 'No, sir,' he answered. 'None of the "muchachas" will have me.'

'Why not?' I asked. 'You're tall and stout. There isn't a man on the country-side who can hunt like you; and the business is profitable.'

'Well, sir,' he said, 'I don't understand 'em. I'm nothing but a poor "nigger,"* and I don't know creole ways. There's a girl I was sidling up to, shop-maid at a store yonder, not more'n half black. We was friendly, and I give her peltries and 'pine quills' [porcupine quills], 'and she took 'em kindly. But says she to me one day: "What d'ye believe, Joe?" "'Most anything," I says, not knowing what she meant, you see. "D'ye believe in works?" she says. "Most sartin," I replies. "Or d'ye believe in election?" "That's what I believe," says I. "Not both?" she says. "No, not both!" says I. "Which, then?" says she. "Why, the other!" I says. So she called me bad names, in a way not fitting for a young girl speaking to a man. I held my tongue; and we parted.'

* 'Nigger,' among negroes, is a term of reproach applied to blacks of African birth, as opposed to those born in America or the islands. The latter call themselves 'creoles,' with the added name of their birthplace; Jamaica creoles, St Thomas, &c.

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'But you 've tried again in another quarter?'

'Yes. I made out it was something they talk about in meeting-house that had set her off; this was in Greytown, of course. So I used to attend regular at the service there, and the minister was kind; like the folks at Sarah Leh'n he was.'

'Did you understand what he said?' I asked.

'No, sir. I 'm a poor nigger, and it was beyond me. He said we were to be good, which isn't Obi. I don't know what he meant by that. I asked Obi, and he told me the minister was right, whatever he said. So, after a while, I took up with a mnehacha as lives behind the cocoa-nut trees on the lagoon. I said to her: "My trust is in election." "What 's that?" she asks. "Election," I says. "What 's that?" says she. And I didn't know any more. "You 're a heretic!" she says a day or two afterwards. I didn't see what to answer, and so we dropped that acquaintance.'

These recollections seemed to affect poor Joe painfully. He sat leaning on his rifle, and grinding at the dank earth with its but, observing with great interest the circles thus formed.

'Well, and what next?' I asked.

'I lost heart for a long time, and hid myself all day and all night in the woods. I never made a better time of it than that. Pigs and deer were more plentiful than ever I found them, and I even met a jaguar—which isn't common, you know, by Greytown. At last I put down the river, with nigh upon a hundred dollars' worth of hides, and seven full quills of gold-dust that I 'd found in a creek. I met a young girl as fine as a quetzal bird, a stranger in Greytown—she was a washerwoman. After a week or so, I asked her to marry me, saying I was no heretic. "All right," says she. Somehow, I didn't like that. Says I: "About election?" I says. "Never you mind," says she. "And works?" I says. "You 've no call to trouble about that," says she sharp. I thought she was no better than I was myself, and left her. I 've not tried since. It seems as if there isn't no one in all this country as is suitable for a poor nigger!'

There were several points which struck me much in this little conversation, which I have not attempted to give textually, though preserving the *tone* as nearly as possible. First, it interested me to observe how entirely this savage possessed the instinctive sympathy—using the word in its strict sense—that distinguishes the creole negro. Though quite unconscious what was meant by the words of his first two loves, he had comprehended, by mere sympathy, that great importance attached to his answers, and that to ask what was meant by 'election,' 'heretic,' and so on, would be destructive to his chance. This quality of reading a person's mind when his words are utterly beyond understanding, is common with negroes, and, I think, is the secret of that liking which most tropical residents bear to them in the abstract. It is the same gift which an intelligent dog possesses in a less degree.

Another and more novel subject of reflection was the free use Joe made of Obi's name, that dire dissyllable which none willingly pronounce in the West Indies. When a blundering stranger, chokeful of questions and bits of half-knowledge, asks his host about Obi and his worshippers, there is loud laughter in the household—maybe laughter a little too loud. 'Obi, my dear sir!' repeats the host. 'There is no such thing among us, and never was—never. You have your bugbear for children in England, and we have our Obi here—the same idea under a different name. It 's enough to make one die of laughter to hear you English people take our Obi seriously. I might as well ask you "the truth" about the giant Cormoran, or the black man who frightens your children to bed.' So have respectable gentlemen expressed themselves to me who write. But long before Joe thus openly made allusions to the dread superstition, I knew how much to believe of the creole planter's eager denial.

Let Joe speak for himself and for his horrid faith. 'Do you say, Joe,' I asked, 'that the dreadful monster you call Obi commanded you to obey the Christian minister?'

'He always does so, sir,' Joe answered. 'Never Obi tell a man to go against the minister.'

'But you yourself said that Obi wasn't "good."'

Joe had no reply to this. He looked at me, and ground the but of his rifle into the soil. At length he repeated: 'Never Obi tell a man to go against the minister.'

On this I reflected for an instant. Joe's words explained in some degree a mystery that has perplexed very many persons who know the existence of Obi-ism, but cannot understand how a race so simply pious as is the negro—I speak of the *race*, mind—can reconcile the practice of a devilish superstition with the enthusiastic belief of evangelical Christianity. But Obi is equal to this difficulty. 'Never he tells a man to go against the minister.' But where the minister has not spoken, on doctrines and deeds the good man would shudder to contemplate, there Obi is master.

'You speak of consulting him. Does he live in the woods round here, and do you see him in the flesh?' I asked.

'I haven't seen Obi in the flesh these ten years: not since I landed at Greytown. Once I see him upon the Blue Mountains behind Kingston. There isn't an Obi in this part of America that I *know* of, sir.'

'Not an Obi? Are there several, then?' And on this I drew from Joe an explanation of the idolatry, most valuable and curious, I think, to those who feel an interest in the negro race. I would fain put into some order the facts he confusedly revealed.

'Obi' is not the name of a deity, as is the common belief. Comparative philologists connect the word with *ophis*, a snake, and deduce from this fact the most singular arguments. I cannot say how far the derivation may be correct; but if, as Joe declared to me, the Obi is *not* a deity, nor even an emanation, it is evident that much of the theory founded on this basis is incorrect. Obi, I learned, is but the title of a man—a man gifted with strange and magical powers, it is true, but simply a man. One is born Obi; no person can acquire the attributes or the title. The child so favoured is recognised almost at birth by his supernatural potency over men's minds. By whom he is swayed, or for what purpose the power is given him, no one investigates, or dares to inquire. The Obi is—the Obi! a terrible fact, a curse, seldom or never a blessing to his neighbours. It is a most important truth to be known, that Obi, all-powerful for evil, seems impotent for good—and by his own confession, he can kill, but he cannot generate life—he can curse, but not bless. The Obi is a solitary

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being, a lover of caverns and deep forests, a feeder on strange meats, a hater of the light. From his seclusion he casts the darts of death, and never do they fail to strike. He dreads his own horrible faculty, and rolls upon the floor in speechless terror when summoned to do the work that men crave of him. But, whether unconscious agent or irresponsible, or no, Obi never fails. Pestilence is a weapon in his hand; dreams and apparitions are obedient to his will; all the baleful secrets of nature reveal themselves to his intuition—the deadly uses of herb and tree, and of animate and inanimate life.

I have but room for a very few of Joe's candid revelations. I choose those which may possibly explain in some degree the manner of Obi's working.

'How did you consult this fearful being, since he is as far away as the Blue Mountains?' I asked.

'Obi gave me a charm, which I wrap round my head at night, when I wish to see him. He never fails to appear in my dreams, and to tell me all I want to know.'

'Has he given you any other charms?'

'One—a hunting charm. I never miss when I have it on me, and never hit when without it.'

'Is it true that Obi delights in poisonings and frenzies?'

'I don't know. They say that if a man ask him for a poison or a philtre, he cannot refuse. I know nothing of that.'

'Most of the Obis are women, are they not?'

'No,' exclaimed the negro with contempt. 'Obi has more work than he can do, and therefore gives power, for a short time, to the fetich women. But when the time is past, they are no stronger than other people, only they know the poisons and medicines. Then they go about doing mischief, until they're caught and hanged by the magistrates, or thrown into a creek at night by the negroes. Obi's never caught, nor dare any one touch him.'

'Are there many Obis?'

'Only two in all Jamaica, and one of 'em's only a poor nigger, they say. But there's a plenty of your fetich women!'

So this savage discoursed to me sitting on a cotton-tree in the forest by the San Juan River. And the conclusion that rested on my mind, in regard to Obi, was this: if there be truth in mesmerism and electro-biology, there is the secret of his dreaded power; if there be not truth therein, then the trick of one is the trick of the other.

SPECTRUM ANALYSIS.

Within the last ten years, there has been made in physical science one of those extraordinary discoveries which almost revolutionise our knowledge of nature, and constitute a new era in scientific investigation. It has been found that luminous substances write down for us, as it were, their own chemical and physical nature and constitution, with an accuracy and delicacy almost surpassing the power of belief. The prismatic colours of the rainbow have been found to contain within them volumes which all the philosophers of the world cannot hope fully to read in centuries of time. No discovery of modern date can bear comparison with this spectrum analysis, as it is called, in regard of the extent and importance of the field it has opened to science.

It has long been known that if a beam of light be made to pass through a small triangular piece of glass, called a prism, the differently coloured rays of which it is composed will be separated from each other, so that if the light is afterwards received on a white screen or wall, the colours will be found to be spread out on the wall in the same order and proportionate breadth as is seen in the colours of the rainbow. This is owing to the fact that each ray is bent or deflected from its straight course in passing through the prism, and every separate ray to a different amount; those at the red end of this spectrum being bent least, and those at the violet end most. Early in this century, the well-known philosopher, Dr Wollaston, observed that if bright sunlight were thus received on a white screen in a very dark room, being admitted by a very narrow slit, a great number of dark lines were to be seen crossing the breadth of the spectrum, as many as fifteen thousand having since been counted. A German optician, Fraunhofer, subsequently described these lines more accurately, and found that they occupied invariably the same relative position in the length of the spectrum, so that he was able to mass and number them with great accuracy. Some of them were broad and distinct, and the most important of these were designated by various letters of the alphabet; others were very narrow and fine; some were single, others formed groups; but all were invariably the same in every particular, and in their relation to each other in position. It was further found that light from a white-hot solid body gave no dark lines at all, but presented a continuous spectrum, in which the colours were shaded into each other through every possible gradation. It had also been found that the vapours of various substances exercised an absorbing effect on the solar rays, the dark spaces caused by them being lines quite similar in character to the dark spaces in the solar spectrum, though the system of lines was different from that of the solar spectrum, every different substance producing, when vaporised, its own peculiar system of lines.

Another step was gained in another direction, and apparently without much bearing on this question of the significance of these dark lines. It was found by the German philosophers Kirchhoff and Bunsen that artificial light, produced by combustion—that is, by chemical combination—also gave a peculiar spectrum, and that of a most remarkable kind, shewing neither dark lines, like solar light and starlight, nor yet a continuous spectrum, like bodies in a state of incandescence without combustion, but a spectrum composed of a few bright lines, occupying definite positions in the spectrum field, or space where the solar spectrum would ordinarily be seen, and having colours accurately corresponding to the precise portion of the continuous spectrum which would be seen at the spot where they made their appearance. It had been well known, long before, that certain substances in burning tinged the flame with peculiar colours; but what the precise shades of colour were could not be told by the unaided eye, on account of the mixing together of various colours and shades.

Thus, it was well known that salts of sodium communicated a yellow colour to any flame in which they might be present; this being, indeed, the cause of the yellowness in the flame of all

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our ordinary artificial lights. Salts of copper and of barium give a green tinge to flames in which they are present, and those of strontium give a crimson hue. This was well known; but it was not until the light from these and similar flames was analysed by the prism, that it was found that these colours, which could not be accurately distinguished by the eye, were nevertheless wholly distinct, being the result of the blending in the light of sets or systems of bright bands occurring in totally different portions of the spectrum field, and being composed, in fact, of rays differing in refrangibility and hue, but absolutely fixed and invariable for each separate source of artificial light. Thus, when sodium or its salts were submitted to this prismatic analysis, it was found that the spectrum produced consisted of a very strong bright line in the yellow portion of the field, and of this line only, this sodium spectrum being the simplest of all known spectra, though it is found on close examination with powerful instruments that the bright line is double, consisting of two very close together. The instruments used are in general two telescopes and the prism, which is placed between them, the light being condensed on the prism by one telescope, and the spectrum magnified after refraction by the other. A microscope, with the usual reflecting mirror, may also be used, being fitted with a micro-spectroscope containing the prism. If a powder, containing some easily volatilised metals, such as sodium, lithium, and thallium mixed together, is placed on a slip of platinum, and introduced into the flame of an ordinary Bunsen's burner, the light being then made to pass through a microscope thus fitted, the observer will see one bright line after another crossing the field of view, as one after another of the metals becomes sufficiently heated to pass into the gaseous condition. The spectrum of the alkaline metal lithium consists of two lines—a brilliant one in the red portion of the spectrum, and a weak one in the yellow. Both are sharply defined, and by this test the metal has been found to be present in the ash of muscular tissue and of blood. The red colour observed in strontium flames is similarly found to be due to the presence of six strongly marked red lines in its spectrum, which contains also, however, an orange and a blue line. The red line mentioned as belonging to lithium very nearly corresponds with one of these, but is distinguishable by its superior brilliancy.

Yet there seems to be some strange and mysterious connection between these two metals, some problem still unsolved in their relation to each other; for on one occasion, when Dr Tyndall was exhibiting at the Royal Institution the spectrum of lithium by means of the very high heat of the electric spark, a line not observed in the spectrum of this metal at the lower temperature of a gas-flame unexpectedly appeared, and this line was of a brilliant blue, like the blue line of strontium. This experiment was again and again repeated by different observers, and always with the same results. Professors Roscoe and Clifton at last compared the two spectra by placing one above the other in the spectroscope, and found, to their astonishment, that the blue lines accurately corresponded with each other; and not only so, but they found in both spectra two other faint blue lines, which had previously been unnoticed, and these lines also accurately coincided in the two spectra. We can hardly avoid the conclusion, that at the high heat produced by the electric spark, these two metals are decomposed into some simpler elements, one of which is common to each, and gives these coinciding blue lines.

The green tinge of barium flames is found to be due to several bright green lines in the barium spectrum; while the spectrum of calcium shews, amongst others, a single strong green and a single strong orange line. The spectrum of potassium has a continuous character, containing, however, two strongly marked lines—one in the red, and the other in the violet, the flame being tinged with a purple colour.

Four new metals have been added to our list by means of this method of chemical analysis, of which two are metals of the alkalies, thus making the number of known alkaline metals five. The two new members of the group are named rubidium and cæsium, so called from the peculiar characters of their spectra, rubidium having some red lines not seen in the potassium spectrum, and cæsium shewing two magnificent blue lines very close together. These metals are more strongly electro-positive even than potassium, but so closely resemble it in chemical properties that they had always hitherto been mistaken for it: they are found in many mineral waters, and in the ashes of several plants. The third new metal is thallium, found by Mr Crookes in the deposit in the flue of a pyrites burner, and named from its splendid single green line, and having chemical properties intermediate between lead and the alkalies. The fourth metal is indium, belonging to the chemical group which contains iron, and recognised in the spectrum analysis by its fine line in the violet.

If the permanent gases are highly heated, as by the passage through them of the electric spark, they also give spectra peculiar to each; thus, that of hydrogen has three lines—one bright red, one green, and one blue.

The accuracy with which the presence of a given substance may be predicated by this mode of analysis is greater than that afforded by any other chemical tests, as will be perceived on considering that some substances, such as iron, have a most complicated spectrum—as many as sixty lines or upwards, the presence of any one of which would, in most cases, be a satisfactory proof of the presence of the metal or other body; while that any two substances, distinguishable by other tests, should present identical spectra, seems, in the nature of probabilities, unlikely almost beyond the power of arithmetical expression, and, as regards observed fact, contrary to all analogy. Yet, the accuracy of this method of analysis is almost equalled by its delicacy: in the case of sodium, the presence of a quantity less than the $\frac{1}{100000000}$th of a grain can be demonstrated by this method; it is hereby found that the presence of sodium is so universal throughout the world as to be capable of recognition in every artificial flame, and a piece of wire shewn to be perfectly free from sodium is found to become covered with it by simply drawing it through the fingers; indeed, the mere exposure of any substance to the air for a moment causes it to give the sodium line in the spectrum.

While Messrs Kirchhoff and Bunsen were pursuing these researches on the luminous spectrum lines of different heated gases and vapours, and on

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the absorbent effect of gases on rays of light coming from a more highly luminous source, it occurred to them to compare with each other the two forms of spectra thus produced—namely, the bright spectrum, containing dark absorption lines, produced by the passage of the light through some gas or vapour; and the dark spectrum-field, illuminated only by a few bright lines, produced by the same gas or vapour when brought to a highly heated and luminous condition. The bright and dark lines thus produced by the same element were found accurately to correspond. The great discovery of the nineteenth century burst upon them in its full splendour, fraught with results hardly to be imagined. The gases and vapours intercepted precisely the same rays, from a source of continuously coloured light, as they themselves emitted when brought by heat to the luminous condition; and, of course, the different elementary bodies revealed their presence alike by their own bright bands, and by their corresponding dark lines produced in a continuous spectrum. The inference was immediate and irresistible, that the dark lines in the solar spectrum were due to the presence of certain gaseous elements in the solar atmosphere, which absorbed portions of the continuously coloured or pure white light emitted by the solid bodies known as Nasmyth's willow-leaves. By comparing these dark lines with the bright bands of the elements when brought to a gaseous condition, it was now possible to determine what elementary bodies were present in a state of gas in the solar atmosphere. This is easily done by superposing the solar spectrum with its dark lines over the bright-line spectrum produced by one element after another; and the elements iron, magnesium, calcium, sodium, chromium, nickel, barium, copper, zinc, and hydrogen are thus found to be present in the solar atmosphere. That man should thus be able to analyse the atmosphere of the sun, placed at a distance of ninety-one millions of miles from us, with as much ease and certainty as he could analyse a measure of gas placed in his own laboratory, must surely be accounted one of the most wonderful results of science in any age.

Of course, it immediately became a matter of great interest to ascertain whether similar results could be obtained in the case of the fixed stars, and whether it would be possible to predicate the existence, in these distant suns, of the chemical elements familiar to us on our own globe. With powerful instruments, this was found to be quite possible. The spectra of the stars are found to be very different from each other and from that of the sun; but they reveal the presence of many elements well known to us as existing on our earth. Thus, the brilliant red star Aldebaran, in the constellation Taurus, has been found to contain hydrogen, antimony, bismuth, mercury, and some other elements similar to those of the sun. In Sirius, the most brilliant star in the heavens, only sodium, magnesium, and hydrogen can be certainly affirmed to exist. Two strongly marked violet lines in Sirius belong to some substance not known on our earth. Antimony, though found in Aldebaran, is a metal whose bright lines are wholly unrepresented by corresponding dark lines in the solar spectrum; and gold, lithium, &c. are in the same category. The star Betelgeux, which is the brightest of the two above Orion's belt, has a very deeply lined spectrum; sodium, magnesium, iron, copper, and several other metals are known to exist in it, but no hydrogen has been discovered. This is a yellow star. We may class stars as white, yellow, and deep-coloured. Sirius, Vega, Castor, and the greater number of minor stars, belong to the white class. The presence of hydrogen appears to be a marked characteristic of their spectra. The Sun and Arcturus belong to the yellow class. Betelgeux, Rigel, Mira, Albireo, Antares, Aldebaran, and many others belong to the third class, some of which are red, and others blue. α Hercules and β Pegasi, both of which belong to this class, have very remarkable spectra, shewing the appearance of a multitude of bright flutings separated by wide black bands: this must indicate that their atmospheres are charged with a great multitude of vapours belonging to many different substances. The colours of the stars depend, of course, on the character of the vapours in their atmospheres: if the atmosphere of a star absorbs a great deal of the violet end of the spectrum, and therefore shews many black lines towards that end, the star will have a red colour; if there are many black lines towards the red end, the star will have a blue colour; if the absorption is pretty evenly spread throughout the spectrum, the star will be white; yellow will result from a good deal of absorption at both ends, the middle being less affected. Stars of the same type are generally found a good deal grouped together. Orion abounds in stars of a green colour; white stars are found about the Pleiades and the Bear; yellow stars about the Whale.

Some stars give bright lines instead of dark ones, but these are very rare—β Lyræ and γ Cassiopeiæ do so, and some small stars in the Swan. This indicates, of course, that actual combustion is going on in these stars, whereas the ordinary black lines indicate an atmosphere of vapour surrounding incandescent material. A very remarkable instance of bright lines occurred in a star that suddenly became very bright in May 1866. This was a telescopic star in the Crown, which, in the course of a couple of hours, attained the brightness of a star of the third magnitude. It was first observed by Mr Birmingham at Tuam, in Ireland; a celebrated astronomer, Dr Schmidt of Athens, had been observing the same spot in the heavens about three hours before Mr Birmingham, and had observed nothing remarkable. Astronomical *savans* immediately turned their attention to the star, which, however, only continued bright for two or three days, and then faded away to its original size. In the meantime, however, Mr Huggins had turned his powerful spectroscope upon it, and had found out that it was nothing less than a world on fire, its brilliancy being due to the combustion of hydrogen with some unknown element. This was exhibited in the spectroscope by the presence of the bright lines of hydrogen along with some other bright lines, which have not been produced by any element on our earth. Several instances are on record of unknown stars suddenly blazing out in this way, and then soon fading away again.

It naturally followed that, after the stars, the nebulæ should be submitted to spectroscopic examination. These, as is well known, are faint fleecy cloud-like masses, most of them extremely minute, which stud the heavens in great numbers. Most of them are quite telescopic, but some are easily recognisable by the naked eye, such as the great

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nebula in the sword of Orion, lying between the two stars which, along with it, seem to hang down from the belt; the great nebula in Andromeda; and the nebula in Hercules, which is, however, much more difficult than either of the former to detect with the naked eye, although we ourselves have constantly made it out on clear nights. Though some are thus visible to the naked eye, nothing can be said to have been known of the nebulæ till after the invention of the telescope. This instrument has revealed hundreds of these beautiful objects, and exhibited their extraordinary structure. We have them ring-shaped, dumb-bell shaped, crab-shaped, and of all irregular forms. Under the high power and vast light-gathering capacity of Sir W. Herschel's four-foot reflector, many of them were found to consist of a vast congeries of stars, and hence have been considered to be star systems like the Milky-way, the star system to which our sun belongs. The distance of these systems has been supposed to be such that thousands of years must be spent ere their light travels to us. When examined by the spectroscope, they are found to have continuous spectra, doubtless because the dark lines produced by one star composing them will be illuminated by the light of another star in which the elements are absent to which the dark lines of the former were owing. The great nebula in Andromeda, spoken of above, is an instance of this kind of nebula. But some of these mysterious objects proved intractable to the highest powers Sir W. Herschel could apply; the great nebula in the sword of Orion was of this sort; it is seen as a misty cloud surrounding several bright star-like points known as 'the trapezium.' Lord Rosse tried it with his great reflector, and thought that some portions of it shewed signs of approaching resolution into stars—that is, looked as if a better instrument would shew that it was composed of stars. In his telescope it formed a most beautiful object, branching out in streamers in all directions, and extending much farther into space than had formerly been supposed. But Mr Huggins turned his spectroscope upon it, and found that instead of being composed of stars, it consists of gaseous matter; in fact, that it is a true nebula, and not a star system. The spectrum was not continuous, like that of the nebula in Andromeda, nor did it exhibit dark lines, like the stars, but three bright lines only; shewing that it was composed of gases in a state of incandescence. One of these bright lines belongs to nitrogen, another to hydrogen, and the third to some unknown substance; two of them are in the green, and one, that of the hydrogen, known as F, in the blue. The same result has been presented by most of the other true nebulæ, so that it cannot be any longer doubted that the sagacious conjecture of Sir W. Herschel was right, that these are systems in process of condensation from a gaseous into a liquid, and subsequently, doubtless, a solid condition—a change which Laplace conjectured, and no doubt with reason, to have taken place long ages back, in the case of our sun and solar system.

Mr Huggins has recently arrived at another result of extreme interest in connection with his spectroscopic observations of the stars, and this is, that by the aid of this instrument we can estimate the motion of the stars towards or from the earth, and the rate of such motion. We shall endeavour to explain the principle on which this astonishing discovery is based. It has long since been satisfactorily proved that light is, like sound, due to an extremely rapid succession of minute waves, which, occurring in the luminiferous ether, strike the eye, and become appreciated by it as light. It is also well known that, as in the case of sound, an increase in the rapidity with which the waves of air strike the ear is attended by a sharpening of the note sounded, while a decrease of this rapidity is attended by a flattening of the note; so in the case of light, the more rapid the vibrations of the luminiferous ether, the more the colour approaches to that seen at the violet end of the spectrum; and the slower the vibrations, the more it approaches to that seen at the red end. Now, it was suggested by Doppler, and proved by Ballot, that in accordance with this fact, changes could be artificially produced in the pitch of the same note as appreciated by the ear, that the ear could be made to hear the same note artificially sharpened or flattened. The mode Ballot adopted of experimentally proving this interesting point was as follows: he placed musicians upon rapidly moving trains, and desired them to sound continuously the same note, while they passed by other musicians stationed beside the line, to listen to this note. He thus employed the most delicate test known for the estimation of the varying or unvarying rate of rapidity of the waves of sound—namely, the trained musical ear. The result obtained was in perfect accordance with the theory—namely, that while the trains were advancing, the note sounded was heard sharpened, or, as it is called, higher than it sounded to the ear of the musician who produced it; while the self-same note, as the train receded, was heard flattened, or lower than it really was; the waves of sound being evidently shortened in the first case, and lengthened in the last, in the same proportion, compared with their natural or normal length, as the speed of the train bore to the rate at which sound travels. Obviously, the same result must hold in the case of light; but light travels with such enormous speed, that no artificial change could affect it in any appreciable degree. The rates of motion of the heavenly bodies might, however, bear some appreciable proportion to the speed of light, and this was the question which Mr Huggins proceeded experimentally to try; and the result was successful; but it put the highest powers of his finest instruments to the very utmost test. The apparatus he used produced a dispersion of light—that is, a lengthening, or rather widening out of the spectrum, equal to that produced by seven prisms of 60 degrees of dense flint glass. Now, it is clear that the eye would be wholly unable to appreciate any difference in the shade of colour produced in bright lines, as from nebulæ, in consequence of their being moved slightly towards one or other end of the spectrum, as a result of changes in the rapidity of the light-producing vibrations; but the position of the dark absorption lines from a star being accurately measured with fine micrometers, might perhaps exhibit a slight deviation towards one or the other end of the spectrum, according as the luminous body might be moving from us or towards us. And this was found to be the case, to the extent of about the two-hundred-and-fiftieth part of an inch. Of course, if the experiment were tried with only a single line, any alteration, however slight, might imply only a new substance in the star's

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atmosphere; but when the same change is found to affect every line proceeding from a star, and always in the same direction, and in the same proportion, the inference is irresistible that the change is due to the motion of the luminous body. The light of Sirius, when thus tested, was found to be slightly degraded—that is, its refrangibility was lowered; or, in other words, all the dark lines were shifted towards the red end of the spectrum; shewing that the vibrations come to us somewhat lengthened, or made slower, than they ought to be; and thus establishing the fact that the star is moving away from us. The result arrived at by measurement of the amount of this degradation of the light is, that Sirius and the Earth are becoming removed from each other at the rate of forty-one miles in a second of time, of which twelve miles per second was due, at the time of observation, to the Earth's motion in the same direction as the rays of light, leaving twenty-nine miles a second as the actual rate of recession of the star from us. Many other interesting facts have been arrived at by the application of this wonderful instrument of research; but the above may suffice to explain the nature of these investigations, and illustrate the results arrived at.

ABOARD THE SEA-MEW.

IN TWENTY-TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER VIII.

It was a rush, and no mistake; for they had been priming themselves up with rum, I should think, for the last hour or two, till they were nearly mad; and with Van at their head, they came on, yelling like so many devils, more than Englishmen, though certainly half of them were from all parts of the world. There was no time then for thinking, and before you knew where you were it was give and take.

We fired as they came on; but I did not see that much harm was done, only one chap falling; while, as they returned it, Mr Wallace gave a cry, and clapped his hand to his shoulder, dropping at the same time his cutlash, which Tomtit laid hold of, for he had just shied his pistol, after firing it, right at Van's head, only missing him by half an inch or so.

Van dashed right at the skipper like a cat, and with one cut sent him down, when he turned upon me, to serve me the same; but I was too quick for him, and as I jumped aside, his cutlash hit the bulkhead and snapped in two. I believe it would have gone hard with him then, for that carver was sharp, and my old blood was up, but in the struggle I was driven back; and the next thing I saw was Mr Ward drive that skewer of his right through one fellow's shoulder, and then starting back, he fired three shots from his revolver, but with what effect I never saw, for two of the piratical rascals were at me, and it was all I could do to keep them at a distance. I fetched one a chop across the back of the hand at last, though, and sent him off howling and cursing; and then managing to avoid a cut, and sending my arm out, I caught the other right in the chest, and down he went like a stone; when, to my surprise, I found it was only the buckhorn handle I had hit him with, the blade having flown out, and gone goodness knows where.

There was no time to choose who should be your next enemy, for two or three were at you directly, and there I was at last, fighting best way I could with my fists, driven here and there with the planks slippery with blood, and men, some wounded, some only stunned, lying about for you to fall over.

I kept casting an eye at Mr Ward, and could see that he was fighting like a hero; but all at once I made a jump to get at him, for I saw Van creep up behind, while he was defending himself from a big fellow with a cutlash, and though I shouted to him, it was of no use, for the poor young fellow was cut down just as I turned dizzy from being fetched down with a crack from a marline-spike.

CHAPTER IX.

When I came to again, my head was aching awfully, and I found myself lying upon the deck, with old Sam Brown dabbing my forehead with a wet swab. Close aside me was Bill Smith, and the sight of him alive did me so much good that I jumped up into a sitting position, and gave his hand a good shake. But, there, it was for all the world like having boiling lead poured from one side to the other of your head, and I was glad to lean against the bulkhead again.

There were half-a-dozen of the crew keeping watch over us, while Sam whispered to me that six bodies had been shoved out of the port—three being passengers; as to the rest on our side, Mr Ward's seemed the worst wound, but he, poor fellow, was sitting up pale and anxious, with his handkerchief tied round his head, and evidently, like me, wondering what was to happen next.

I could not help noticing soon after how well the women bore it all; hushing and chattering to the children to keep them quiet, and doing all they could to keep them from noticing our wild and wounded faces. They were all huddled together in the big cabin, while, with the exception of the men on guard, the mutineers were on deck. From the slight rolling of the ship, it seemed that they had altered her course; but my head was too much worried and confused for me to notice much, and that day slipped by, and the night came—such a night as, I pray God, I may never again pass; for the cabin-hatches were closed upon us, and none of the men staid down, but after serving round some biscuit and water, and some rank bad butter at the bottom of one of the little tubs, they went on deck, though we soon found that a couple of them kept watch.

It was a sad night and a bitter, for as soon as darkness came down upon us, the poor women, who had held up so well all day, broke down, and you could hear the smothered sobbing and wailing, till it went through you like a knife. I believe they tried all they could to keep it in, poor things; but then 'taint in 'em, you know, to keep up long; and then when the children broke out too, and wanted all sorts of things that they couldn't have, why, it was awful. We had no lights, for they wouldn't give us any, so we all had to set to, to try and make the best of everything; but we couldn't, you see, not even second best, try how we would.

'Only a bit of a cut, sir,' I says to Mr Ward, who was going round and doing what he could in the dark for we chaps as had got knocked about. 'I shan't hurt. See to Bill Smith here. Tell you what it is though, sir—you won't ketch me at sea again in such a Noah's Ark as this here.'

'Hush! my man,' he says, 'and try all you can

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to help.' 'In course I will, sir,' I says; and then, hearing a growl on my right, I says: 'That ain't Bill, sir, that 's Sam. He 's all right: nobody can't hurt him, his blessed head 's too thick.' Directly after the doctor felt his way to Bill Smith, and tied up his head a bit, while I was wondering what to do for the best, listening all the time to women wailing, and little ones letting go, as if with the full belief that they 'd got the whole of the trouble in the ship on their precious little heads. What seemed the best thing to do was to quiet some of them; and if it had been daylight, a sight or two of my phiz would have frightened 'em into peace; but how to do it now, I didn't know. 'Howsoever, here goes for a try,' I says; and I groped my way along as well as I could, expecting every moment to be deafened, when I turned half-mad with rage, for some one yells down the skylight: 'Stop that noise!' and at the same moment there was a pistol fired right into the wailing crowd; then there was a sharp clear shriek, and directly after a stillness that was awful.

'It was a cruel cowardly act,' I heard some one say then close to me; 'but, Miss Bell'—— And then directly came the young lady's voice saying: 'It is almost as cowardly, sir, to speak to me in this way, when I am so unprotected.'

'By your leave,' I says gruffly, and I felt a little hand laid on my arm.

'Is that you, Mr Roberts?' says Miss Bell, and I could feel her soft breath on my cheek.

'It 's old Tom Roberts, without the Mister, ma'am,' I says, 'and at your service. What shall I do?'

What could I do? Rum question, wasn't it? When, if she didn't put a little toddling thing into my arms—a bit of a two-year-older, as was just beginning to cry again, after the fright of the pistol; but I turned myself into a sort of cradle, got rocking about, and if the soft round little thing didn't go off fast asleep, and breathe as reg'lar as so much clock-work!

'Well done you, Tom Roberts,' I says, after listening to it for about half an hour; and do you know, I did feel a bit proud of what I 'd done, being the first time, you see, that I 'd ever tried to do such a thing; and so through the night I sat there with my back to the bulkhead, and with my head all worried like, for now it was me groaning, and now it seemed that I was crying like a child, and then people were telling me to be quiet, only I wouldn't, for I had mutinied, and was going to kill Mr Ward, and marry Miss Bell, and things were all mixed together, and strange and misty, and then thicker still, and at last all was blank, and I must have gone off to sleep, in spite of my trouble, for when I opened my eyes, it was broad daylight again, and then the first thing they lit on was a little chubby, curly-headed thing in my lap, watching me as serious as could be, and twisting its little hand in mine.

I hadn't eyes for anything else for a little while, but as soon as I did take a look round, all the troubles seemed to come back with a jump, for most of the party were asleep: there they all were, first-class passengers and steerage passengers, all huddled together, no distinctions now. Old Sam was snoring away close alongside of the skipper and Mr Wallace, and strange and bad they looked, poor fellows; while up at the far end sat Miss Bell, bending over her brother, who lay on a locker; but whether she was asleep or not, I couldn't tell.

But there was something else took my attention, and that was, that though all the other berths seemed empty, one had some one lying in it, and that berth I could not keep my eyes off, for it got to be somehow mixed up with the firing of that pistol down the skylight and the sharp cry I had heard; and so from thinking about it all, I got it put together in a shape which Mr Ward afterwards told me was quite right, for a little lad of nine years old was killed by that cowardly bullet, and it was him as I saw lying in the berth.

By degrees, first one and then another of our miserable party roused up with a sigh, and then sat staring about in a most hopeless way; all but Mr Ward, who went round to those who had been wounded, saying a cheering word or two, as well as seeing to their bandages; but it was quite by force that he had to do the skipper's, for his wound had made him light-headed, and he took it into his poor cloudy brain that Mr Ward was Van, and wanted to make an end of him.

People soon got whispering together and wondering what was to be done next, for they seemed to be busy on deck, and of course we were all very anxious to know; but when Sam Brown got a tub on one of the tables, and then hauled himself up, to have a look through the skylight, he came down again rubbing his knuckles and swearing, for one of the watch had given him a tap with a marline-spike; and after that, of course no one tried to make out.

I, for one, expected that they would have taken advantage of having their own way to have a reg'lar turn at the spirits; but no: they certainly got some up, but Van seemed to be driving them all with a tightish hand, so that they were going on very quietly and reg'larly, as we found, for by-and-by they serves out biscuit and butter and fresh water again; and not very long after, Van sung out down the hatchway for me to come up; and knowing that if I didn't go he 'd send and fetch me, I went up, and sat down on the deck, where he pointed with a pistol. Then he ordered up Sam and Bill, and four sailors who were on our side (lads only), and the skipper and Mr Wallace, one at a time, till we were all set in a row, with them guarding us; when, with his teeth glistening, Van walks up to the skipper, and hits him on the head with the but-end of his pistol, so that the poor fellow fell back on the deck.

'Set him up again,' says Van savagely; and a couple of the mutineers did so, but only for Van to knock him down once more; and he did that four times over, till, when they set the poor captain up again the last time, he fell back upon the deck of himself, being stunned like. It was enough to make any fellow burst with rage; but what can you do when there 's half a score standing over you with loaded pistols? and, besides, trouble makes people very selfish, while we all knew how Van was having his bit of revenge, cowardly as it was, for the way the captain had treated him.

Last of all, Van goes and puts his foot on the skipper's neck, and I made as though to get up, for I thought he was going to blow his brains out; and bad and cowardly as the captain had been, I couldn't a-bear to see him hit when he was down without trying to help him; but it was of no use, for I was pulled back directly, and all I could do was to sit and look on.

All at once, Van turns a breaker on its end,

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jumps on it, and, sticking his arms a-kimbo like a fishwoman, he begins to spout at us; and fine and fierce no doubt he thought he looked in his red nightcap, and belt stuck full of pistols. 'Now, my lads,' he says, 'we're going to have some of the good old times over again: take possession of one of the beautiful isles in the P'cific, and sail where we like under the black flag, free as the day, with none of your cursed tyrants to make men sweat blood and work like dogs, but all free and equal. We've done the work, and captured the ship, and you've acted like thieves and curs, and sided with them as will be ready to kick you for your pains. As for you, Wallace, curse you! you have always been a cur and a tool; but we shall want help, and you can come if you like; while, you others, we'll look over what's gone by, for you did fight like men. So, what do you say?—will you join us, or take your chance to reach land in one of the boats with the lot below?'

The young lads all looked at me, to see what I'd say, for no one took much notice of Mr Wallace. Bill Smith, too, who was much better, he looks at me; and I s'pose old Sam meant to do the same, but when I turned to him, all I could make out was the whites of his eyes, till he turned his head on one side, and I got a sight of one eye, when he turned his head t'other way, and then I see t'other.

It was very plain that they meant me to be spokesman; and seeing that was to be the case, and that, after a fashion, they left me to decide, I just turns it over in my own mind for a bit, and seeing as I should be wanted in the boats to help make the land somewhere, as they was to be loaded with a set of the helplessest beings as ever breathed—why, I says: 'T'others can do as they like; as for me, you never asked me at first; and as you've done without me so far, why, you can do without me now—till you gets to the gallows,' I added, but so as they couldn't hear me. And, though I hardly expected it from the lads, they said they'd do as I did; while, as for Bill and Sam, they always was a pair of the helplessest babies as ever breathed, and left me to think for 'em ever since we first sailed together—indeed, I don't fancy as Sam ever had any thinking machinery at all. Howsoever, they said as they'd stick by me; and Van gave a curse and a swear, and a blow or two at us; and then, after a bit of 'scussion, in which women was named two or three times, and Van and another party was quite at loggerheads for a bit, he gave his orders, big and bounceable like, and telling us to lend a hand, he made ready to lower down one of the boats.

CHAPTER X.

Two boats were lowered down, and my two mates and me and the four sailors was to man 'em. They let down Captain Harness, wounded and half-mad as he was, into one boat, and Mr Wallace the mate into the other; and then a couple of compasses, and some breakers of water, a bag or two of biscuit, and a tub of butter were lowered down. Then came the job of getting the passengers into the boats. The men were ordered up first, and, some wounded, some savage, some weak and disheartened, they were made to take their places, some of the mutineers keeping guard with cocked pistols and drawn cutlashes. I believe, though, in spite of their weapons, that a little English pluck was all that was needed to save the ship; but no attempt was made, and, trembling and frightened, the women and children were ordered up, and then the boats were loaded.

'Now, then, down with you, and shove off,' says Van Haigh, shewing his cursed white teeth, and pricking at poor Sam Brown with his cutlash, just out of malice like. And you should have seen Sam's eyes that time! He never spoke, but it's my opinion if he'd had the chance, he'd have shaken Van's precious body until the ear-rings he was so proud of had dropped out of his yellow ears. But, as I said before, Sam didn't speak; he only lays hold of the side-rope, and lowers himself into the boat, already too full; Bill Smith dropping into the other, in spite of his wound.

'Now you!' roars Van to me, for I was standing hesitating, and I don't mind saying that a cold chill ran all through me, for just then I heard the click, click of his pistol cock, and I knew he was taking aim at me. But I mastered myself, and wouldn't turn round; for it was an important time, and there was much to think about. There was poor Mr Ward, with his head bound up, held by two of the mutineers; and poor Tomtit, with his knees to his chin as he sat upon the deck; and of course they weren't going, for the boats wouldn't hold any more. And there was the fat passenger, as cried when we left home; and last of all, Miss Bell and her brother below.

It didn't take me long to make up my mind, for it seemed to me as it would never do for me and my mates to go and leave them in their trouble, for maybe they'd be sent afloat in a little boat next, and wouldn't know how to work her; so, half-expecting every moment to drop with a bullet through me, I says: 'I'm blest, my lads, if I ain't had about enough of it. While the old skipper was aboard, I did my duty by him and them as was under him; but now there's a new skipper, I don't see what call there is for me to go afloat with a set o' lubbers in a crazy boat. You, Bill Smith, and you, squinty Brown, can do as you like.—Captain Van,' I says, turning to him, 'if you'll shove that pistol away, I'll stop aboard.'

'Hooray!' shouts half-a-dozen of the fellows; and I could see Van looking me through and through with them dark eyes of his; but I don't think he got much below the skin either, and besides, he was a bit tickled by me calling him 'captain;' so he puts the pistol in his belt, and the next minute Bill and Sam was aboard again, looking half-puzzled like, while the mutineers gave a bit of a cheer, and the passengers groaned at us; and, to make matters right with them on board, I jumps on the taffrail and groans again, and calls the poor beggars swabs—God forgive me!—for shoving off in so lubberly a way, with their oars dipping anyhow, nohow, one after the other in the water, and the boats not trimmed. It was a cruel trick, but I meant it all for the best; while, what to do about old Sam, I didn't know, for he was growling and swearing to himself like some old tiger-cat, and I was afraid he'd shew his teeth and claws every moment; but he kept quiet. And as for Bill, he seemed misty and dazed, never speaking, but sitting down on the deck to lean his head against the side. Then Van seemed more at rest, for, giving his orders, the men uncocked their pistols, after making-believe to blow the fat chap's brains out, and making the perspiration run down

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his face, mixed up with tears, for he began to pipe his eye terribly.

'Lower 'em below,' says Van; and the fat passenger saved 'em the trouble; while, when they were letting down Tomtit, whose hands were tied, and they were going to let go, they found his legs was already at the bottom, and then his head disappeared, but only to pop up again the next moment like a Jack-in-the-box, to see what was going to be done to the doctor.

'Ain't he a rum beggar?' I says to one of the bloodthirsty devils at my side, all to make friends, you see; and he laughed, and so did two or three more, for another of 'em made a cut at the poor chap's head with his cutlash, to make him bob down the hatchway again, which he did, though only to come up again, till, finding it wasn't safe, he kept down, and we didn't see him no more just then. The poor doctor was the next to take their attention; and, seeing how cut up the poor fellow was, I 'd have given something to have gone and shaken hands with him, and told him what I felt, and at first I hardly dare look him in the face.

They lashed Mr Ward's hands behind him, and I saw his lips quiver as he kept on casting an eye at the cabin stairs. I knew well enough what he was thinking about, only I daren't look at him much, for there were plenty watching me suspiciously enough; and, let alone not wanting to be knocked on the head, I felt that to do any good for the passengers, I must throw them as had the upper hand off the scent.

I was leaning against the bulwarks, making-believe to look on, cool as could be, and screwing my old mahogany phizog into what I meant to be a grin of delight at our freedom, but I know it must have been about the sort of screw that a fellow would give when lashed to a gun for a round dozen.

Mr Ward saw me grinning, and sent such a look at me as made my face grow as long as a spoon; but that wouldn't do, and I daren't give him any signal, so I laughed it off, and, pulling out my box and opening my knife, I goes up to him, and I says in a free-and-easy way: 'Have a chaw, mate?' and made-believe to cut him one.

'You infernal traitorous scoundrel!' he shouted, and in spite of his lashings he made at me; while, making-believe to have my monkey up, I up with my knife and made a stroke at him, sending it through his pilot-coat and into one of the side-pockets, dragging at it, to get it out again, and keeping it hitched the while, till some of them laid hold of me by the arm, when, struggling and swearing, I hit out with my left hand, and caught Mr Ward upon the chest, sending him down upon the deck, when I tried again to get at him, but they held me fast.

'I 'll let him know,' I spluttered out; and then Brassey, Van's right-hand man, gives the order, and three of his mates drags Mr Ward down the hatchway; when I pretended to be better, and only kept on muttering and scowling about like a dog that 's lost his bone, till ten minutes after, when I got a pannikin of grog, and sat looking at what was going on.

CHAPTER XI.

I don't think I 'd any plans made; my only idea was, that when they sent the three or four others off, me and my mates might seize another boat, and row after them, the same night, for they wouldn't get very far, as I knew, unless a fresh breeze sprung up, and took us away. Certainly the two boats that had gone were loaded deep, but they were not making a mile an hour; and it seemed plain enough to me that unless they could answer for its being calm till the poor wretches were picked up, if they ever were, the brutes on board had murdered 'em one and all, men, women, and children, by a slow kind of torture.

'Not very smart crews, matey,' I says, pointing with my knife over my shoulder to where the boats were slowly rising and falling, and then I fished out a piece of chicken from a tin case of the skipper's, and went on eating away as if I hadn't a care on my mind. 'Pig away, my lads,' I says to Bill and Sam; but Bill couldn't touch a snap. Sam made up for it, though; and after plenty of hard work and fighting, and two days on biscuit and water, and that rank yellow grease sailors get for butter, one's teeth do get rather sharp. 'Now, if you 'll just sarve another tot o' grog round, cap'n,' I says to Van, as I wiped my knife on the leg of my trousers, 'I shall be about done and ready for work.'

Some of the fellows laughed, and Van said something about my not being such a bad sort after all; but I could see as he did not trust me, which, I must say, was quite right, and the only right thing as I ever saw in the blackguard's character.

I soon found that though they 'd all doubled the Cape a good many times, there wasn't a man with navigation enough in him to tell where we were, or how to carry the ship on her course; while, though I don't believe I could have worked a reckoning right, yet, somehow or other, I fancy I could have shoved that old ship's nose into the harbour for which we were bound. Their plan seemed to be to crack on due south till we 'd got high enough, and then to steer west, and get into the P'cific best way we could. I give them my bit of advice when it was asked, for I thought that the more we were in the track of ships, the more likely we were to be overhauled; but they would not have it my way; and Van giving his orders, a lot of us sprung up to make sail. When lying out on the main-royal yard, I run my eye round and quite jumped again, for, bearing down towards where the boats were crawling along, there was a bark with every stitch of canvas set.

Sam saw it too, for he grunted; but I give him a kick, and down we came, our vessel feeling the breeze now, and careening over as the water began to rattle under her bows.

I felt more comfortable after that; for though I did not for a moment think that the ship I had seen would overhaul us, still I felt pretty sure that she 'd pick up those poor creatures in the boats, and save them from a horrible death. There was no doubt about having seen the bark, but from the deck never a glimpse was got of it; and we went bowling along in capital style, just, in fact, as if we had been a honest ship on a good cruise.

Having nothing particular to do, I went below, and the first place I came to was the cabin that had been fitted up for Mr Butterwell's birds; and on getting to 'em, there they were, poor little things, fluttering and chirping about with their feathers all rough, for they 'd got no water and seed. Quite a score of 'em were lying dead in the bottom amongst the sand; and after giving the

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pretty little things water, and seed, and paste, I fished out the dead ones in a quiet, methodical sort of way, turning over something in my mind that I couldn't get to fit, when I feels a hand on my shoulder.

'Going to wring their necks?' says Van, for it was him come down to watch me.

'Not I,' I says. 'They'll do first-rate to turn out on the island we stops at. Sing like fun.'

'Look ye here, Roberts,' he says, 'we're playing a dangerous game, and you've joined us in it. Don't play any tricks, or'—— He didn't say any more, but looked hard at me.

'Tricks!' I grumbled out; 'I'm not for playing anything. I'm for real earnest, and no favour to nobody.'

'I only said don't,' says Van; and he went up again.

'A suspicious hound,' I says to myself; and then I began to turn over in my own mind what I had been thinking of before; and then having, as I thought, hit upon a bright idea, I hugged it up, and began to rub it a little more shiny.

You see what I wanted to do was to get a word with Mr Ward, and how to do it was the question. I knew well enough that I should be watched pretty closely, and any attempt at speaking would be put an end to most likely with a bullet.

I rubbed that thought about no end, and next morning I goes to one particular cage where there was a linnet that I had seen Mr Butterwell play all sorts of tricks with; and instead of feeding it, I quietly took out the panting little thing, carried it on deck, got up in a corner under the bulwarks, and waited my time, watching the while to see if any one had an eye on me. Then I let the bird go; and it flitted here and flitted there with a tiny bit of paper fastened under its wing, till, as I had hoped, there came from out of the cabin skylight a particular sort of chirrup, when the bird settled on the glass for a moment, and then dropped through the opening where it had been broken.

Now, on that bit of paper I had printed what I knew wouldn't hurt me if the bird was seen by the mutineers, for I was afraid to say much the first time; and as I had written on it, 'Let him go again,' so sure enough up he came ten minutes after, and watching my chance, I followed him about till I caught him, and took him back to his cage, and gave him plenty of seed.

Van had taken possession of the cabin next to where his prisoners were, and the skylight being partly over his place, a word with Mr Ward was out of the question; while such a little messenger as I had found would go to his master when called, perhaps without calling, specially after him fortunate enough to catch sight of the bird the first time I tried.

All that day matters went on as usual, a strict watch being kept over the prisoners, and more than one as I fancied having an eye to me. On and on we sailed due south, and the weather kept wonderful all the time; but there seemed no sign of starting the rest of the passengers off in a boat, and I began to feel worried and troubled about their fate, and more anxious to get on with the plans I was contriving.

CHAPTER XII.

Now, not being a scholar, I had a deal of trouble over the note I got ready for the next morning, for, you see, I wanted to say very much in a very little room, and in a way that shouldn't betray me if it was to fall into the wrong hands. It was meant for Mr Ward, but I knew Tomtit would get it; but that didn't matter, as they were fellow-prisoners, and what I wanted was to put the doctor on his guard, and also to let him know that all I'd done was so as to be alongside of him and Miss Bell. So I says in the note:

'HONOURED SIR—Lay yourself well to the wind, and haul every sheet taut. Them as you thought was sharks a shewing their teeth warn't only shams. Take all you gets, and clap 'em under hatches, and, whatever you do, don't be deceived by false colours, nor hail ships as seems enemies.'

'There,' I says to myself, when I'd got that printed out careful, 'if he can't make that out, he can't understand nothing;' for, I put it to you, what could I have said clearer, and yet made so as no one else could understand? It seemed to me that I'd just hit the mark, and the next thing was to get it to him.

Who'd ever have thought, I says, that that long doubling-up chap, as we all made such fun of with his little birds, would have turned in so useful; and then I got what you big people call moralising about everybody having their use on earth, without it was mutineers, whose only use seemed to me to be finding work for the hangman.

I got no chance to send my note that day, through people being about; next day, too, nothing came of it; but early the next morning, soon after daybreak, I got my little messenger out, tied the paper to his wing with a bit of worsted out of my kit, and then going on deck, I let him fly; but so as not to take the attention of the chap at the wheel, I started him from up in the main-top, where I made-believe to have gone to have a smoke.

There was a watch of three forward, but they were all half asleep; while as for him taking his trick at the wheel, he kept on nodding over his job, and letting the ship yaw about till she went anyhow.

Bless the pretty little thing! When I first opened my hand, it only sat there looking at me with its bright beady eyes, and then it was so tame, it hopped upon my shoulder, to stay a few seconds, before flitting from rope to sheet and shroud, lower and lower, till it perched upon the cabin skylight, and rattled out a few clear crisp notes, like a challenge to its master, who, I felt sure, would be asleep. My only hope was that the little thing would flit through the big hole I made, and stay in the cabin till Tomtit was up.

But I was wrong, for the bird had no sooner sung its sweet note, putting one in mind of old boyish days when we used to go bird-nesting, than I saw a hand thrust up through the broken light, and after a little fluttering, the bird let itself be caught, when, knowing that my job was done, I came slowly down, and walking aft, stood and talked to the chap at the wheel.

'Hollo!' I says, all at once, 'there's one o' my birds got loose;' and running forward, and making a good deal of fuss, I captured the little linnet, for it never flew far at a time, having been tamed and petted by Mr Butterwell till it was almost like a little Christian.

That day I watched my chance, and got hold of what powder I could, making a little packet of it

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in my silk neckercher; and when it was dark, I managed to drop that through the skylight as I went whistling along the deck. Next thing to be done was to get some weapons, for it seemed strange to me if we six true men couldn't somehow make one chance and turn the tables on the rascals who had taken the ship. Counting them up, I found there was about seventeen—long odds enough, unless we could trap half of 'em, and fight 'em a part at a time. Then I thought the odds would be fair, for fighting with right on our side, I considered that we were quite as strong as eight of the others.

But the job was to get hold of weapons, for they never let neither me, nor Sam, nor Bill Smith have neither cutlash nor pistol, only take our turn at the wheel, or trim sails, otherwise we were treated right enough. Some of the chaps grumbled, saying, that now Van had made hisself captain, times were as hard as they were before; but that wasn't the case, though now he'd got the ship, he didn't mean to lose her again if he could help it, and seemed to me to be always on the watch for everything. As to trusting either of we three to go down below with rations, that was out of the question, either he or Brassey attending to that, and more than once I heard high words, and Mr Bell talking in a threatening way when Van was below.

Now, if it had been at any other time, we should not have sailed a hundred miles without being boarded by some one; while, if a Queen's ship would only have overhauled us now, it would have been salvation for us: but no; day after day slipped by, and not a sail came near. All I had managed to drop more into the cabin was only a couple of table-knives; when one dark evening, as I lay under the bulwark, hid by a bit of sail, I saw Van come out of his cabin, go and talk to the chap at the wheel, see to the coursing of the ship, and then go forward. I heard him talk to the watch for a minute, and then he went below forward, when, running upon all-fours, I was at the cabin hatch and down below in a jiffy.

As I expected, there were plenty of pistols and cutlashes there, where he had had them put for safety; and if I could have opened the big cabin door, I might have pitched half a score in before any one could have said 'Jack Robinson;' but there was something to stop me, for I had crossed the room and had my hand on a cutlash before I knew that Brassey was in the cabin with his head down upon the table, and seemingly fast asleep.

I should think I stood there with my hand stretched out for a full minute, not daring to move, expecting every moment that Van would come back, or else that Brassey would wake up.

That minute seemed to be stretched out into quite an hour; and then feeling that it was now or never, I shoved one after the other six pistols inside my shirt, when taking another step to reach where some swords stood together in a corner, I knocked one down, when I threw myself on my hands and knees, so that, if Brassey started up, he would not see me at first. Then as I lay there trembling with anxiety, I heard him yawn, push the lamp a little further on the table, and a minute after, he was snoring loud.

I waited as long as I dared, and then rising lightly, I got hold of one cutlash, and then of five more, out of a good twenty as stood there; stuffed as many cartridges out of the arm-chest into my pockets as they would hold; and then, after doing all this by fits and starts, expecting every moment that Brassey would hear me, I turned to go.

I 'd crept across the cabin, and reached the door, when I heard a step on the deck, and drew back; but the next moment it had gone, and after waiting for a minute, with the cutlashes tightly held under my arm, I made another start, when my heart seemed to sink, for I heard a sort of husky cough I well knew, and Van had his foot upon the stairs.

There was only one way for safety, and that I snatched at, for in another few seconds Van would have had me by the throat, and all would have been over; but, darting back, I laid hold of the lamp, dashed it down upon the sleeping man's head, and then leaped aside.

MEDIEVAL BOOKBINDING.

The Egyptians, as every one knows, wrote on the papyrus, a kind of rush, growing in the swamps adjacent to the Nile, strips of which were fastened together till the required breadth of surface was obtained. A great deal of this was required, for copies on papyrus of the funeral ritual were placed in every mummy-case. To make the paper, the Egyptians cut off the two extremities of the stalk, slit it, and peeled off the skins. These were placed one above another transversely, and stuck together by the water of the Nile; and finally, beaten with a mallet, and polished by a tooth or shell. When required to last long, they rubbed it with oil of cedar. The botanical name for the papyrus is *Cyperus antiquorum*, and it is called *berd* by the modern Egyptians. It grows to the height of about ten feet, surmounted by a downy flower. On monuments of the reign of Chephren and Cheops, men are represented bearing bundles of this plant.

According to Varro, before the time of Alexander the Great, the Greeks used palm-leaves, linen, or wax. Papyri were exported from Egypt; but the trade was stopped by the rivalry of the kings of Egypt and Pergamus. Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, prohibited the exportation of the papyrus, in order to prevent Eumenes of Pergamus increasing his library; but the latter caused the skins of sheep to be dressed and used for writing upon; this was called *pergamena*, hence *pergament* and *parchment*. *Biblos* was a kind of bark used for books in Greece, as well as papyrus and *liber*. The inner bark of the lime was used in Italy for the purpose. We get our word *book* from the Danish *boek*, beech-bark, on which writings were made at an early period. The Roman books up to the time of Augustus were in the form of scrolls (*volumina*), wound round a stick named *umbilicus*, the extremities of which, richly ornamented, were the *cornua*. The outside of these *volumina* were often of appropriate colour to the subject treated of in the roll; thus, those relating to war were *red;* to voyages, *blue;* &c. The manuscripts of the rolled-up form dug up at Herculaneum and Pompeii have no trace of decoration. In some instances the Romans used leaves of lead, which had been beaten thin with a hammer, and also leaves of wood covered with wax, connected at

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the back with rings. Books of this kind have been found at Herculaneum, and may be considered the rude original of the modern book.

Martial, in his *Epigrams*, tells us that works could be had in an elegant case or *binding* for five denarii (about three shillings of our money). He says it took only *one* hour to copy the whole of his second book of *Epigrams*. Respecting the cheapness of books then, we must remember that slaves executed vast numbers, and their food only cost twopence-halfpenny per day of our money. Horace allowed his slaves a pound of a kind of common corn, a little wine, oil, and salt. Mr Humphreys says that a rapid writer was able in less than twelve hours to produce a copy of a poem equal in extent to Tennyson's *Enoch Arden* and its accompanying poems. The square form of book began to prevail in Rome, in imitation of tablets. These tablets were afterwards made of leaves of vellum, and the covers of ivory were richly embellished. Square books began to be generally adopted in the fourth century. A copy of Virgil in the Vatican in this form has been assigned to the reign of Septimius Severus. The Romans had superb libraries, adorned with portraits of deceased *literati*, with cases reaching to the roof, called *loculamenta*, with shelves and holes for the rolls. The number of books destroyed in the Alexandrian Library was about five hundred thousand volumes. Josephus refers to a copy of the Law sent to Ptolemy Philadelphus, which was written in letters of gold upon skins so artfully put together that the joinings did not appear.

In the middle ages, the libraries were much smaller. Before the year 1300, the library of the university of Oxford consisted only of a few tracts, chained or kept in chests in the choir of St Mary's Church. At Glastonbury, in 1248, there were only four hundred volumes, and that was the first monastery in England. In 1364, the Royal Library of France did not exceed twenty volumes. When the Abbot of Gambleurs had collected one hundred volumes, he imagined he had a fine library. The monastery of St Serfan, an island in Loch Leven (Kinross-shire), possessed only sixteen books, and yet the prior, Andrew Wintoun, in 1420, completed his *Orygynale Cronykil of Scotland*, a valuable specimen of ancient manners. The finest library we read of in the fifteenth century was that of Corvinus, king of Hungary (died 1490), who had thirty thousand volumes, a great many of which were bound in brocade, with bosses and clasps of gold and silver.

It seems extraordinary that with the difficulties the monks had to contend with, they should have produced masterpieces of illumination, which we cannot equal, much less excel. 'If you want a rubber,' says an old treatise on Illumination, 'you must take a dogge's toothe, and set him in a sticke.' They made their own brushes from minever tails, set in quills, or often perhaps from the hair of the conventual tom-cat. They extracted their colours from plants and minerals, which the lay brethren ground; and made the vellum from the skins of animals slaughtered for their food. It is certain that in the eleventh and twelfth centuries the skins were prepared in the monasteries, and the process is described by Archbishop Hildebert of Tours in his sermon on the *Book of Life*. But this parchment was not equal to that supposed to have been imported from the Moors in Spain. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, it was bought in its manufactured state, as the monastic rolls of accounts testify. Generally, in a volume, one set of scribes wrote the work, and the illuminators added the initial letters, &c. But it is on record that Henry, a monk of the Abbey of Clyde, in 1178, wrote and illuminated a volume, and even made the brass bosses of the binding with his own hands. When finished, the volume was bound generally between two boards covered with skins, or richly ornamented with plates of gold and silver set with crystals and rubies. Ecclesiastics were forbidden to hunt, but Charlemagne granted permission to priests to indulge in the pleasures of the chase if they did so to procure deer-skins for binding their books.

The Book of the Gospels, or Text, was generally bound in the most sumptuous manner, and decorated with the symbols of the four evangelists. An example, in the Vatican, containing the Gospels of St Luke and St John in golden letters, is covered on one side with a leaf of ivory, artificially wrought with carved work, in which is seen a figure in a toga, holding in the left hand a book, with the right in benediction: it is supposed to be of the time of Charlemagne. The same emperor gave to the monastery of Arrianse a Text, the covers of which were enriched with amber and carved ivory. Lothaire, king of France, in 855 offered to the monastery church of Pruyan, where he embraced the religious life, 'a Book of the Gospels in ivory covers, inlaid with gold, and set with crystals and jewels.' The early Irish manuscripts were often splendidly adorned, as well as the silver *cumdhacks* or cases in which they were contained. Ethenwolf, in a metrical epistle to Egbert, at that time resident in Ireland for the purpose of collecting manuscripts, extols one Ultan, an Irish monk, for his talent in adorning books. In Anglo-Saxon and Irish bindings a piece of crystal or beryl is made their chief ornament. In some instances, this piece of crystal (usually shaped into a convexed oval) is of so large size as to take up the whole side of the cover, and readily suggests the propriety of calling it a 'glass book' (*Archæologia*, vii. 167). Dr Rock thinks this custom was derived from the Druids. The term 'æstel' employed in King Alfred's translation of Pope Gregory's *Liber Pastoralis*, was probably this boss of crystal: 'To every bishop's see in my kingdom I will that one (of the copies of his own Anglo-Saxon translation of the Pastoral) be sent; and upon each there is an *æstel* which is about fifty mancuses (in value), and I bid, in God's name, that nobody that æstel from these books shall undo.' The Durham Book, or St Cuthbert's Gospels, in the British Museum, is surpassed only by the celebrated Book of Kells, that exquisite example of early Irish art. Bishop Eadfrith, successor to St Cuthbert, caused the book to be illuminated to his memory. It was encased in a splendid binding of gold, set with precious stones, by Bilfrid, an anchorite at Tyninghame, in East Lothian, the most skilful binder in Northumbria. St Dunstan was very celebrated for the beautiful manner in which he bound books. In the Stowe Catalogue, the ancient silver binding of the celebrated Irish Service-book is figured. In *The Church of Our Fathers*, by Dr Rock (279, 287), a notice will be found on the style of bookbinding among the Anglo-Saxons. St Margaret, queen of Scotland, one of the last of the Anglo-Saxon

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princesses, bestowed a cover glistening with gems on her highly illuminated copy of the Four Gospels. The volume was interleaved with fine glossy silk, such as may sometimes be met with even now between the leaves of later illuminated manuscripts. In Dugdale's *History of St Paul's*, we find mention made of eleven Texts or Books of the Gospels, all richly bound, belonging to that cathedral. The texts were placed in shrines (*camisiæ*) often of silver and gold. Salisbury Cathedral had (1222) a Text bound in solid gold, ornamented with twenty sapphires, six emeralds, eight topazes, eight alemandine stones, eight garnets, and twelve pearls. In the year 1315, Canterbury reckoned as many as seven Texts, bound in gold and precious stones (Dart's *Cant. Cath.*, App. p. 7). A fine specimen of this style of binding in silver parcel-gilt, formerly belonging to Dr Butler of Shrewsbury, is now in the British Museum.

Alcuin, an industrious English monk, occupied himself from 778 to 800 A.D., that is, twenty-two years, in making a copy of the Bible for Charlemagne. This was afterwards purchased by the British Museum for L.750.

Of course, bound in this way, and artistically illuminated, these books were the most valuable gifts a monastery could offer a prince; and in the opening page of the volume, we often see a representation of the author presenting his book to the king or nobleman. Thus, in *The Shrewsbury Book* in the British Museum, Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, is presenting his book to Henry VI., who is seated on his throne, and surrounded by his courtiers. Richard de Bury, Bishop of Durham (1333–45), was a great bibliomaniac. He bought of the Abbot of St Albans a Terence, a Virgil, a Quintilian, and a sermon against Rufinus, together with thirty-two other volumes, for fifty pounds of silver. In the reign of Edward III., one hundred marks (or one thousand pounds) were paid to Isabella de Lancaster, a nun of Ambresbury, for a book of romance purchased from her for the king's use. The richest covers were sometimes made double, so that when a secret spring was touched, the outside boards opened, and displayed the inward magnificence. Eleanor, Duchess of Gloucester, mentions, in her will in 1399, 'a chronicle of France in French, with two clasps of silver enamelled with the arms of Burgoyne; a book containing the Psalter, Primer, and other devotions, with two clasps of gold enamelled with the arms of France; and a Psalter richly illuminated, with the clasps enamelled with white swans, and the arms of my lord and father enamelled on the clasps.' In the accounts of the wardrobe of Edward IV., we find that Piers Banduyn was paid for 'binding, gilding, and dressing' two books twenty shillings each, and sixteen shillings each for four others. Now, twenty shillings then would be twenty pounds of our money. He also had six yards of velvet, six of silk, with tassels, gilt clasps, and nails supplied to him. The British Museum gave seven hundred pounds for a missal and case of Italian work, *c.* 1580, ornamented with rubies, emeralds, and azure enamel, supposed to have belonged to Henrietta Maria, queen of Charles I.

Libraries were often kept in towers, for superior seclusion, in early periods. The books were arranged on the shelves with the edges outside. In *Noontide Leisure* (i. 38, 39), we read: 'This room [at New Place], which Shakspeare called his own, had, together with an eastern aspect, a pleasant look-out into the garden, and was very neatly fitted up in the Gothic style with carved oaken presses, well stored with books, of which the leaves, and not the backs, being placed in front, and these decorated with silken strings, and occasionally with gold and silver clasps, in order to confine the sides of the covers, not only contrasted well with the dark hue of the oak, but gave a light and cheerful appearance to the apartment.'

Shakspeare says:

> That book in many 's eyes doth share the glory,
> That in gold clasps locks in the golden story.

Bishop Earle, in his *Microcosmography*, says of a young gentleman of the university: 'His study has commonly handsome shelves, and books neat silk strings, which he shews to his father's man, and is loath to untie or take down, for fear of misplacing.'

In the frontispiece to Dr Boys' *Works* (Lond. 1623, folio), the author is represented in his study with his books ranged on the shelves, with the edges frontwise. We frequently meet with vellum and parchment-covered volumes in which the vellum overlapped the edges, and the title was written on one of the flaps. But with other books it must have been difficult to find any volume wanted. Sometimes the title was written across the leaves in large letters.

In a book preserved by the town of Southampton (a code of naval legislation, in Norman-French, *c.* 1320), one of the oak boards in which it is bound is much longer than the other, and has a square hole in the lower part, to put the hand through, in order to hold it up while citing the laws in court. In the fifteenth century, books of prayers were often bound thus: the leathern covering of the volume was lengthened beyond the margin of the boards, and then gathered into a large knot at the end; it could then be hung at the girdle. A wood-cut of this arrangement will be found in the second volume of *The Book of Days*, page 339.

In the monasteries, an officer called the 'armarian' had charge of the books. He was expected to see that they were not injured by damp or insects, and especially to look after the bindings; he had also to keep a correct catalogue of them. Ingulphus, of the Abbey of Croyland, speaking of the lending of books, says: 'Our books, as well the smaller unbound volumes as the larger ones which are bound, we altogether forbid.' The scriptorium at St Edmundsbury was endowed with two mills. In Archbishop's Lanfranc's Constitutions (1072), we find an injunction ordering that at the beginning of Lent the librarian was to deliver a book to each of the religious, which was not to be returned till the following Lent; and all who had neglected to read the books were commanded to prostrate themselves before the abbot, to supplicate his indulgence.

The old stamped leather bindings of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries are often beautifully executed, and exceedingly interesting. Jean Grolier, Viscount d'Aguisi, one of the four treasurers of France (born at Lyon 1479, died 1565), collected a magnificent library, and had the books splendidly bound. In 1675, his library was dispersed. Gascon, the celebrated binder of that time, was chiefly employed by Grolier, but the designs are

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said to have been composed by himself in moments of leisure. A wood-cut of one of these bindings will be found in Shaw's *Decorative Arts, Ecc. and Civil, of the Middle Ages.* It had the usual inscription: '*Io grolierii et amicorvm,*' indicating that it was for the use of his friends as well as himself. The collection of Mr Edwards was very rich in these volumes, and large prices were realised. A coloured plate of great beauty will be found in Shaw's work, of a book belonging to the same style and period, though it cannot be proved to have belonged to the Chevalier Jean Grolier. Aldus, the famous printer of Venice, printed the works of Machiavelli in 1540, in four volumes. Grolier had his copy bound in four different patterns, and one volume was sold at the Libri sale for one hundred and fifty pounds. At the same sale, two volumes, which formerly belonged to the library of Diana of Poitiers, beautifully bound, were sold for eighty and eighty-five pounds respectively. The celebrated artist, 'le petit Bernard,' is said to have been employed on them. At the library at Treves is a manuscript studded with heads wrought in fine cameos.

In the middle of the sixteenth century, leaves of paper were pasted together for bindings, wood having been previously used for the purpose. Mr Thoms says the originator of binding in cloth was Mr R. E. Lawson, of Stanhope Street, Blackfriars, formerly in the employ of Mr Charles Sully; and the first book bound in cloth was a manuscript volume of music, which was subsequently purchased by Mr Alfred Herbert, the marine artist. On the volume being shewn to the late Mr Pickering, who was at that time (1823) printing a diamond edition of 'the classics,' he thought this material would be admirably adapted for the covers of the work. The cloth was purchased at the corner of Wilderness Row, St John's Street, and five hundred copies of the Diamond Classics were covered by Mr Lawson with cloth. Shakspeare's plays were also issued in this form, and these works were the first books bound in cloth.

The custom of chaining books to desks in churches is said to have originated from an act of Convocation in 1562, ordering that Nowell's Catechism, the Articles, and Bishop Jewell's Apology should be taught in universities and cathedral churches. But the custom has been traced back as far as Sir Thomas Lyttleton, who, by his will, dated 1481, ordered some of his works to be chained in different churches. St Bernard, in 1153, in one of his sermons, actually alludes to some such custom.

It is probable that there was no specimen of velvet binding before the fourteenth century. In the will of Lady Fitzhugh, *c.* 1427, several books are bequeathed: 'I wyl that my son Robert a Sautre covered with rede velvet, and my doghter Mariory a Primer cou'ed in rede, and my doghter Darcy a Sauter cou'ed in bleu, and my doghter Mal de Eure a Prim'r cou'ed in bleu.' Queen Elizabeth had a little volume of Prayers bound in solid gold suspended by a chain at her side. The Countess of Wilton, in her *Art of Needlework*, says the earliest specimen of needlework binding remaining in the British Museum is Fichetus (Guil.) Rhetoricum, Libri tres (Impr. in Membranis), 4to, Paris ad Sorbonæ, 1471. It is covered with crimson satin, on which is wrought with the needle a coat of arms, a lion rampant in gold thread in a blue field, with a transverse badge in scarlet silk: the minor ornaments are all wrought in fine gold thread. The next in date in the same collection is a description of the Holy Land, in French, written in Henry VII.'s time. It is bound in rich maroon velvet, with the royal arms, the garter and motto embroidered in blue; the ground crimson; and the fleurs-de-lis, leopards, and letters of the motto in gold thread. A coronet of gold thread is inwrought with pearls, the roses at the corners are in red silk and gold. In the Bodleian Library is a volume of the Epistles of St Paul (black-letter), the binding of which is embroidered by Queen Elizabeth; round the borders are Latin sentences, &c. Archbishop Parker's *De Antiquitate Britannicæ Ecclesiæ* (1572), in the British Museum, is richly bound in green velvet, embroidered with animals and flowers, in green, crimson, lilac, and yellow silk, and gold thread. In the same collection is a Bible bound for James II., shewing on the cover his initials, J. R., surmounted by a crown, and surrounded with borders of laurel, the four corners being filled with cherubim.

The writer of this paper once saw at Broomfield, in Essex, a Bible which belonged to Charles I. (date 1529, Norton and Bell printers). It is a folio, bound in purple velvet; the arms of England richly embroidered in raised work on both sides, and on the fly-leaf is written: 'This Bible was King Charles the First's; afterwards it was my grandfather's, Patrick Young, Esq., who was library-keeper to his Majesty; now given to the church at Broomfield by me, Sarah Attwood, Aug. 4th 1723.' It is a relic little known.

Various kinds of insects, popularly called bookworms, do much injury to books. A mite (*Acarus eruditus*) eats the paste that fastens the paper over the edges of the binding, and loosens it. The caterpillar of another little moth takes its station in damp old books, between the leaves, and there commits great ravages. The little boring woodbeetle also attacks books, and will even pierce through several volumes. Mr W. R. Tymms mentions an instance of twenty-seven folio volumes being perforated in a straight line by the same insect, in such a manner, that by passing a cord through the perfectly round hole made by it, the twenty-seven volumes could be raised at once.

A TWILIGHT PICTURE.

'Tis a sweet Sabbath eve in summer-time,
And lovers twain, with hand enclasped in hand,
Upon a flower-hemmed meadow-pathway stand,
Beside a stile they care not yet to climb.
Before them spread fair uplands crowned with pine,
That, sharply on the amber sky defined,
Stand up black-green against it; while behind,
A wood's dark edge with strongly pencilled line
Curves round a hill. Fair is the sylvan scene,
And oh! so sweet the tender twilight hour—
So sweet, and yet so sad. A silvery sheen
Falls like an after-thought on leaf and flower;
And such deep calm abounds, the very air
Breathes low and faint, like one engaged in prayer.

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DRAWN FROM THE LIFE.

MR JOHN STOTT'S DIFFICULTY.

Less than forty years ago, in a certain west-country town of England, lived Mr John Stott, head of the constabulary, so astute a thief-catcher, that his friends thought it a pity he should throw his wits away upon provincial vagabonds, and not give them broad and noble scope as a Bow Street runner. His enemies, the local scoundrels, thought the same; but contented themselves with observing darkly that 'he was so sharp that he would one day probably cut himself,' or that 'he was too clever to live.' In spite of these intellectual advantages, or in consequence of them, Mr Stott was as vain as a peacock, and made the not uncommon mistake of imagining himself even a cleverer fellow than he really was. He kept the little town (for it was a little one then) so clear of evil-doers, and got so complimented thereupon by the bench of magistrates, that he could not conceive that any misdemeanour could be committed which his sagacity should be unable to ferret out, or should fail to bring it home to the true culprit. 'I don't pretend for to say,' was one of his favourite remarks, 'as I was *never* puzzled in my profession, but this I *will* say, as no man ever took me in *twice*;' and then he would resume his pipe with the air of a man who has modestly confessed to a weakness, which no other person would have dreamed of attributing to him. Even his wife believed in Mr John Stott, and so doubtless would his *valet de chambre*, if he had happened to have kept one.

'Burglary at Sir Robert Air's last night,' said he sententiously, as he sat smoking after supper in his snug little parlour, one summer evening, while his wife mixed his gin-punch after his own particular receipt.

'You have got the wretches, of course,' observed Mrs Stott, paring the lemon-peel so that you could see through it, 'or else it would not be my John.'

'Well, no,' returned the great man, rightly appropriating the last observation as a compliment rather than an expression of doubt as to his personal identity. 'The fact is, it 's very queer; but I have *not* got the wretches. I shall have them to-morrow, but at present they are absolutely at large.'

'Lor, John! I can scarcely believe you when you tell me. Why, how on earth could they have got away from you? They could not have been ordinary burglars.'

'You are right, ma'am,' returned the chief-constable, with a gratified look; 'you have hit the nail exactly on the head. They were not ordinary men: they were acrobats.'

'Acrobats!' answered Mrs Stott softly; 'dear me!'

She had no very accurate idea what 'acrobats' were; they might be a religious sect, or they might be a savage tribe, or possibly even both. But she had long passed for a woman of sense and sagacity, through maintaining a discreet silence, except when her husband's talents seemed to demand her eulogies, and she was not going to risk that reputation now. She had a full share of the curiosity of her sex, but she had more than their ordinary patience. She waited to be informed upon the subject in question, without hazarding the remark which occurred to her, that acrobats had white hair and pink eyes, and therefore could at least be easily recognised by the constabulary; and she had not to wait long.

'Yes, it must have been them Tumblers,' mused Mr Stott, sipping his punch out of the teaspoon; 'and less than three and the boy could never have done it. It was her Ladyship's dressing-room window, as looks out on the back, as they broke in at, and no ladder could have been put there because of the flower-stand. It must have been that little devil in the tights and spangles at top of the three others. I have measured the height from the ground, and it just tallies. That 's what comes of allowing them itinerants to be in the place at all. The idea of the mayor letting them have the Town-hall to shew their tricks in! I'd

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put a stop to everything of that sort, if I had my way: and I will do it too, in future.'

'But you will not interfere with Mr Shaw, John, I do hope, since he has been so pleasant and civil.'

'No, ma'am, no. Mr Shaw is a man of science, in his line, and what is more, a man of substance. Mr Shaw's exhibition is itinerant, it is true, but that is from the necessity of the case. His collection of wild animals is interesting in a high degree, as the rector was observing to me only yesterday. But them acrobats is quite another matter. However, lissom as they are, they must run a little faster, and climb a little higher, I can promise them, before they can get out of the reach of John Stott.'

'They stood upon one another's shoulders, and the boy clambered up them, I suppose?'

'Yes, ma'am, that was their ingenious method; and if they had had to do with a common mind—though I say it who should not say it—the manner in which the thing was done would have remained a mystery. If a ladder had been used, it must needs have made some mark upon the mignonette-box. My men were all agape when I stated that circumstance, and began looking up in the air, as though some bird had done it. But, of course, when I said "Them Tumblers!" they saw everything clear enough. Sir Robert, who assisted our investigations in person, was so good as to say that I reminded him of Christopher Columbus and his egg.'

'You don't say so!' said Mrs Stott admiringly, and wondering within herself what that story was, and whether Mr Christopher Columbus could possibly have been an oviparous animal. 'And did her Ladyship lose much?'

'Some rings and pins, and three or four pounds in gold. Curiously enough, there was a bundle of bank-notes upon the dressing-table which entirely escaped the young rogue's attention, or her loss would have been much more serious.'

'And yet, he was such a frank-faced, honest-looking little fellow, that I never should have thought harm of him,' said good-natured Mrs Stott; 'but of course you 're right.'

'Well, most probably,' observed her lord and master with a short dry chuckle. 'By ten o'clock to-morrow morning, when the justices meet, we shall have this honest-looking young gentleman and his friends in the Town-hall, taking part in a public performance of another kind than that with which they favoured the town last week. And then we shall see what we shall see.'

Mr Stott arose, took his official hat down from its peg, and prepared to go his rounds, a nightly precaution he seldom omitted, notwithstanding the absence of all native criminals from his strictly preserved territory; as for the acrobats, they had fled with the first dawn of morning, and were not likely to return till they were brought back; but he had despatched two of his small 'force' in pursuit of them, and hence there was the more need for his personal vigilance.

'I shall be back at two, as usual, my dear, if not before,' said Mr John Stott.

About two A.M., from long habit, the wife of the chief-constable was accustomed to awake, and presently to hear her husband's heavy footfall coming up the stairs; but upon the present occasion there was no such welcome sound. She sat up in bed with her nightcap tucked behind her ears, and listened attentively, but in vain, for him. Notwithstanding his precarious calling, Mr Stott was a model of punctuality, and as Time (which in her opinion was almost the only thing that could do it) went on without him, she began to be seriously alarmed lest this admirable man, whom human ingenuity had never yet baffled, had been overwhelmed by envious Fate. There had been thunder in the air that night, and a bolt might have struck him. But at daylight she heard the front-door open, and a slow tread come up the stairs. The wife of a chief-constable should be above the suspicion of trepidation, but it was so unlike his ordinary step, that it made her heart go pitapat. However, it *was* her husband, whose noble spirit something had evidently cast down. Instead of kicking his boots across the room as usual, he drew them off, and then sat in his stockings, thinking.

'John,' said she, in much confusion and alarm; 'what *is* the matter, my dear? Have you not caught them albatrosses?—I mean albinos.'

'Yes, ma'am, *they*'re safe enough. But the deuce of it is that—in their absence—there has been another burglary. Mrs Colonel Peewit's house has been broken into just in the same way—through the second-floor back window. It 's nothing less than magic, for *that* had a mignonette-box, and there is no mark of a ladder to be found there neither. I 've had my bull's-eye over every square inch of it.'

'Lor, John!'

'There was nobody in the room,' went on the chief-constable musing, 'and the window was open, so that the thing might have been done easy enough, when he had once got there. But how he ever *did* get there—that 's the question—unless the devil had wings.'

'But the devil *has* wings!' was Mrs Stott's involuntary exclamation; the good lady was so flustered by her late anxiety, that for once she spoke in a hurry.

'You will presently cause me to imagine that I have made a *second* mistake in my life, ma'am—in the having married a fool,' was her husband's stern rejoinder. Then he went on soliloquising. 'The thief, whoever he was, took the same things—rings and pins, and such-like; but he also took a plated inkstand. That looks as if he did not know his trade. And yet, to have effected an entrance just where nobody would have thought such a thing practicable, he must have been most uncommon cunning. Cunning? No, for then I should see the thing as plain as the church tower. It 's downright unaccountable. How is it humanly possible that things can be stole out of a second-floor window without a ladder, or anything to climb up by, unless it 's a water-spout—*that 's* what I want to know. And what 's more, even if he got up, how did he ever get down again?'

Hearing these remarks put aloud, and in an interrogative form, Mrs Stott thought it incumbent upon her to speak, and the more so, as she had ingeniously elaborated a theory of her own to account for the whole mystery.

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'If nobody could have got in from the outside, John, people as was inside could have done it easy enough. It was one of them trapesing servant-girls, who dresses so fine, and is always wanting money to buy gewgaws, you may take my word for it.'

'I don't suppose, ma'am,' returned the chief-constable with supreme contempt, 'that the Bench of Justices would "take your word for it," even if *I* was weak enough to do so—which I am not. The servants are all above suspicion, both at Sir Robert's and Mrs Peewit's—that was the first thing as we looked to of course. But even if it were otherwise, do you suppose that thieving is an epidemic, that it should break out in one household to-day, and in another to-morrow, as this has done. You had better go to sleep, ma'am, and leave me to think the matter out alone.' Which, accordingly, this great man, having drawn his nightcap on, the better to consider in, proceeded to do. 'Two burglaries on two following nights, in a town under his personal superintendence, and nobody yet in custody! He had never imagined that such a blot could befall his 'scutcheon! It was not impossible, in a town so slenderly guarded, that a ladder might have been employed without detection, but, most certainly in neither of these cases had such an instrument been used. The flower-boxes had, in both instances, projected beyond the sill, so that the top of any ladder must have rested on them, and left its mark. There was also no trace of the foot of it in the soil below—or sign of an attempt to remove such trace—although, in the case of Sir Robert's house, there was a flower-bed immediately beneath the window.' Mr Stott, in short, brought all his intelligence to bear upon this problem in vain, and nothing came of it but headache.

Next day, the whole town was in a state of intense alarm. The previous robbery had created much excitement among the inhabitants, but not so much on account of the crime as of the sagacious manner in which their chief-constable had discovered the mode of depredation; but now, not only had a second outrage been committed, but the *fact* of its occurrence while the acrobats were away had proved their innocence of this particular offence (though the magistrates, not knowing how else to account for their seizure, committed them for a month, as rogues and vagabonds), and negatived Mr John Stott's solution of the riddle altogether. The chairman of the Bench, who had been accustomed to suck that official's brains before addressing his audience in the Town-hall, had nothing to say upon the subject except to recommend people to shut their second-floor windows, which, since it was very warm weather, and most of them cultivated flower-boxes, did not give general satisfaction.

The next night, the mayor's own house was robbed in a precisely similar manner.

It was on a Friday, and the local papers which came out the next day, published second and third editions, to describe the details. Besides the burglary, a sort of sacrilege had been committed. The thief had actually possessed himself of the Municipal Mace. This beautiful object, although not intrinsically valuable, had apparently excited his greed, for he had dragged it out of its case as far as the window, and thence let it fall with a report that had alarmed the house, and dinted the ground below. When the door was opened, however (which the servants declined to do, until the 'proper authorities' arrived), the marauder had vanished, and with him this Emblem of Authority, as well as a pair of his Lordship's boot-hooks. There happened to be nothing kept in that room but the mayor's boots and the town mace. But the incident was, of course, as distressing to Mr John Stott as though the regalia had been plundered. He felt that his great reputation was giving way under these repeated shocks; while the rest of the constabulary were of course overwhelmed with disgrace; and the Tory newspaper openly advocated 'stringent measures' and the calling out of the Yeomanry.

'I suppose,' sighed his wife, upon this Saturday afternoon, 'there is no chance of your going with me to-night to the Show? And yet it seems such a pity, after that civil Mr Shaw has sent us these tickets: and you know I never enjoy anything—let it be wild beastesses, or what not—without you, John. How fine they look, with this picture of the lion and the unicorn—though the bill says as the unicorn is dead—with *Shaw's Show*, "patronised by all the crowned heads of Europe," and "admit the bearer," with his autograph in the corner, in red ink! Why, the mayor's own invitations are not more splendid.'

'Don't talk of the mayor, woman, for that makes me think of the Mace,' replied her husband with a shiver. 'I don't wish to see any show but one, and that's the man that stole that mace with a pair of handcuffs on him, or what would be better still, a-standing underneath a bit of wood, with a rope round his neck, and a parson by his side. But there; it's no good wishing. Upon my life, I sometimes wonder if the devil himself is not a-doing on it all, to vex me.'

'Lor, John, you make me creep!'

'Well, I can't make you *fly*, I reckon,' replied Mr Stott surlily; 'and yet that's what this fellow can do, confound him! He's like a bird of the air—a bird of prey.'

'Well, John, do you know I can't help sometimes thinking—only I would not have mentioned it unless *you* had—that, perhaps, after all, it *is* a bird! You know a magpie is a thief by nature.'

'And so you suppose a magpie could have stolen the town mace, do you? Why, you are a greater fool than the newspapers.'

'I forgot the mace, John,' observed Mrs Stott humbly.

'I wish *I* could forget it,' growled the chief-constable. 'You had better put on your bonnet, and take my ticket round the corner to Mrs Jones, who will be glad enough to go with you; only take care Shaw don't keep you both, and put you in a cage for a pair of owls. There, I'm sorry to be so rude, Mrs Stott; but the fact is I feel as I shall go out of my mind unless I tackle this mystery; and I must be left alone to think it out.'

So Mrs Stott, obedient wife as she was, attired herself in gorgeous apparel, and accompanied by her friend and neighbour, the parish doctor's wife, honoured Mr Shaw's menagerie with her presence. It was a sort of fête which that practical student of Natural History (which included some knowledge of mankind) had given to the inhabitants of the town, and everything was on a very splendid scale. The show was lit up by rows of chandeliers, made of circlets of wood and candles, from the latter of

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which, as they of necessity hung very low, the tallow dripped upon the heads of the company; but that was not found out till the next morning. The floor and cages had been thoroughly swept and garnished, and some attempt had even been made, by means of unguents and spices (or, in other words, chlorate of lime), to mitigate the odour that hangs about all establishments devoted to the reception of wild beasts. But it must be confessed that this last refinement was a failure—it was like the jar of *ottar*, which, 'do what you will, the scent of the roses would cling to it still;' only in this case the perfume was the result of a combination; the hyena and the musk-rat, the royal Bengal tiger and the marmoset, each contributed their *soupçon*. In place of the usual showman, Mr Shaw himself, with an elegant white wand, pointed out the various objects of interest, explained their habits, and narrated anecdotes of their extraordinary sagacity. The monkey-cages, as usual, were the chief attraction; their innocent gambols, and the remarkable *penchant* they exhibited for biting each other's tails, were the admiration of the beholders. Mrs Stott, while regarding these parodies upon mankind with a contemplative air, was very nearly—indeed literally within half an inch or so—paying a great penalty for her philosophic abstraction. A ribbed-face baboon of gigantic size, looking not unlike one of Mr Cooper's Indian heroes in his war-paint, made a snatch at her fingers, which, loaded with rings, happened to be ungloved, for she had just been taking refreshments.

'Your charms even vanquish the brute creation, Mrs Stott,' observed the clerk to the magistrates gallantly; 'the enamoured animal seeks your hand.'

'Yes; but, like the rest of the male sex, for what is in it, or on it,' replied Mrs Jones, who had been an heiress in a small way, till her husband removed from her that invidious distinction by spending all her money.

The ribbed-face baboon screamed with disappointment, and swung by his rope head-foremost, and with his eyes shut, for the rest of the evening.

It was 1 A.M., and the chief constable's wife had been in bed since midnight, but she had not yet fallen asleep. She was awaiting the arrival of Mr Stott, in hopes that he might have some good news to tell her, or to comfort him with her sympathy in case he hadn't. It was a beautiful night, and she had left the window open, through which the soft fresh air came gratefully enough after the atmosphere of the menagerie. She would be able to catch the majestic footfall of her lord while it was yet a great way off, and she was listening for it. Presently, through the deep summer stillness, sounded a human step, which, albeit not that she was expecting, seemed familiar to her. It was a step which, although it moved with quickness, had a slight limp, such as she had noticed in the gait of Mr Shaw. Yet he had himself assured her that very evening that he was a man of early habits, and always shut up his house on wheels before twelve o'clock. It was most unlikely that on the night of his fête, of all nights, he should have made an exception to this salutary practice; and yet she knew no other step than his like that step. It stopped beneath the window, and then there was a sliding, scrambling noise, as though something were struggling up the water-pipe that ran down the side of the house, and she felt at once that the mystery of these nightly Thefts was about to be solved.

She was frightened, of course; but she did not shut her eyes and put her head under the bed-clothes, as most ladies would have done under such circumstances; on the contrary, she stared so hard at the window, that the sides seemed to meet, and leave no window at all. Or was it that the space had become obscured by the presence of the marauder? Yes, that was it: and what a marauder!

The face of the intruder she could not catch; but she saw that he was quite black, very inadequately attired, and provided with a long tail. That late imprudent reply of hers to her husband, 'But the devil *has* wings,' came into her mind with terrible emphasis. No wonder that even the chief-constable's vigilance had failed to——

Ah, that face! There was no mistaking those very strikingly marked features! It was, without doubt, her late admirer, the ribbed-face baboon; and whether from motives of delicacy or fear, Mrs Stott did dive under the bed-clothes then, with only her nose left out to breathe through, like the elephant when under water, as Mr Shaw had instructively informed her not three hours ago.

She could hear a little, however, as well as breathe; and she distinctly caught the quiet chuckle of her visitor, and the chink of her rings as he swept them off the dressing-table with his hairy paws. Presently, there was a shrill whistle from below, and the chuckling ceased; and then came the sliding scrambling noise again. The ribbed-face baboon had put the rings in his mouth—having no pocket—and slid down the water-spout to his master with the spoil.

'John,' cried Mrs Stott, when the chief-constable put in his long-wished-for appearance, and as soon as he had got inside the door, 'I've found it all out.'

'Pshaw!' said her husband contemptuously.

'Lor,' cried she, 'well, you *are* a wonder! How ever did *you* find out it was Mr Shaw and his ribbed-face baboon?'

'Never you mind, ma'am,' rejoined Mr Stott with his old confident air; 'I *have* found it out. And now let me hear how far your testimony goes in corroboration of my views.'

The next day, 'from information received,' as he darkly hinted, the chief-constable apprehended the keeper of the menagerie, and searched his house on wheels with such effect that all the stolen property was recovered. Mr Shaw, it appeared, had trained the ribbed-face baboon to climb up water-spouts and sweep from dressing-tables all articles that glittered, which accounted for his taking the plated inkstand and the municipal mace. If his education had been suffered to progress, he would doubtless in time have been taught to carry off bank-notes and railway dividends. But, thanks to Mrs Stott, his occupation was henceforth gone. The chief-constable, however, got all the credit for the discovery, and was held by everybody, including his wife, in higher estimation for sagacity than ever. It was true that he had been at fault at first, and in more than one instance; but then, as he himself observed: 'I may still say as no man ever took me in twice—for this was not a Man, but a Hape.'

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The above curious incident happened at Shrewsbury in 1834, and was without doubt the circumstance on which Edgar Poe founded his famous story of *The Murder in the Rue Morgue.*

FRANCOIS RABELAIS.

When a great revolution sweeps away the fetters of tyranny, though there may be some men who will devote their new-found liberty and unchained energies to the foundation of a new government on juster bases, there will always be many more who take advantage of their freedom from control to make a general carnival. So it was in the beginning of the sixteenth century, when the great revolution, called the Renaissance, cleared the world of thought of the empty dogmatism of the priests, and the arid formulas of the schoolmen. There were men who only shook off their old bonds, to bind themselves anew as voluntary servants of the great causes of art, religion, or philosophy. But others were set free to drift, without anchor and without object, on the ocean of life. An age of exalted positive thought is always also an age of scepticism.

Scepticism may influence a noble mind in three ways. Of these—as one of his critics has said—Shakspeare has given us instances in the characters severally of Hamlet, Iago, and Falstaff. One kind of men it will drive into profound, but sorrowful, speculations on the nature of God and the world, life and death—speculations full of interest and value to mankind, but bringing to the thinker himself little else than sadness and despair. 'We see him quite shut out from hope: looking not into the golden orient, but vaguely all round into a dim copper firmament, pregnant with earthquake and tornado. . . . . A feeble unit in the middle of a threatening infinitude, seeming to have nothing given him but eyes, whereby to discern his own wretchedness.' So Carlyle of his famous Professor. Byron, Swift, Rousseau, and Shelley give us a similar account of themselves. The second type becomes cynical, selfish, intriguing. Of this there are examples sufficient in the Italian statesmen, the cardinals and the popes, of this Renaissance period. Machiavelli, whose name has become proverbial, is, perhaps, really less open to such charges than many of his contemporaries. But it is the third type that is at present the most interesting to us. In every great period of history we shall find a Falstaff as well as a Hamlet, the laughing philosopher, to throw the weeping philosopher into stronger relief; but nowhere do we see the ideal Falstaff more completely realised than in Rabelais—no better instance is there of a giant intellect, set free from bondage, plunging madly into the wildest and most riotous carnival of thought, full of the grotesque, the unclean, and the sublime, and, under every mask, full of laughter. He is said to have died with a loud laugh upon his lips, and as was his death, so was his life. The personal friend of the greatest men of his time, he was continually making them the objects of his practical jokes. Human life, of whose highest problems he had a keen perception, seemed to him the broadest of farces. *Rire est le propre de l'homme,* he says to his readers at the beginning of the *Life of Gargantua,* and he repeats his text again and again.

There are few important writers about whom there are so many different opinions. According to some critics, there are in Rabelais the germs of all modern thought. Others call him a mere drunken buffoon, whose reputation is based chiefly on his obscurity. As in all controversies, there is exaggeration on both sides. Rabelais calls himself 'the oracle of Goddess Bottle;' he 'emptied his bottle before he wrote, while he was writing, and after he had written;' and much that he has written seems to be little more than the natural outpourings of such inspiration. But this veil of buffoonery was to a great extent assumed, for the sake of safety in the age of the burning of heretics; and the same may be said of his obscurity. Where the buffoonery is most outrageous, or the obscurity deepest, a gleam of the brightest light is sure to dart out unexpectedly from the shadows. Yet, little credit can be given to the elaborate interpretations of his commentators, who, probably, like the commentators of Homer and Aristotle summoned before Gulliver in the island of Glubbdubdrib, keep in the most distant quarters from their principal, in the lower world, through a consciousness of shame and guilt, because they have so horribly misrepresented their author to posterity. These attempt to make a consistent whole of a work which was published in several parts, at different times in the life of Rabelais, and with very different objects. In the prologue to the first book, he certainly leads us to believe—what we must find out for ourselves before we have made much progress—that there is throughout an under-current of meaning. But it is equally certain that in *La Vie de Gargantua et de Pantagruel,* we have no allegorised version of any particular period of history. Historical events, no doubt, are repeatedly referred to; but the satire extends beyond them—it is universal.

The passage in the prologue just referred to is loosely paraphrased as follows: 'Alcibiades, in the dialogue of Plato called the Banquet, praises his master Socrates, without dispute the prince of philosophers, and, among other words, says that he is like a Silène. Silènes were little jars, like those we see now-a-days in apothecaries' shops, painted outside with merry and fantastic figures, harpies, satyrs, horned hares, winged goats, stags in harness, and the like—fanciful mimicries moving the world to laughter, like Silenus, the master of good Bacchus; but within were stored rare drugs, as ambergris, spice, musk, civet, and jewels, and other precious things. Such, said he, is Socrates, for, look at him outside, and judge by his exterior, and you wouldn't give a slice of onion for him, so ugly is his figure, and so ridiculous his general appearance—a pointed nose, the look of a bull, the face of a fool, the manners of a simpleton, the dress of a chaw-bacon, the fortune of a beggar, unlucky in love, incapable in all affairs of state, always laughing, always drinking more than any one else

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in the world, always making a fool of himself, always hiding his divine philosophy. But open this jar, and you will find within a drug that was sent from heaven, and is without price, a width of soul more than human, wonderful virtues, invincible courage, unequalled sobriety, steady content, perfect self-possession, incredible contempt for all the prizes for which mankind sit up by night, rush about by day, make voyages, and fight battles.' In the same way, he continues, when you read the merry titles which I put upon my books, such as "Gargantua," "Pantagruel," or "The Dignity of Breeches," you must not decide at once that there is nothing inside but quips and follies, and merry tales. It is not right so lightly to pass judgment on the works of men, for 'tis a saying of your own that the cowl does not make the monk. You should therefore open the book, and weigh with all care what meaning lies therein, and you will find that the drug contained within is of a value quite other than the promise of the jar.'

In this description of Socrates, Rabelais gives us his own character as much as that of his book. In personal appearance, he has been compared to Silenus: throughout his life, he was always laughing, always drinking, always making a fool of himself; but within was hidden—in his case, almost as much as in the case of Socrates—a divine philosophy, a width of soul more than human. He was introduced by the Cardinal du Bellay, one of the most distinguished politicians of the time, to the guests at dinner in the latter's house as 'le plus gentil esprit et le plus docte personage de la république des lettres.'

François Rabelais was born at Chinon in Touraine, in or shortly after the year 1483. His father was innkeeper* at the sign of the *Lamprey*, and also possessed a vineyard called La Devinière, a few miles from the village. Here was produced the white wine of Pineau, spoken of more than once with praise by the innkeeper's son. And it was in this vineyard—a meet birthplace for the 'oracle of Goddess Bottle,' that Rabelais was born. The lovely scenery of his birthplace made a deep impression upon him; his writings are full of references to the neighbourhood, especially to Sevillé and its abbey of Benedictines. The monks began his education. He can scarcely have learned much from them. If the picture in the first book of his work is at all faithful, they were more devoted to the bottle than to books; but he seems to remember them with affection. Rabelais was as yet a child, and ignorant, and could love the child-like simplicity of these country monks, without being aware of their ignorance.

He was soon, however, to have experience of the ignorance and barbarous pedantry which distinguished the monastic orders. In 1511, he became a priest himself in the Franciscan convent of Fontenay le Comte. Some years had been spent, on leaving Sevillé, at the university of Angers. Of what passed during that time we know little. Rabelais was beginning to know something of the great outside world. The three brothers, Du Bellay, —two of whom afterwards became cardinals, and the other an illustrious soldier—here became his friends, as they continued to be throughout his life. And now he, who was to be one of the most formidable enemies of the church that the world has seen, has taken priest's orders—as did Swift, and Sterne, and Cervantes (nearly) after him. And he who tells us, 'je cuide que soie descendu de quelque riche roi, ou prince, au temps jadis: car onques ne vistes hommes qui eust plus affection estre roi et riche que moi,' has bound himself with a vow to perpetual poverty. His time, however, was not ill spent: he devoted himself to the study of the Greek language, which became as familiar to him as his mother-tongue; and by application to the great works of ancient literature, he laid the foundations of his wonderful style. The jealousy of the monks was roused by the superior learning of Rabelais, which also opened his eyes to their ignorance and bigotry. They said that the language of Homer was barbarous. His anger, as usual, vented itself in ridicule. A feud arose. The monks were made the victims of a hundred practical jokes. Rabelais was sentenced to imprisonment for life in the convent prison, and was only released by the forcible entry, in a body, of his friends.

We have now reached the year 1524. In 1516, Zwinglius had given voice to the indignation of the people at the tyranny of the Church in Switzerland. Two years after, a more eloquent voice was heard at Wittenberg, denouncing the same abuses; and the utterances of Luther and his fellow-reformers were received by the people with increasing interest and belief, and every day produced a more intense hatred and fear among the monks and clergy. The movement had spread into France, and was there met by the orthodox with their wonted weapons, the rack and the stake.

Rabelais could scarcely be called a reformer; yet, with many points of difference, there were some points of likeness between him and the reformers. He, as well as they, had set himself free from the restraints of effete medieval thought. He was not likely, it is true, to be of much service in building up new dogmas on the ruins of the old. But the time for building had not yet arrived: the preaching of the reformers was as yet only destructive; many of them therefore hailed him with eagerness as a kindred spirit. His learning and the general tendencies of his genius were known, and *Gargantua and Pantagruel* had not yet been written to shew that his mind was uncontrolled and uncontrollable by any kind of dogma. If anything of his epicureanism was known, it must be remembered that there was a much greater latitude for the expression of epicureanism in that age than this—that the good Luther himself could say with approval: 'If you don't love wine, women, and music, you will always be a fool'—a dictum worthy even of the Rabelæsian philosophy. If, then, Rabelais could be mistaken for a reformer by the great leaders of the Reformation (he was for some time the friend of Calvin), how much more likely was it that such a mistake would be made by the half-educated monks, whose very dulness made them keener to smell out heresy?

Rabelais saw his danger. Fortunately, he had friends among the high dignitaries of the church, many of whom favoured the new cause. A bull was obtained from Clement VII., allowing him to quit the Franciscan order, and cancelling his vow of poverty. He retired into the service of Godefrey

* According to some authorities, the father of Rabelais was an apothecary.

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d'Estissac, Bishop of Maillezais, whose private secretary he continued to be for some time. The bishop, who was a great patron of literary men, remained the friend of Rabelais long after the latter had left him, corresponding with him, and filling his purse when it was empty, which was the case very often.

We next find him parish priest of Sonday, on the appointment of the brothers Du Bellay. He had studied Hippocrates and Galen with great care, and he now began to put his knowledge of medicine into practice. Imagine the laughing philosopher on his mule, riding about from cottage to cottage in his parish, his basket of herbs under his arm, looking now more than ever like Silenus. This period is filled by his biographers with innumerable stories, more or less mythical, but characteristic. But we must pass them by, and follow Rabelais to Montpellier, where he began his studies in the School of Medicine about the year 1530.

Like all other branches of knowledge, the science of medicine had made rapid progress in the last few years. In 1526, Paracelsus had created a great sensation at the beginning of his professorship of physic and surgery at the university of Basel, by burning publicly in the amphitheatre the works of Avicenna and Galen, assuring his auditors that the latchets of his shoes were more instructed than those two physicians. His frantic claims to be regarded as the legitimate monarch of medicine were by most men laughed to scorn, and he himself was compelled to take flight from Basel. But it was true that the old science was passing away, and a new science was about to arise, a science of which Rabelais was to be one of the most illustrious founders.

Rabelais, however, did not cast aside the old authorities. His lectures on Hippocrates and Galen brought crowds to hear him. Those writers reappeared in new editions, under his supervision; and he rapidly made himself a name among the doctors by his commentaries upon them. But he did not allow himself to be guided entirely by the experience of others. One day he dissected the body of a criminal who had been hanged the evening before, and lectured upon its internal structure.

While he was engaged in such pursuits, he seems also to have been occupied with another kind of dissection, and one in which he was still more successful. His fame as a dissector of the human body has passed away; but of the art of dissecting the human mind he remains to this day an acknowledged master. The first edition of the *Life of Gargantua* appeared in 1532. The title is: 'The great and inestimable Chronicles of the great and enormous Giant Gargantua, containing his Genealogy, the Size and Strength of his Body, as well as the marvellous Feats of Arms that he did for King Artus, as you shall see hereafter.' His fame as a physician was at once eclipsed by this 'livre seigneurial,' which, he tells us, 'was entirely written in that part of his time which he set apart for his bodily refection—that is to say, for his eating and drinking.' His printers said that they had sold more copies of it in two months than of Bibles in nine years. Like *Don Quixote*, it was intended as a satire on the extravagant tales of knight-errantry which constituted the popular reading of the age.

Satire, more than any other kind of art, seems to be the child of mature genius. Rabelais was now nearly fifty years old. Cervantes was fifty-eight when he gave *Don Quixote* to the world; Swift was sixty at the time of the publication of *Gulliver's Travels*. The poet or the painter may confine himself to a narrow field of observation, and yet be successful, their work being too minute to cover a very wide surface. But the satirist must range through the whole world of thought and life: he, too, must study the minute details, but only with a view to the whole, which he must represent with a few bold sweeping lines, not one of which but must suggest a hundred details. To accomplish this end he must spend years in study, not only of books, but of men. The poet and the painter have to deal with truth, of which they gain knowledge by flashes of inspiration, rather than by watchful experience. But the satirist, though without some such inspiration he is nothing, requires a vast experience of the foibles and vices of society, and the pedantries and extravagances of philosophy, in order to write his comedy of human life, and make it acceptable to mankind.

Shortly after the *Life of Gargantua*, appeared, with a new edition of the same work, 'newly augmented and corrected by Maistre Jean Lunel, Docteur en Théologie,' the 'Pantagruéline Pronostication certaine, véritable et infallible, pour l'an MDXXXIII., novellement composée au Profit et Advisement des Gens estourdis et Musars de Nature, par Maistre Alcofribas, architrinclin dudit Pantagruel (Petit in-8° de 8 feuilles, sans lieu ni date).' Another mock-astrological work was published about the same time—to this Rabelais prefixed his own name, 'François Rabelais, Docteur en Médecine et Professeur en Astrologie.'

As yet he had made no systematic attack on theology or the church; but there is sufficient bitterness in the incidental references which he has made to them. Here is one of these—a passage which, however, may have been inserted in a later edition. Rabelais has just described the birth of Gargantua—how he made a summersault, and came forth from the left ear of his mother. 'This done, he did not cry like other children: "Mie, mie, mie!" but called out with a loud voice: "Drink, drink, drink!" as if he were inviting all the world to come and drink. . . . . I doubt not that you will disbelieve this assuredly strange manner of nativity. If you do not believe it, I don't care; but a good man, a man of common-sense, believes everything he is told or finds written down. Saith not Solomon, Proverbiorum xiv., Innocens credit omni verbo, &c.; and again St Paul, prim. Corinthior. xiii., Charitas omnia credit? Why don't you believe it? Because, you say, it is without probability. I say to you, this is the very reason why you should believe it with a perfect faith; for the Sorbonnists say that faith is the argument of things that have no probability.' And so on. Such passages, and his known opinions, were sufficient to excite the suspicions of the theologians, but the storm of universal theological indignation did not yet burst upon Rabelais.

We next find Rabelais at Rome, in the train of Cardinal Jean du Bellay. The latter had returned from his embassy to Henry VIII., in which, according to some authorities, he was accompanied by Rabelais, in the capacity of family doctor and

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private secretary. This visit of Rabelais to England—which, however, does not rest on very strong evidence—took place before he began his medical studies at Montpellier. The cardinal was now at Rome, in order, if possible, to settle the difficulties between the pope and Henry VIII. This time it is certain that Rabelais was with him. We have a collection of letters, dated from Rome, from him to his old friend and master, the Bishop of Maillezais. They are very interesting, as they are full of his opinions on the political position of Europe, given in his own rich and lucid style, and making one of his biographers almost regret that he had devoted his genius to satire instead of actual history. One characteristic runs throughout: like Socrates, Rabelais was always 'pauvre de fortune:' in almost all the letters there is a request for more money with all speed. Rabelais was far from being wise as the children of this generation are wise. His restless spirit would not suffer him to stay many years in one place, however lucrative it might be. And the same uncontrollable energy of thought would not allow him to dissimulate his opinions, though the expression of them might be dangerous. He could not restrain his unquenchable love of pleasure and merriment. His money was spent as fast as he received it; and he made royalty itself, even the pope, objects of his practical jokes. But jokes were seldom the cause of great enmity or bitterness. There was something in his manner—something of gentleness and magnanimity beneath the wild merriment of his conduct—that made all, except rough bigots and narrow pedants, kindly disposed towards him. And there was something in that age, a childlike love of mirth and extravagance, which inclined all vigorous minds to this lord of frolic and misrule. Men were as yet ardent in their likes and dislikes. The fervent admiration the child feels for all that is free, and beautiful, and noble, had not yet given place to the cold cynicism of the maturer eighteenth century. The follies of Rabelais were regarded as a part of the wonderful vivacity of his intellect, while a later age had neither a like admiration for the genius of Steele or Fielding nor pardon for their follies.

The rest of the life of Rabelais was occupied chiefly with his great work. About 1534–35, he returned to France, and published a new edition of *Gargantua*, in much the same condition as we now possess it. The title this time was: 'La Vie inestimable du grand Gargantua, Père de Pantagruel, jadis compousée par l'Abstracteur de Quintessence; livre plein de Pantagruélisme (Lyon, Fr. Juste, 1535, in-16 de 102 f. goth).' The first part of *Pantagruel* appeared about the same time. The storm then began to burst. The writings of Rabelais were received by the educated with unbounded enthusiasm, while the ignorant began to view them with ever increasing hatred; and not only the ignorant monks and priests, but the Aristotelians and Platonists of the university, and the leaders of the Reformation, joined in the outcry against them. The friendship between Rabelais and Calvin came to an end, and was followed by a mutual declaration of war. When the former went back to Rome in 1536, it was thought necessary by his friends to obtain for him a special bull of absolution from Pope Paul III., which also appointed him prebend of the Benedictine Abbey of St Maur.

In 1537 he left Rome, and, having taken his doctor's degree in medicine at Montpellier on his way, he is again at Paris. For the next nine years he is engaged in his profession of physician at Paris, and perhaps partly in the Abbey of St Maur. He is not, however, neglecting *Pantagruel*, a continuation of which appeared in 1546. It is dedicated to the Queen of Navarre. The monks, the pedants, and the reformers became more indignant and violent than ever. There are two reasons for this increase in the wrath of the reformers: the satire of Rabelais had become much more bitter; and the reformers were now much more decided in their aims. The parties in the church were now more clearly defined. The reformers had gained strength, and were no longer in need of powerful though dangerous alliances with great men, simply because they were opposed to the abuses of Rome. They looked for and found a useful assistant in such men as Rabelais, so long as their policy was merely destructive; but when they began to construct anew, they found that he was as ready to pull down the new as the old. Henry Estienne said of him: 'Though Rabelais seems to be on our side, yet he is continually throwing stones into our garden.' Most of the reformers handled his name much more roughly. The monks and pedants had always been his enemies. And now the University of Paris (the 'Sorbonnistes' of a passage already quoted) petitioned King Francis to condemn the scurrility and heresy of the works of Rabelais. Rabelais sent a counter-petition, very characteristic of its author, to the effect that, 'Whereas certain printers and publishers have introduced matter into the writings of Master Frahçois Rabelais which has been the cause of much public discontent, and also of much detriment to the author's meaning, the said author begs that those printers and publishers shall be reprimanded, and permission shall be given to him to continue his work.' The king's reply was entirely in favour of Rabelais. 'He had,' he said, 'a horror of all such serpent-eaters (*mangeur de serpents*) as found the charge of mortal heresy on the fact that somewhere an *n* is put for an *m*, through the fault and carelessness of the printers.'

Francis I. died in 1547. He had been throughout the friend of Rabelais, as well as of all who were distinguished in literature and art. Leonardo da Vinci died in his arms; Erasmus received from him the offer of the government of his new royal college. With all his faults—and they were many—we cannot but love this king of France. Who does not remember what Andrea del Sarto says of him in Mr Browning's poem?

> That Francis, that first time,
> And that long festal day at Fontainebleau!
> I surely then could sometimes leave the ground,
> Put on the glory, Rafael's daily wear,
> In that humane great monarch's golden look—
> One finger in his beard or twisted curl
> Over his mouth's good mark that made the smile,
> One arm about my shoulder, round my neck,
> The jingle of his gold chain in my ear,
> I painting proudly with his breath on me,
> All his court round him, seeing with his eyes,
> Such frank French eyes!

Henry II., who succeeded Francis, extended the same indulgence to Rabelais, who, after a third short visit to Rome, was appointed curé of Meudon. This appointment he owed to his friend and protector, Cardinal Jean du Bellay, now Bishop of

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Paris. The enemies of Rabelais became still more furious. Peter Ramus, the celebrated reviver of the Platonist philosophy, made a violent attack upon him; but it was like handling a scorpion to use words as weapons against Rabelais. The abuse of Ramus has been forgotten; but it will never be forgotten that in the fourth book of *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, which was published at this time (1550 A.D.), there is a certain 'poor Rameau who finds that he is destined to be an object for spitting upon to the remotest posterity.'

The literary career of Rabelais, so far as it had to do with his contemporaries, is now at an end. The fifth book of *Gargantua and Pantagruel* was not published until after his death.

In 1553, at the age of seventy, he died. The last few years had been spent in his parish of Meudon, in quiet charity. He had never been ascetic in his life, and he did not become so now, but liberally ministered to the bodily as well as the spiritual wants of his parishioners—beloved by all. Meudon, while he was there, was a favourite resort for Parisians on Sunday. They used to say, and the saying was still repeated as a proverb a century after: 'Let us go to Meudon: there we shall see the castle, and the caverns, and curé, who is, of all men in the world, the most pleasant to look on, and the most good-humoured, and who gives his friends and all good people the best reception and the best discourse.'

When at last death was approaching, a page came to his bedside with inquiries about his health from the Cardinal de Chatillon. 'Dis à monseigneur,' he said, 'en quelle galante humeur tu me vois; *je vais quérir un grand peut-être.* Il est au nid de la pie; dis lui qu'il s'y tienne, et, pour *toi*, tu ne seras jamais qu'un fou.' When the last moment came, he said, with a burst of laughter: 'Draw the curtain; the farce is played.'

Of the great work of Rabelais there is not space for more than a few words. The object of the earlier part is to satirise the extravagant romances with which the age abounded, and of which we find a very copious list in the first book of *Don Quixote*. As the narrative proceeds, the language becomes more caustic, and bears more distinct reference to the questions of the time. We miss, too, as Hallam says, the luxuriant merriment of the beginning. In form, the satire follows the model of Lucian, but its spirit flows rather from the inspiration of Aristophanes. The language of Rabelais is peculiarly rich and eloquent. The study of it is most interesting, as it is the chief fountain from which modern French draws its characteristics. In places it is very obscure, but the difficulties have been much exaggerated. The English translation of Sir Thomas Urquhart, which is generally considered to be a masterpiece among translations, contains all the difficulties of the original. The *Contes Drolatiques* of Balzac, avowedly imitations, in style and language, of *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, are more difficult.

In a certain sense, Rabelais is the father of all modern satire. His influence is visibly present in *Don Quixote*, the plays of Molière, in the works of Sterne, Thackeray, Voltaire, and even of Charles Kingsley. But a larger portion of his spirit descended upon Swift than upon any other. Episodes in *Gulliver's Travels* are drawn directly from Rabelais, though the individuality of Swift has made them his own. The *Tale of a Tub* (though now generally attributed to Dr Arbuthnot) is evidently an imitation throughout; Hallam says that it is the best imitation. But there was an immense difference between the two men. Rabelais enjoyed life, laughed always and at all things: Swift's life was spent in hatred of men and gods, and his laughter was even greater torture to himself than to the objects of his hatred.

ABOARD THE SEA-MEW.

IN TWENTY-TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER XIII.

THAT trap took just as I expected. Brassey leaped up like a wounded tiger, and, cutlash in hand, Van bounded down the staire, when the two men were locked in a sharp tussle in an instant, leaving the way clear for me to slip up, gain the mizzen shrouds, and make my way up into the top, where I laid my treasures; went hand-over-hand by the stay, and got down to the deck again in the dark by the main shrouds, without being seen, and joined the party that was being collected by the noise and shouting in the cabin.

'Curse you; bring a lantern. Help here, or he 'll end me,' roared Van in a smothered voice; but not a man dared go down till I offered, and, making-believe to be afraid to venture without a cutlash, one of the chaps handed me one; and with the lantern in my other hand, I went cautiously down, chuckling to myself to find that Van and Brassey had been mauling one another awfully, and if it had not been for my coming, there 'd no doubt have been an end of one of the scoundrels; for, woke up wild and savage from a drunken sleep, Brassey had attacked Van fiercely, and when I got to them, had him down and half-throttled.

There wasn't a man that didn't grin as Van cursed and raged at Brassey for a drunken fool, starting up and knocking the lamp over; while Brassey swore that Van struck him first, shewing his bleeding head as a witness; but after such an up-and-down fight as they had had in the dark, no one took much notice of what he said, every one, themselves included, taking it for a false alarm; and we all separated, leaving Van and Brassey sore and savage as could be.

Knowing how frightened some of the prisoners would be, I says out loud to one of the chaps as we passed the broken panes: 'Don't s'pose the captain thought there was so much muscle in old Brass.'

'Hold your tongue,' says the other; 'he 'll hear you;' and then we both laughed and walked forward, me wishing the while that those below could have known of my luck, but satisfied that they would feel that there was nothing particular the matter.

Feeling pretty sure that Van would not be on deck again that night, I waited about three hours all in a tremble, as I lay in my hammock, for fear I should go to sleep, and forget to fetch the weapons; and even then, spite of all my pains, lying there and trying to keep awake, if I did not drop off, and dream that they were missed from the cabin, and that Van was going to shoot Mr Ward for stealing them. Then I awoke with a start, and it seemed to me that I had been asleep for hours and hours, and I slipped out of my hammock to find, from the men talking on deck,

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that I couldn't have been more than five minutes. So I crept down again and into my hammock, and once more I dropped off, do all I would to stop it, and this time I dreamed that the wind had changed, and all hands had been piped to shorten sail, when they came across the arms in the top. Then I awoke again with a start, to find that I could hear the buzzing of voices still upon the deck. But I wouldn't risk it any more, though I feel sure I shouldn't have slept above half an hour at a stretch; and sitting down by my hammock-head, I took a bit of baccy, and sat listening to old Sam snoring, till it seemed as if it would never grow late enough to go. At last, I felt that if I meant to act, it must be at once, or there would perhaps be a change in the watch, and I might lose my chance; so I crept up on deck, taking with me a handful of lashing; and as soon as I felt the breeze, I knew that I was not a minute too soon, for with a good mate or captain, orders would have been given directly to shorten sail.

The watch were well forward, and, as usual, the one at the wheel was half asleep, or, being now much lighter, he must have seen me going up or coming down from the mizzen-top where I had left the arms; but no; I got them safe down, and then crawling like a cat along the deck, I threaded the lanyard I had through the trigger-guards of the pistols, and lowered them one at a time, all six, and was just drawing the lanyard back after loosing one end, when I felt a warm hand from below grasp mine, and on drawing it away I was able to pass the six cutlashes down one after the other, to have them taken from my hand.

I'd hardly done before I heard a step on the deck behind me, and dropping flat down, I gave a half-roll over, so that I lay close under the combing, but not daring to move, for it was the watch coming to the man at the wheel.

CHAPTER XIV.

Every morning reg'lar, Van used to take two of the chaps down below to Mr Ward, and he used to doctor their wounds for them, as I used to hear, for, seeing that they never felt disposed to trust me near the prisoners, I used to hang away, and never attempt to go near; but I kept on sending a line now and then by the little bird, telling them that I was making my plans, and that they were to wait a bit. I used to tell them too to feed the linnet, and it got to be so at last that if I wanted it to take a message, all I had to do was to take away its seed and water over-night, and let it loose at daybreak, and it would go as straight as possible to the broken skylight, flit down, and come back in about ten minutes.

I know it must have been a disappointment often to them below; but then I daren't often be sending notes, for fear of being noticed. Then, too, I was puzzled a deal about things; I wanted to know what Van meant by keeping his five prisoners, and what I ought to do for the best. Try and seize a boat, and get them aboard, or to get the upper hand when there was only the watch on deck.

This last seemed the most likely way, for going afloat in an open boat, with the chance of being picked up, is queer work, and the sort of thing that, when a man has tried once, he is well satisfied not to try again. So, being, as it were, head-man, I settled that we'd seize the ship; and after talking it over, the first chance I had, with Sam and Bill Smith, they quite agreed, thinking about salvage, you see; and then I began to reckon up the stuff I'd got to work with.

To begin with, there was Mr Ward, who was as good as two, so I put him down in my own mind two.

Then going on with my best men—there was Sam, who was also good for two, if he was only put in the right way.

Then Bill Smith, who hadn't quite got his strength again, so I put him at one and a half.

Next came Tomtit, who was right enough, no doubt, in his way, only being so long and wankle,* I couldn't help thinking he'd be like a knife I used to have—out and out bit of stuff, but weak in the spring; and just when you were going to use it for something particular, it would shut up, or else double backwards. That's just what I expected Tomtit would do—double up somewhere, so I dursn't only put him down at half a one

Then there was the fat passenger who cried. He shewed fight a bit in the scrimmage, but I hadn't much faith in him; there was too much water in him for strength, so I dursn't put him down neither for more than half. While as for Mr Bell, poor chap, and his sister, they were worse than naughts, being like in one's way. So you see that altogether I had to depend on two and two was four, and one and a half was five and a half, and a half made six, and another half, which I put to balance the two naughts to the bad, making, all told, what I reckoned as six, and myself thrown into the bargain.

And now came the question: How was we good men and true to get the better of seventeen of they? I turned it over all sorts of ways. Once I thought I'd get the doctor to p'ison the lot, only it seemed so uncommon like, even if the others were mutineers and pirates, while most likely they wouldn't have taken the p'ison if we'd wanted them to. P'ison 'em with rum, so that they couldn't move, might be managed, perhaps, with some of 'em, if the stuff was laid in their way; and that might answer if a better plan couldn't be thought of. To go right at them without a stratagem would have been, of course, madness, though Sam Brown was for that when I talked to him, saying, thinking wasn't no use, and all we had to do was to get first fire at 'em twice, and shoot twelve, when we could polish off the other five easy. Now, that sounded all very nice, but I was afraid it wouldn't work, so I give it up, and asked Bill Smith his opinion, but he said he hadn't none.

I'd have given something to have had a long palaver with Mr Ward, for I think we might have knocked up something between us that would have held water; but a talk with him being out of the question, I had to think it out myself; and all I could come at was, that the best thing would be to leave a bottle or two of rum where the watch could find it; and then, if we could shut down the hatches on the others, we might do some good. That seemed the simplest thing I could get hold of, for it looked to me as if the more one tried to work out something fresh, the more one couldn't.

I watched my chance, and wrote out all my plan, and started it to Mr Ward; and this time, I

* Wankle (Lincolnshire), weak, sickly.

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contrived, when no one was looking, to drop my letter down the skylight, telling him that he was to send me an answer by the bird, writ big, so as I shouldn't make no mistakes in the reading of it. Next morning, as soon as I was on deck, I found that I was too late, for Van and a couple of the chaps were hunting the linnet about, while, as it flitted from side to side of the deck, you could see a bit of white paper tied under its wing, and it must have been that as set them on after it.

I knew well enough that if the bird was caught, it would be all over with my scheme, and p'raps with me; so I went at it with the others, trying to catch the little thing, contriving, though, to frighten it all I could, so that it flew up into the rigging, and being nearest at the time, I followed it out on to the main-yard.

'Be careful, Roberts,' says Van, as I went cautiously out till I was right over the water, the linnet going right off to the end; but I got my feet in the stirrups and followed on, expecting to see it flit off to another part of the rigging. I'd made up my mind what to do if I could get at it; for, though I liked the pretty little thing, there was a wonderful deal depending on whether it was caught or not, while all the time I was abusing myself for not being on deck sooner. I'd let the bird's cage be open the night before, ready for it to get out, and now it was plain that it had been down to the cabin, and Mr Ward had sent me an answer.

But it was no use to grumble; there was the bird before me, and if it would only keep still for another half-minute, I thought I saw my way clear. Plenty were now watching me from below; and fortunately for me, instead of flitting off, the little bird crouched down upon the yard-arm, so that, creeping nearer and nearer, I got quite within reach, when, making a dash as it were to catch it, I knocked the poor little thing stunned into the sea, making a sham slip at the same time, and hanging by my hands.

'Yah-h-h! you clumsy lubber!' roared Van; and then to one or two about him: 'Lower the dingy, and pick up that bird.'

'Lost, after all,' I growled to myself; but we were going pretty fast through the water; and by the time we had heaved to, and let down the boat, the little thing was out of sight, and I felt that for this time we were safe.

CHAPTER XV.

Our every-day life on board the *Sea-mew* had not much in it to talk about. Of course the ship was badly handled, and there was a deal of drunkenness aboard, though hardly ever before night. In the daytime, they just did what little making or shortening sail there was, and then smoked, and ate, and drank just as they liked. After the first few days, they had the fat passenger up, and made him cook, and hang me if one day I didn't see him crying into the soup he was making! But I always kept at a distance, never speaking to him, only kept watching my chance. From what the others said, I learned that Mr Bell was only just alive; while some of them used to talk about his poor sister in a way that made me set to work more than ever to get my plans right.

I got to think at last that if I waited much longer, I should never do anything; so one day, when I had a chance, I pitched a bullet down into the cabin, wrapped in a piece of paper, and on that piece of paper was written 'To-night!'

'Now, if he's the man I take him for, all them pistols will be loaded, and the cutlashes ready for action,' I says to myself; and leaving that to Mr Ward for his part, I warned Sam and Bill, and then set to do mine.

I'd been saving up on purpose; and as soon as it was dark that night, and just before they set the watch, I put two good big bottles of rum where I thought they would find them, and then waited to see.

All things turned out just as I could have wished, for going by an hour after, I could tell from the chatter going on that the three chaps were at the rum, which they supposed to have been left by mistake by those who had the watch the night before. Some of the chaps were carousing in the fore-cuddy, where they could easily be boxed up, and the others were with Van and Brassey, all card-playing in the skipper's cabin.

It seemed almost a hopeless case, now it was come to the point, but I felt that making up one's mind was half the battle, and I was up now, and meant to do or die.

Bill and Sam were on deck, and knew their parts well enough; Bill to manage the chap at the wheel, Sam to shut up the party in the fore-cuddy; I meaning to secure the cabin hatch; and then I thought if that was done, we should have time to settle and lash the watch, who ought to be half-drunk, leaving our hands free to keep those quiet who would be trying to get out of the cabin.

Now my plan was to get Mr Ward up through the hole I made in my fall, if I could get the fellow away who was stationed there, and now it was that I trusted to the rum, for before now Van had been content to have a chap at the cabin door, leaving the watch to make sure the prisoners did not get on deck.

I was about right, for we three had not been watching long under the bulwarks before one of the watch calls out 'Harry!' and the sentry fellow goes to where they were busy with the rum. The next moment I was at the broken skylight, and whispered down the one word 'Tools,' for I was afraid them playing in the other cabin might hear.

Mr Ward was ready, and next minute I was under the bulwark again with the arms the doctor had passed up, and we three had each a pistol in our belts, and a cutlash in our hands before the sentry chap came back.

The night was not so dark as I could have wished, but it was dark enough for us, and, as I expected, the sentry couldn't resist the smell of that rum, and in a very few minutes he was along with the others again, and did not seem disposed to come back. So now seeming to be my time, I said the word: Sam crept off one way, Bill the other, with their orders that there was to be no bloodshed only as a last resource, and I went to the skylight, keeping the side nearest to the cabin hatch, when I turned cold all over, for I heard Van's cough, and he came up the stairs as if to look out.

There was nothing else for it: I knew that if he missed the sentry, he would most likely spoil my plan, so, at the risk of being seen by the watch, I stood boldly up in the sentry's place, took a step this way and that way, and then began to whistle softly to myself like.

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It was a bold trick, but Van was taken in: he could see some one was on guard; he could hear the watch; and the face of the man at the wheel was plain enough by the binnacle light, so that all seemed well.

'If Bill only makes his attempt now, we're undone,' I thought; but all kept still aft, and then I shuddered like for fear Van should speak to me, but he did not say a word, only turned to go down again, and my breath came freer, as I felt for the lashings I had got ready for the prisoners I hoped to make; while I'm afraid if Van had come up to me then I should have been his death, and then have secured the cabin hatch.

As I said before, I breathed freer, and turned my attention to where the four men were at the rum; but the next moment I was taken all aback again, for Van came up once more, stood still as if listening, and then saying to me: 'Keep a sharp look-out,' he turned once more to go.

'Right,' I mumbles out, as if my mouth was full of baccy, and the next minute I could hear his voice quite plain through the other half of the skylight.

'Now or never,' I says to myself, in dread lest that watchful cur should spoil my chance; and, going down on hands and knees, I leaned through the hole.

'With a will! Mr Ward,' I says, and, grasping my arms, next moment he was through and lying on the deck aside me, just as we could hear the scrooping noise of Sam closing the hatch of the fore-cuddy.

'Quick, Mr Butterwell,' I says, and Tomtit had hold of my arms, but, just as I expected, he shut up when he was wanted, for there was a slight scuffle by the wheel as I gave a heave, the watch stopped their chatter to listen, and as I rose up like to hoist Mr Butterwell out, he went back into the cabin with a crash, falling against the bulkhead which separated it from the cabin where Van was, and if I had not darted to the hatch, he would have been up with the three hell-hounds at his back. But he was too late; I had the hatch over, and then turned to help Sam, who, like a brick as he was, had gone at the watch.

I need hardly tell you that Mr Ward was already in the thick of it; and Bill, coming up, having silenced his man with a tap on the head, it was even odds, four against four; but the fellows fought savagely, and it was not until the sentry was cut down, and another had a bullet through him, that the other two were lashed fast neck and heels together.

Now all this time they had been thundering and battering away at both hatches, but I was in hopes that they would be held fast till we were at liberty, and we made the game we had taken secure before we left them, when a crash told us that something had given way, and running aft, we heard two pistol-shots fired quickly, one after the other, and could see the flashes and a figure standing by the hatch.

My hand was raised to fire, but I dropped the pistol, for I remembered that it was empty; and sword in hand, with my blood up, I dashed at whoever it might be, but only to miss my aim, for he darted aside and caught my cutlash on his in an instant.

It was cleanly done, that guard; and I shouldn't have thought he had it in him, for it was no other than Tomtit, who had climbed out well armed, and sent a couple of shots through the hole Van and his party had battered through the hatch. He was a friend in need, and a friend indeed that time, for if he hadn't come up as he had, it would perhaps have gone precious hard with us.

But there was no time to be lost, for I expected every moment that they would find their way up on deck from one of the cabin windows; and now, in place of wishing for darkness, we prayed for light, so as to be able to see our enemies, and from which side we should next be attacked.

I wanted Mr Ward to take the lead, but he would not—only asked to be set his work, so I set him at the cabin hatch; Bill I planted on the poop, to cut down the first man who should try to climb on deck; Mr Tomtit over the two bound men of the watch, and the wounded; and Sam over the hatch of the forksel, for though we'd got the upper hand, there was no knowing for how long it would be, and besides, we all knew well that if once the savages below got us under, there would be no mercy for us.

What a night that was, and how long the day seemed coming! I was going about from place to place to see if I could make out danger anywhere, when Mr Ward called to me, and made a communication, whose end was that, with Mr Tomtit's help, we drew the two prisoners to the cabin hatch, and left him to guard them and the cabin, while Mr Ward and I dropped through the skylight quick as thought. But they heard us through the bulkhead, and directly after we heard a hand on the door, and the key move, to which I answered with a shot, crashing through the panel, and whoever it was dropped, while for reply another bullet was sent back.

Mr Ward had darted to the inner cabin, while I kept guard, and now appeared with Mr Bell and his sister, she holding him up on one side, Mr Ward on the other.

'Quick as you can, sir,' I whispered, 'for there's some devilment 'most ready;' when mounting the table himself, Mr Ward put a chair ready, and helped Mr Bell and his sister up beside him. He then drew up the chair, planted it firmly, and was through the skylight in an instant. He then asked Miss Bell to mount, but she would not until after her brother; and with the doctor's help, the poor feeble young fellow was dragged up. Then I heard a sound as startled me, and running to the table, I caught Miss Bell in my arms, and dragged her down and to one side, just before three or four pistol-shots came tearing through the bulkhead, making the splinters fly in all directions.

'Now, up, quick,' I said; and leaping on to the table, I dragged her on, lifted her in my arms to Mr Ward, and the next minute she was in safety, when, expecting another firing, I jumped down again, and went on my hands and knees.

Just as I expected, they fired again; but being dark, their shots did not tell; and before they could reload, I had jumped upon the table and climbed out to the rest.

'It's a wonder almost that they did not try to make them safe before,' I said panting; and then, having made Mr Bell and his sister comfortable under the bulwarks, we began to take steps for making ourselves a little surer. For instance, we laid a tarpaulin on the cabin skylight, and a spare sail over that, and then again on the sail we coiled

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all the rope and cable we could. The cabin and forksle hatches we served in the same fashion, so that it was quite impossible for any one to get up that way; while just about daybreak, when a head appeared over the rail close to the wheel, the chop Bill Smith gave it sent it back again in a moment, so that there did not seem much to fear at present.

Daylight, and then glorious sunrise—a big word that for a common sailor, but sailors, as a rule, think a deal of the bright sunshine and the dancing waters. And a bright morning that was, cheering us up all, so that with a grin I went up to Mr Ward and axed his pardon for hitting him; axing too, at the same time, how he found himself after the stab I put in his pocket. But there, instead of laughing, if he didn't turn almost like the fat passenger, for his lip went all of a tremble, and his voice turned husky as he shook me by both hands and says: 'God bless you, Roberts, and forgive me for ever doubting so true a man for a moment.'

'Don't you be in a hurry, sir, with your thanks. Maybe we ain't half-done yet. We've divided the ship, and got the deck and a breaker of water, and there's what rum them four didn't finish; but they've got the below-decks and all the prog, unless we can find some anywhere else. We've got the upper hand, but now the question is, can we keep it?'

'No, you can't,' shouts one of the fellows lying tied on the deck; 'so'——

He didn't say any more, for Mr Tomtit fetched him a slap on the face with the flat of his cutlash, and then the fellow lay and muttered most savagely.

We had a bit of a refresher in the shape of some cold water, with a dash of rum in it; when Mr Ward said that there was some provisions in their cabin below, and volunteered to get them if I stood at the skylight opening with two loaded pistols, to command the door that Van had kept on the outside.

I did not much like running any more risks than we could help; but food I knew we should be obliged to have, and if we could get it without attacking Van and his party, so much the better; for though I knew that it must come to that, I wanted to put it off as long as I could, and I was just making ready to go to the skylight with Mr Ward, when there was a shout from Mr Tomtit, and at the same moment a bullet struck the bulwark close to where Miss Bell was sitting.

CHAPTER XVI.

Mr Ward sprang like a tiger towards the cabin skylight, where, through a slit in the sailcloth and tarpaulin, you could see a hand holding a pistol twisting about to get back again; but, though it had most likely come through easy enough, the edges of the stiff tarpaulin now closed round the wrist, and though the owner seemed to struggle hard, and having a peephole somewhere, shrieked out as Mr Ward came on, there was no saving the hand, upon which the young doctor's cutlash came down like a streak of lightning, cutting it to the bone, when it was at last dragged through, leaving the pistol upon the deck.

Now, this came from the side of the skylight over the mutineers' cabin, for so far they did not seem to have got into the one where Mr Ward and his friends had been; and seeing this, Mr Ward again volunteered to go down, after we had moved Mr Bell and his sister for safety under the port bulwarks, thrown another sail or two over the skylight, and then bowsed up a bit of an awning, for the sun came through, and beat heavily upon the poor sick man.

But having been made a big man of now, and being consulted upon all points, I give in against anybody going down, for, says I: 'You're too vallable a man to be spared, Mr Ward, sir, and one can only go down after that there prog when we're reg'lar dead beat. Let's hoist a signal of distress, in case we're seen by any other ship, keeping on ourselves steady like, watching well, and taking things coolly as we can.'

My advice was taken, though if it hadn't been, I don't know as I should have gone and hanged myself; and there we sat, listening to the movements of the mutineers below, and wondering what devilry they were planning, till all was still as still, the wind falling calm, and the sea turning like glass; while the only sound we could hear was the twitter, twitter of Mr Tomtit's birds down below, which, by good luck, had got plenty of water and seeds, for, knowing as the little things has sense enough only to eat just as much as is good for them, I had well filled their boxes the day before.

'D'ye hear the birds, Roberts?' says Mr Tomtit to me, just as if there was nothing else in the world but birds, and I do believe as he thought they was the most important things living, save only for a bit when he was thinking of Miss Bell, and perhaps, after all, he thought her only a kind of sweet song-bird as he would like to have along with the others. However, 'D'ye hear the birds, Roberts?' he says.

'Yes, sir, I do,' I says. 'I was just a-thinking about 'em when you spoke.'

'Were you?' he says, brightening up, and laying down his pistol.

'Yes, I was,' I says; 'but don't you lay down that there bullet-iron, for you never know how soon you may want it, sir. While we're like this, sir, you'll have to sleep with both eyes open, and you a nussin' a pistol; while as to what you gets to eat, you must pick that up on the point of your cutlash.'

'But about the birds,' he says eagerly. 'How many are there left?'

'Well,' I says, 'sir, I can't rightly say; but I was a-thinking that if we could get 'em up on deck by shoving a hole through the wires with a boat-oar, there'd be enough of 'em, with 'conomy, to last us all for eight days.'

'What?' he says, staring.

'Why,' I says, 'lowancing ourselves to one big bird a-piece, or two little uns, we could keep ourselves alive for a bit.'

He didn't say a word, but looked just for all the world as if he thought it would ha' been a deal more like the right thing to do to cut one of us up small to feed his little cock-sparrows and things, if they ran short of food. So, just out of a bit of spite like, I says to him drily: 'You might try Miss Bell with them two doves now, sir,' I says.

'Hold your tongue!' he says quite fierce, and looking to see if Mr Ward had heard.

'Wouldn't make a bad roast, sir, and this here sun's hot enough to cook bullock.'

'Will you be quiet?' he says.

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'And she'd pick them bones, and thoroughly enjoy'——

'Roberts,' says Mr Ward, just then in a whisper, 'what's that?'

I'd heard the sound at the same moment as he did, and for a moment it didn't strike me as to what it might be; but the next instant I was at the side with a cocked pistol in my hand, an example followed by all the others, for, through our bad watching, two men out of the fore-cabin had dropped softly overboard, and were making for the poop, when I hailed them to stop, covering one with a pistol the while.

He saw that it was of no use, so he asked for a rope directly, and heaving him one, we had him aboard lashed and lying down upon the deck beside his mates in less than no time; but the other one swam on and on, diving down every moment so that I shouldn't hit him. But I could have done it, if I'd liked, though I did not want to shed more blood, so we let him swim on till he began to paddle behind and shout to Van for a rope, when we could hear the cabin windows opening.

'Here, this won't do, sir,' I says; and 'Hi! here, you Sam,' I shouts, 'don't you leave that fore-hatch,' for he was coming away and leaving it unprotected. So he went back; and getting hold of a line, I makes a running noose, and going right aft, I tries to drop it over the fellow's head; but he kept dodging and ducking under, till at last I made a feint, and the water being clear as glass, just as he was coming up again I dropped the noose over his head and one arm, drawing it tight in a moment, and there he was struggling—a harpooned porpoise.

I thought I'd lost him once, for a stroke was made at the line with a cutlash out of one of the cabin lights, but I soon towed him out of reach, when Bill Smith threw him the end of a rope, and we had him aboard too.

Now, what with two wounded men and four prisoners, we had our hands more than full, so after a short bit of consideration, it was decided to risk the opening of the fore-cabin hatch, and make the four men go down one at a time; we, for humanity's sake, keeping the prisoners who were wounded.

So we took the four with their hands lashed, and then with Mr Tomtit only on guard, we four stood ready; and Mr Ward giving the signal, Sam raised the hatch, when one fellow leaped up savage, but I had a marline-spike ready, and down he went again quicker than he came up. Then another tried, but I served him the same, when they stopped that game, and began to fire up the hatch, till I sang out that we were going to send down their mates.

But sending down was one thing, and making them go was another; for the first fellow turned rusty and wouldn't go; till, seeing that half-measures were no good, I nodded to Mr Ward, and he put a pistol to the fellow's ear, and at the same time I gave him just a tap on the head with the marline-spike, when he went down sharp, and the others followed.

Sam clapped the hatch down so quickly that the last chap's head must have felt it; but that put a stop to their firing up at us; and this being done, we felt safer, though none the less compelled to keep a strict watch.

And so the day wore away—not a long day at all—for rather dreading the night as I did, it seemed to come on quickly, and this was the time I felt sure the mutineers would make their attack, perhaps to get the better of us.

At one time I was for taking to the biggest of the two boats left, and leaving them to it; but without provisions, it was like running to meet death, and I was obliged to give up that idea, for, after all, it would only have been to get away till such time as they could overtake us and run us down.

The night turned out bright and starlight; and after making the best arrangements we could for the watch, we patiently waited for any new dangers that might befall us. Even Mr Bell, sick as he was, insisted upon taking his turn at watching, and having now plenty of arms, he sat with his sister by him to guard the fore-hatch, Miss Bell going from time to time to the side, and keeping an eye to the cabin window. Two or three times, too, she came to me, and talked about our position in whispers; and somehow or another she seemed to grow upon one, until I swore to myself that I'd die sooner than the poor lass should be left to the tender mercies of the scoundrels who had seized the ship.

We had two or three false alarms during the night, but that was all; and the next day broke, finding us all half-famished; and now it seemed that either we must attack Van's party in the after-cabin, or one of us must go down and try for some provisions.

Mr Ward said he would go, and he turned towards Miss Bell, as if expecting her to say something, but she never looked his way at all; and after making our arrangements, we lifted the tarpaulin, Mr Ward dropped through, and in a short time handed up to me several tins of preserved meat, some biscuit, and a couple of bottles of wine.

He made four journeys before I heard even a movement in the next cabin, and then there came a muttering as of some one waking from a drunken sleep, and we all made up our minds that, having plenty of rum below, the cabin party had made a drinking night of it.

I never expected to see him up again without a few shots being exchanged; but there he was safe; and after dropping the tarpaulin again, the provisions in moderation were served out, and no meal was ever more welcome. As for the fellows in the fore-cabin, they were evidently well provided, for we heard nothing of them all that day.

Though we swept the horizon again and again, not a sail appeared in sight, so that I was not much surprised to see Miss Bell having a good cry all to herself, when she thought no one could see her; but I did, though I would not let her know that I was looking.

THE SEA-KINGS AT HOME.

THERE was a time in the history of our country when the very mention of Norway spread terror and dismay in the breast of every one, for it was associated with those old Northmen, the Vikings, whose piratical expeditions to this country, and indeed to the whole of Europe, brought so much suffering and misery in their train. Plundering, burning, and killing wherever they came, they used to visit our shores as regularly as the swallow does

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now. At this lapse of time, however, it is interesting to learn something of the domestic life and manners of these hardy seamen, to whom, indeed, we owe a debt of gratitude, for there is little question that it was mainly owing to them that England became a seafaring country. Mr Barnard * has done good service in laying before the public a short sketch of the life these Norwegian rovers used to lead at home; and we purpose now to give our readers a brief account of their domestic habits—habits which were gradually changed and improved as the old pagan religion gave way to the civilising revolutions produced by the introduction of Christianity.

Like the Spartans of old, the Northmen, in the days when they were pagans, used to expose their children, if they were born deformed, or were more than usually weakly. The object, of course, was to prevent any deterioration in breed, a matter of the last import to a people who valued physical powers so highly. Still, the introduction of Christianity did not, as might be supposed, at once abolish this barbarous custom; indeed, it lingered for some time after in Iceland, where 'the people considered it unjust to be deterred from exposing their children, and at the same time be prevented from eating horse-flesh, which had hitherto been their chief means of subsistence.' The plan generally adopted was to place the infant in a covered grave, and there leave it to die; or else to expose it in some lonely spot where wild beasts would not be likely to find it, and to place some nourishment in its hand, usually a piece of salt pork, for it to suck, so that life might be sustained till, possibly, some compassionate person might find it, and take pity on it.

According to the ideas of the old Northmen, a man ought not to marry for love only, but ought especially to 'secure an independent and honourable position for the future;' consequently, the young men of the period were generally glad to profit by the advice and counsel of their elders. This rule was observed more strictly in the case of the other sex. 'If a girl married without the consent of her parents, her father or relations could disinherit her and her offspring;' consequently, elopements were of rare occurrence in those days. In their courtships, a great many curious customs were observed: the suitor was always accompanied by a spokesman, and in case he was a man of rank, by a suitable retinue, to woo the woman of his choice, a custom which is still observed in many of the country districts of Norway even at the present day. On the day after the wedding, the husband had to give his wife the 'morrowing gift,' a custom which the reader of history will readily recall, for on the morning after the marriage of James I. and Anne of Denmark, the royal bridegroom gave his queen the palace and dominions of Falkland and Dunfermline as her morrowing gift. Amongst other privileges, the right of the husband 'to exchange, bequeath, or give away his wife' deserves notice. Still, the old Sagas mention only one instance where such exchange took place without the previous consent and knowledge of the wives themselves, and in this, one of the ladies, named Sigrid, rather than have anything 'to do with the affair,' went and hung herself in the temple. The authority of the husband over his wife was very great: she could not, for instance, leave her home, even on the plea of visiting her nearest relatives, without his permission. Divorces were of common occurrence among the Northmen, and where both parties wished to separate, they were at perfect liberty to do so. Among other causes for seeking a divorce there was one which, from its peculiarity, deserves especial notice, and this was where one or other of them wore garments which were only worn by the opposite sex; thus, if a man 'wore a shirt which was so much cut out in front that a considerable portion of his breast was exposed,' his wife could claim a divorce; and, on the other hand, if the wife 'went with breeches on,' the husband had a legal claim for separation. In using the phrase at the present day, 'the wife wears the breeches,' people little imagine what serious consequences resulted therefrom some few centuries back.

Hospitality was a great virtue among the old Northmen. No one who stood in need of shelter, no matter whether he was rich or poor, could be refused admittance without the person refusing drawing down on himself the dreadful reproach of being a 'niggardly person.' It was considered incompatible with the laws of hospitality to worm out the stranger's name or inquire into his business. No unpleasant news was allowed to interfere with the mirth of the house while the stranger remained; but the host, like Admetus entertaining Hercules while his wife Alcestis lay dead, had to render his sojourn as agreeable to him as he could. In many cases, these laws of hospitality were carried to ridiculous excess; thus, the Sagas relate that a 'Norwegian woman, Geirrid, who went over to Iceland, and settled there, built her house right across the public road,' and that 'she herself used to sit in the doorway on a chair, and invite all travellers to come in; and that refreshment always stood ready served on a table inside.' But even this profuseness seems to have been surpassed by another Northman, an emigrant to the same country, who built so large a house 'that all persons travelling through the valley where he lived, could pass through it, with their horses and pack-saddles, while victuals stood in readiness for every one.'

In friendship, the old Northmen were as sincere as they were bitter in enmity:

> A friend one shall prove
> To his friend:
> To him, and to his friend.
> But no man
> Shall shew friendship
> To his friend's enemy.

There is no doubt that the Northmen used to drink deeply at their social meetings; indeed, it was especially the business of the women to encourage them to drink. As a natural consequence, quarrelling and fights frequently ensued; and here the women used to render good service, 'for they would catch hold of the most boisterous of the combatants, and throw a cloth over him, to prevent further mischief.' Generally speaking, the parties became reconciled after sleeping their debauch out. Banquets on a large scale would sometimes last for a fortnight, and a chieftain would generally hold three such in the course of a year—namely, at Winter's Night (October 14), Christmas, and Midsummer.

It was a natural consequence of the warlike

* *The Private Life of the Old Northmen*; translated from the Posthumous Works of R. Keyner, late Professor in History at the Royal University in Christiania, by the Rev. M. R. Barnard, author of *Sport in Norway, Life of Thorvaldsen*, &c. Chapman and Hall, 1868.

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propensities of the old Northmen that made them esteem everything that tended to make their bodies active and strong, and themselves skilful in the use of weapons. But what will our athletes, and the admirers of 'muscular Christianity' of the present day, say to the following feat, which was held to be a great achievement?—namely, to be able to 'walk on the oar-blades while the boat was being rowed along.' King Olaf Tryggvesson was such an adept at this, that he could throw up three small swords, so that one of them was always in the air, while walking on the oar-blades of a boat in motion.

Both in the pagan as well as in the Christian ages, it was deemed a sacred duty by the Northmen to inter their dead speedily and becomingly. He who neglected to cover a corpse with earth was outlawed. One of the Eddas gives the following directions to be observed:

A hillock should be thrown up
For the departed one;
Hands and head must be washed—
He must be combed and wiped dry
Before he is placed in his coffin,
And a peaceful sleep must be wished him.

Then the 'death-shoes' were fastened on. The individual, usually a near relative or great friend, whose duty it was to wash and lay out the body, did not in these cases advance towards it in front, because it was considered that the glance from a dead man's eye would exercise a baneful effect. Neither was a body carried out of a house in the usual way, but a hole was broken through the wall, so that it could be carried out backwards.

The introduction of Christianity into Norway gradually did away with the old habits and customs of the people; but it was not till the close of the eleventh century, when Olaf Kyrre was king, that any marked changes in morals or manners could be observed. Little by little, however, the change took place; and with 'that hankering after pomp and pageantry, from which the old Northmen even in the very earliest ages had not been entirely free, there was now united a desire to imitate the more comfortable manner of living adopted by southern nations; and thus the domestic habits of the people either underwent a sudden and radical change, or gradually adapted themselves to the pattern from which they were copied.' Thus, it is related in the Sagas of Egil, an Icelander, that when he buried his son Bödvar, who had been drowned, he wore a red fustian tunic, narrow above, and with fastenings at the side, which said 'tunic' split when Egil's frame swelled out, owing to the strong emotion grief at his loss had produced. Egil had resided a great deal in England, and as the style of dress he adopted was strange to the old Northmen, there is no doubt that he had imported the fashion with him. Again, Magnus Barefoot, after his expedition to Scotland and Ireland about the beginning of the twelfth century, introduced into Norway the style of dress used in those countries, and went about with bare legs and a kilt.

The usual time for rising was between four and five o'clock in the morning, and the general time for going to bed was between ten and eleven at night. In the evening, the whole household used to assemble in the *skáli*, or keeping-room, when the women would work, the lads loll on the floor, and the master draw his 'high seat' near the fire. The men folk, especially the old ones, were very fond of baking themselves before the fire, with their clothes off, after which the children would 'rub them down' with rough cloths, an arrangement doubtless very conducive to health. But people of rank frequently indulged in a greater luxury—that is, they would get some of the women to tickle their feet for them till they fell asleep.

The custom to be observed by any one on being presented at court is deserving of notice. First of all, he had to find some one to present him before majesty, and had to dress his head and his beard, and put on his state dress before repairing to the king's quarters. On entering into the king's presence, he had to bow low, and to address him in the following words: 'God give you a good day, Sir King!' The position, too, the person presented had to assume was strictly defined; it was considered the correct thing for him to clasp the left wrist with the right hand, and then let his arms fall into a natural position. Of course, in addressing the king, care had to be taken to use the plural number; while, in speaking of himself, the presentee had to be equally careful to use the singular. Great caution, too, was necessary, in case the king spoke inaudibly, not to ask again with a 'Hah!' or 'Hoh!' or 'What!' but only to say 'Sire?' in an interrogative tone; or, if one preferred using more words: 'Sire, be not angry that I ask again what you said to me, for I did not rightly comprehend.'

Thus, having introduced our Northman into such good company, we will say adieu to him, leaving those who desire to know more of him to consult this curious little book for themselves.

CHANGED.

Dear love, in this rapture of meeting,
While the heart-leaps thrill fast through our veins,
You ask why a shadow of mourning
Like a cloud on my forehead remains?

You say I am altered, my darling,
In these years I have waited and wept,
While the sickening hands of the weary clocks
In slow beats tired, or slept.

The tears that we shed when we parted
Dimmed all the youth out of my eyes,
Till the fair green earth had no freshness to me,
And the sun no heaven in the skies.

The feather-tipped tops of the pine-trees
Are yet bent by the cold winter-blast,
And the laughter and warmth of the summer
Can never make up for the past.

Though the white-thorn blossoms are blowing in May,
And the wheat pierces green through the hill,
Underfoot in the curling bracken
The dead leaves are lingering still.

And the sorrow that left its mark on my youth
Will pass from my forehead never,
Till my brows are smooth in the long last sleep,
And the coffin-lid shut for ever.

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RIVER-SIDE LONDON.

In spite of the talk about the paucity of gratuitous 'sights' in London, I cannot help thinking that, to a person of the *Homo sum*, &c. turn of mind, there is no other place that offers so many. Wandering through London, you can note the most various manners and customs, and even populations, without the expenditure of a penny, or, at most, by the outlay of a few coppers for 'bus fare. Crushed together within the compass of a few miles, as if for the accommodation of inquisitive but impecunious travellers, 'London' holds a score or two of cities, towns, villages, and hamlets, as different as if they were sundered by hundreds of miles of land, or even sea. Could there, for instance, be a greater contrast, in all that relates to the amenities of life (save for the smoke that impartially blackens aristocratic mansions as well as chemical manufactories), than there is between Belgrave Square and Bow Common? Chelsea and Cheapside, Putney and Petticoat Lane, Dalston Rise and Duke's Place, Moorgate Street and 'the Mint,' Norwood and the New Cut, Hampstead Heath and Hoxton, Stamford Hill and Stepney, Bayswater and Bethnal Green—what similarity, beyond alliterative letters, is there between the coupled localities? There is bustle both in Oxford Street and in Ratcliffe Highway; but how different is the bustle!

In the latter thoroughfare, and the neighbouring docks (even without a tasting-order) a morning may be lounged away, and yet by no means be wasted.

Of all tradesfolk, the Ratcliffe Highway 'naturalist' seems to me to lead the most aristocratic life. Dressed in black broadcloth, with a cable-like gold albert drooping from his glossy, if somewhat greasy black satin vest, and a felt hat, of the kind which clergymen and Fenians have taken it into or on their heads to wear, slouched knowingly above his fat red cheeks, he lolls at the door of his shop, smoking a capital cigar, or choice tobacco in a ponderous meerschaum, clouding into tawny grace, beneath its veil of wash-leather. He puffs away as leisurely as a lord in an aviary. In his windows are golden canaries, drab and jet-mottled mules, diamond-sparrows, wax-bills, milk-white cockatoos for ever setting up their serrated sulphur crests, rosy-throated ashen cockatoos, gray parrots, green parrots, whole colonies in crowded cages of vividly verdant little paroquets. Gorgeous macaws are screaming in the middle of the shop, and striving to untwist the wires that imprison them with the pincers of their lobster-clawlike beaks. Ranged round the walls in dusky dungeons droop moping laughing-jackasses, butcher-birds, herons, ibises, and all kinds of quaint, big-headed, or snake-necked fowl. In his muddy, malodorous back-yard, the naturalist keeps a little menagerie of wild beasts. If you wanted to purchase a hedge-hog to kill the black beetles, or a hyæna as an eccentric pet for your lady-love, he could probably accommodate you with equal readiness. His talk is

> With marineres
> Who come from a far countree—

and it is talk evidently profitable as well as pleasant.

It is strange to see those flashes of tropical plumage through the grimy window-panes of a dingy thoroughfare in East-end London. And here are more reminders of far-distant shores. One window of this little shop is filled with dusty old china—cups, jars, vases, images of dim white, and blue, and pink, and tarnished gold grotesquely shapen, and figured with dragons, and pagodas, and parasol-bearing moon-faces from 'the world before perspective.' In the other, in heaps and rows, lie dusty shells, with dull rainbows playing on their pearly whorls, and varnished emeu and ostrich-eggs converted into silver-rimmed drinking-cups. St George's-in-the-East may seem a strange place to grow sentimental in; but, looking at its *curios*, brought from all parts beyond the seas, you cannot help speculating as to the fates of those who brought them. In hundreds of instances, coral must have been made of the bones of those who have paced these vulgar-seeming flagstones; all over the world, they lie forgotten at the bottom of the Deep.

The pawnbrokers' shops in the Highway are

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also crammed with suggestive nautical relics—sextants with verdigris on their brass, murderous-looking knives in blue-moulded sheaths, and armouries of rusty revolvers and single and double barreled pistols. Cheaply enough they may be purchased now; one brace of double-barrels is ticketed at six shillings and eightpence. If the weapons could tell of the hands through which they have passed, and foretell the hands through which they are destined to pass, their dull steel might prove a gold mine to a sensational romancer. This old sea-chest, again, tilted up outside on the pavement, has not the prosy look of a box pledged by a landsman; an exciting history (if you could but translate the characters) seems to be written in the many scratches on its faded green paint.

Almost all the shops in the Highway smack somehow of the sea. The tobacconists expose glossy black piles of 'American Negrohead, 3d. an oz.' In the photographers' frames, smart young merchantmen's mates proudly sport their navy-mimicking uniforms; stewards figure in the shore-going gilt-buttoned watch-coats, and house-flagged caps, in which, amongst admiring female friends, they pass themselves off as 'pursers;' grinning tars overcome by the solemnity of the curtained camera, display with gravity their broad collars, shaggy breasts, and hats plastered down on their occiputs; and trios of man-of-war's boys are grouped like Graces with their hands on one another's shoulders. Nautical Almanacs, navigation books, sextants, compasses, barometers, are sold in this shop, with the miniature midshipman in white trousers, or the full-figged and more than full-sized captain in cocked-hat, taking ceaseless observations from its door jamb; in that, green-cased, yellow-lettered signal-lamps are the only wares. In a third, if so disposed, you can buy (just as you might a 'charm' or a watch-key at a silversmith's) an anchor, a ship's wheel, a buoy, a block that might serve for a card-table, or a great coil of tarry cordage that looks like a lump of magnified 'pigtail.' A fourth is black with marline-spikes, and bright with the barbed heads of 'grains' for dolphin and porpoise spearing, to say nothing of a heap of other unfamiliar hardware. Here dangles a row of zinc pails, and there of wooden buckets with rope-handles. Some of the outfitters make a specialty of waterproofs, scenting their neighbourhoods, like a whaler's hold, with blended odours of tar and oil. Stiff as boards, the black garments sway in the wind, with outstretched arms, like the figure over a 'dolly-shop,' or a boy's sketch of his school-master in slate-pencil. The yellow oilskins gleam in the cavernous store like sunlit trees in a dusky grove. Other outfitters offer almost everything that a sailor can want to buy. At the door of the shop, in one arm-chair, lolls the obese, hook-nosed proprietor; opposite him, in another, sits his still fatter and more hook-nosed spouse. Sooth to say, they remind one somehow of bloated spiders in the middle of a cobweb, although the wife *is* sometimes nursing a dirty, hook-nosed, fat baby, with a cooing fondness that contrasts queerly with her business 'cuteness. 'Seamen's Advance Notes Cashed,' is announced in staring capitals on a bill pinned to one of the garments dangling overhead. Every sailor who passes—white, yellow, brown, or black—is accosted as if he were a son, or, at the coldest, a favourite nephew, by the watching couple. That he must want to buy *something* is taken for granted.

Black sea-boots, unblacked 'look-out' boots, woollen stockings, cotton stockings, check shirts, comforters, silk neckerchiefs, cloth trousers, canvas breeches, oilskin breeches, all kinds of waistcoats, jackets, coats, and overcoats, low-crowned shiny hats, straw hats, 'chimney-pots,' Scotch bonnets, sou'-westers with snug flannel-lined flaps, fur caps, plush caps, gold-banded navy caps, pillows and mattresses covered with gay chintz patterns, pots and pannikins as brightly polished as prize tankards, a ring or a watch, a sea-chest or a baccy-box—whatever he pleases—he can take his choice. If he wants a hammock, there is one swinging in the shop, bulged out by a hook-nosed small boy, who peers over the side exactly like Punch. A statistician probably might ascertain the amount of wages paid and advanced to seamen in London; and this, I imagine, would pretty nearly represent the amount of money spent by seamen in London—a large proportion of it in this dirty Highway. The trellis-guarded window of its money-changer's shop is spotted as if patched with all kinds of dirty, flimsy, quaintly charactered foreign notes, and queer greasy bits of battered copper and silver and brassy-looking gold are huddled together in his wooden bowls. Foreign, too, is the aspect of many of the sailors' boarding-houses—the Bremen House, the Prussian Eagle, the German Flag, &c., with red, and white, and blue foreign ensigns, and announcements of *gütiges* entertainment, in yellow German-text, painted upon their panes. It seems at first unaccountable that sailors can find 'pleasure' in sitting and standing in the low cramped bars of these lodging-houses, crowded together like pigs in an Irish packet, in a stifling atmosphere of tobacco-smoke, and the stale fumes of slopped beer and spirits; but after the forecastle, a pigsty, with liberty and unlimited 'lush,' would almost seem a palace to poor silly Jack.

In the Highway, too, he can enjoy at all hours the company of his sirens. Oh, such hideous sirens!—flaunting about bare-headed, in dirty-white muslin and greasy, cheap blue silk, with originally ugly faces horribly seamed with small-pox, and disfigured by vice; eyes freshly black from last night's blow, or circled with the stale rainbow of an ancient bruise. When, according to the local phrase, 'the Highway has woke up' for its never intermitted revelry by night, scenes occur, both in and out of doors, which cannot be spoken of; but even at high noon it is impossible for the most incurious observer to avoid noticing how the sailor is preyed upon by these wretched parasites as they share his pot of porter at the bars, or block his staggering tacks across the pavement. Poor Jack is thought fair game by most of the prowlers in Ratcliffe Highway. It is a comfort to find that anybody cares for him, body or soul. At the end of a side-street, dim capitals announce that the dingy building above which they stand is a seaman's church; and at the bottom of a many-storied warehouse there is a cockpit-like seaman's chapel. To save him, too, from finding his way into Tiger Bay, and afterwards, as accuser or accused, to the police station in queerly named King David Street (few psalms are sung there), a course of evening lectures, according to the bills in the shop-windows, has been projected, to begin and

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close with a concert by a hundred school-children. As to the daylight amusements which the Highway offers to the sailor, he can play at skittles (most probably with sharpers); he can try his skill in the rifle-gallery, above which a wooden marksman is taking aim at the opposite chimney-pots; or he can assist at the exhibition of wax-work, which shews, as samples, an old-fashioned grandam seated, and a young lady in ball-dress standing, in the window, and advertises, as rich treats within, correct likenesses of the last 'sensation' murderer and his victim. If he had a taste for antiquarian researches, Jack *might* find entertainment in exploring some of the lanes that branch from the Highway. The low-roofed gap that forms the mouth of Seven Star Alley, looks like the entrance to a mere beggar-peopled slum; but go down to the bottom, and you come upon great gates, and a court-yard, and what was once a merchant's handsome house, with a still handsome doorway, now tenanted only as office and foreman's residence of the neighbouring oil and colour works; but merry roysterers, instead of rats and mice, used to make the floors and wainscots of its deserted chambers creak again. And behind, shut in between high walls, like a convent garden, there is a square of hard-trodden cindery soil, dotted with a mangy patch of green that just shews it once was grassed. A flight of rotten 'garden'-stairs droops, like a sadly meditative cab-horse's nose, from a trellised door on the first floor. Within a trellised hen-house, some melancholy draggle-tailed fowls are lugubriously crowing, and clucking, and scratching, as if they wanted to fancy themselves in a farm-yard, but found, like 'the Marchioness' in the Bevis Marks kitchen over her orange-peel and water, that they must 'make-believe *very* hard.' A wide-armed garden-seat, that many a year ago forgot the slimy trace of its last snail, is yawning as if in weariness at having no one to sit upon it. With the black walls for background, a few sheaves of thin, gray, smoke-furred wire—said to be crocus leaves—can be discovered struggling into the light. And, finally, in the middle of the 'garden,' there is actually an old mulberry-tree, pimpled with smutty buds, and reported to bear fruit in its season—from three to four dully dark, wrinkled beads (sometimes, in a very favourable season, even so many as seven) of mingled grit and verjuice.

At the heads of most of the lanes and alleys of the Highway, little knots of dirty, unshaven men are lounging. Some of them, no doubt, are labourers in want of work; but an indefinable and yet immediately recognisable something proves that a good many of them belong to the mysterious order of 'roughs.' One of the many puzzles of London life is the way in which these very peculiar people get their living. Their notions of *meum* and *tuum* may not be strait-laced, but still they do not rank with professional thieves. They have no visible honest means of earning a livelihood, and yet they always seem to have money enough to buy a meal or a pot of beer, or to get a place on board a river-steamer bound to a 'mill' in the marshes. Their life indeed appears to alternate between lolling at street-corners and rushing about to all open-air exhibitions of popular interest—a prize-fight, an execution, a fire, a Hyde Park meeting, or the departure of a police-van freighted with Fenians. How can such a life be lived on an income of L.0 per annum, even though supplemented by the chance earnings of their clumsy amateur dishonesty? The labourers on the look-out for a job are decidedly in the majority in the squalid crowd clustered in front of the main entrance to the London Docks. The self-complacent folks—often in the enjoyment of incomes earned by no exertion of their own—who preach that all poverty is the result of indolence, might, perhaps, not feel quite so confident of the soundness of their theory if they could see the despondent faces of some of these waiters on Providence, standing idle in the market-place, only because no man hath hired them.

Once inside the docks, there is not much lounging to be seen. 'Apply at the Spice Floor,' is roughly chalked on a blue door; long ago the employment thus offered was secured. And a keen eye do the overseers of lading and unlading keep upon their gangs. Small chance of shirking has the dock-labourer. Will he, nill he, he must earn his half-crown *per diem* fairly. At the movable winches, ballasted with paving-stones and pig-iron, on the quays, and at the fixed winches on the decks, perspiring men are straining with a 'Heave—heave—heave all together!' Hydraulic cranes are for ever swaying backwards and forwards over holds, like Titanic fishing-rods whipping for Titanic trout; but what they hook are big boxes and barrels, huge sugar-hogsheads, and twice-pressed wool-bales, seized upon, as soon as they emerge, to undergo a third compression within iron bands—an interlaced chaos of which elastically curves and clashes, and spitefully cuts handlers' fingers, on the wharf. Tea-chests, swathed in matting, or topped with sheet-lead, slide down planks into lighters in a ceaseless avalanche. Here come a dozen men trundling along sulphur-casks, which write their itineraries in the yellow powder they spill, and manifest a most pig-like propensity for blocking up the path, and dodging round all possible corners. Wherever you pass within the shadow of the long, high piles of warehouses, a bundle of sheepskins, a bale, a crate, or a barrel of something, dangles over your head like Damocles's sword.

Everywhere there is bustle. Dwarfed by the lofty spars and buildings, the men look like emmets in their fuss. Chief-mates, with weather-dimmed house-flags on their caps, and attired in gilt-buttoned, long-skirted blue overcoats, very white at the elbows and the seams, are hurrying about with pens behind their ears; or sit at rough tables checking off cargo, opposite landsman-clerks, who look sceptical as to the accuracy of nautical arithmetic. Other scribes are scribbling away as if for their life, in locomotive wooden offices like wheeled sentry-boxes. In this long shed (what a splendid ballroom it would make!), half-a-dozen men are vigorously battle-axeing sugar-hogsheads, like Crusaders pitching into Paynims. Outside, a band of white-frocked coopers keep up a constant clatter, as they hammer down their wedges on the hoops of casks curiously scored with arabesques in crayon. Yonder, a man with an ink-bottle slung from his button-hole, pen behind his ear, scroll of paper in one hand, and a mysterious instrument like a shoemaker's magnified measure in the other, is buzzing about barrels like a blue-bottle. In and out of the customs-offices people pop like bees at the mouth of a hive. The only persons who seem to take things easily in the docks are the

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dock-constables, strolling about like park-rangers; passengers in search of ships, getting their toes trodden on as they gape at the ship-cards nailed to the sheds or the ship-placards lashed to the shrouds, and wandering about decks, and diving into cabins in a bewildered dream; the men scraping, and washing, and painting the ships' sides, meanwhile chatting in lazy polyglot upon their swinging stages; and the cooks at the galleys wiping out dishes, and superintending the boiling of their bubbling strong-scented messes.

The nose is powerfully appealed to in the docks. The fundamental perfume is a mixture of tar and bilge-water; but superinduced on that there is now the sweet scent of sugar; now the sour scent of vinegar; now the fat or rancid smell of oil or grease; now the fetid smell of fermenting sheep-skins, hides, and horns; now the aromatic or pill-suggesting scent of drugs; now the moist scent of paint; and now the dry scent of seeds piled up in sheds like coal. Snuff seems floating in the air as you pass the vast Tobacco Warehouse, covering more ground than a good many Irish farms; and in spite of their *al fresco* position, you are reminded of a steamboat's cabin and steward's pantry when you wander through scores of casks branded Cognac. It is curious to reflect that one is walking over miles of port and sherry, a subterranean town of wine, in whose dark fungus-tapestried avenues dim lights are flitting about like marsh-meteors. The orderless roamer in the docks cannot help wishing that he could find his way down one of the well-like shafts that open here and there, and join the tasters who are jollifying in that Bacchic Hades, with auger-bearing coopers for Ganymedes.

Daylight wandering in the docks, however, is not free from adventure. A drawbridge may split in halves as you cross it; the narrow space between shed and water along the quays and jetty is so choked with cargo, wood-stacks, heaps of metal—so crossed with gangways, over which you must jump, or under which you must creep—so encumbered with chains and hawsers that trip you up, and iron rings against which you break your shins, and so crowded with pushing and pulling porters, that, if you do not look sharp, you may take an involuntary header in the brown-green basins—no very inviting baths, although even from their viscous surface the sunlight flashes upwards, and plays in golden ripples on black bows, and rudder-posts, and quarters. A plentiful supply of drags is hung along the walls, in readiness for any such mishap; but their meat-hook-like appendages suggest the thought that if they fished you up—say, by your nose, drowning might almost be preferable to such salvation.

It is a jumbled but a picturesque sight which offers itself as you ramble from basin to basin: now crossing a capstaned drawbridge—now diving through a tunnel—now darting from gate to gate, athwart an intersecting lane, like a rabbit from hole to hole, over a bridge iron-latticed to prevent drunken or desperate East-enders from ending their misery by a leap from its railings: warehouses crammed with wealth, squalid cottages with patched panes, church towers, chimney-pots, inextricably mixed up with shipping; a forest of masts, with here and there a topsail bellying in the sunlight, or a curvilinear row of sailors' frocks and trousers hung out to dry, or a house-flag fluttering from a mast-head, or a white ensign from a peak, like an almond blossom on a leafless bough; ships with white streaks, ships with blue streaks, ships with no streaks; ships with peaked yards, ships with squared yards; ships with square sterns, ships with round sterns; wooden ships towering like castles, low rusty iron ships that look like floating coffins; clipper ships, with razor-bows, gilt suns or lions' faces on their cat-heads, scoured brass belaying-pins gleaming like polished gold, white-painted masts, and flush decks, holy-stoned as clean and as bare—save for Catharine-wheel-like coils of artistically 'flemished' cordage—as a just-washed china plate, scornfully turning up their jib-booms at the black lighters and the water-logged barge lumbering alongside; and old-fashioned ships (clustered together in an outer basin, as if ashamed of themselves), with stems as bluff as their sterns, blisters on their black paint, rusty stains upon their white, rusty anchors digging their fangs into their battered bows, meagre little spars as out of proportion to their hulls as Punch's legs to his humped back, splintered, wave-worn oars lashed askew to their gray ravelled shrouds, and a cramped waist that is a tar-streaked, grease-spotted chaos of boats, buckets, tarpaulin, tilted hatches, patched sails, and tangled 'slack' of halyards.

In the docks, foreign lands are *brought home* to one, as when we read upon the stern of a Flemish ship *Antwerpen*, or of a Spanish, *Sevilla*. The latter is the wedge-bowed, Clyde-built steamer *Velasquez*, with a canny Scotch mate, but a sprinkling of Spanish sailors amongst her crew, who, saving their bushy black beards, look so much, as they shew their white teeth, like merry mulattos, that it seems easy to understand how—once, at anyrate—the Spaniards, as Mr Merivale writes, were 'the most humane among all European slave-owners.' Yonder, carpet-bag in hand, a snub-nosed English mate, with a stubbly straw-coloured moustache, and a tallow-candle complexion and creased uniform, that seem to tell of 'turning in, all standing,' on a sofa, at ever-so-much o'clock, after a last Cider-cellars' spree ashore, is hurrying towards an Italian steamer, surrounded by full and empty coal-lighters, that will go out in a few hours through the 'Wapping entrance,' bound for Palermo and Messina; but over her forecastle bulwarks lounges a classically featured, Vandyke-bearded, darkly pale Italian mariner, who might sit for a model of a Calabrian brigand, calculating whether he should cut off another ear to hasten the payment of his captive's ransom. In the main basin lies the screw *Britannia*, so down by the stern that she almost lifts the sea-greened copper of her fore-foot bodily out of the water. The shipping-clerk who is bawling and gesticulating forward over the unpainted wooden rail that serves for bulwarks, looks like a candidate for parliamentary honours harangning his desired constituents from very lofty hustings. She must make haste to get in trim, since she is advertised in the *Times* to sail for Lisbon and Gibraltar to-morrow morning. Alongside of the jetty lies the *Caranjah* for Adelaide; and astern of her, the *Spirit of the Age* for Victoria, Vancouver's Island. The *Verulam* is laid on for Port Natal. The *Charles* clipper, on whose deck the diluted London sunlight is so lazily sleeping, will have to battle through the 'roaring forties,' and round the Horn, before she can glide through the Golden Gate into San Francisco. The *Abbotsford*

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is bound for Brisbane in our own Pacific-washed Dorado. A huge three-master, with 'Windsor, N.S.' upon her stern, makes one proud of the ship-building skill of our Blue-nose cousins. Hard by, there is a ship for Boston, opposite her a Scotch tea-clipper, and in the same tier the New York liner *Constantine*. A 'Moodian' mate, with a complexion like a blighted lemon, is drawlingly yarning with an invalided soldier on board the brig *Romaine*. She seems to be superciliously sulking in the dirty waters of St George's-in-the-East. When she returns to her cedar-shaded St George's-in-the-West, a negro pilot will sit astride upon her bowsprit, and so guide her into harbour, through tortuous channels of deep blue and green water, as transparent as glass, fringed with glossy black 'sea-rods,' and groves of fantastically twisted white coral. Next to her is a piratical-looking three-masted schooner laid on for Pernambuco; a battered little brigantine bound for Aspinwall: and whilst you are thinking that you would as soon attempt to cross the Atlantic in a basket as in her, a grizzled old Russian sailor, in a high-domed black sheepskin cap, brushes past you, chatting in broken English with a fat and fluent old Cockney landlady, who has come to claim him once more for her airy lodgings in Rosemary Lane.

BROTHERHOODS.

From the earliest ages, great minds have conceived the idea of human fraternity: this instinct becomes a light which shines through every page of the Gospel. He who relates the story of the traveller who fell among thieves, meeting with the disdain of the priest and the assistance of the Samaritan, placed the charitable and warm-hearted heretic above the indifferent man of orthodox sentiments; and divinely taught us, nearly two thousand years ago, that humanity takes precedence of everything in the eye of our common Father. If men have profited little by this teaching, it is that the spirit of egotism and pride is so difficult to root out of the human heart; and since no institution has realised in its full extent the doctrine of the parable, it only proves that Christianity is far from having exhausted its treasures and ended its task. As it was impossible that one society should embrace all races, private guilds, brotherhoods, or societies have been constantly formed, each drawing up its own code of principles, manners, and distinct interests; hence arose the antagonism of country and religion, with many other obstacles to the dream of universal brotherhood; and though the hopes of enthusiasts have been oftentimes disappointed, the institutions have had their advantages, especially in an unsettled state of society.

Europe, in its transition period during the middle ages, presents a picture of life and property under the most uncertain tenure; thus we find communities of individuals everywhere springing up. Religious men thought they increased their devotional feelings by forming monastic establishments; the knights, who maintained the laws of chivalry, each chose a brother-in-arms, who was bound to defend his friend in all the dangers of warfare; the citizens, in their various trades, joined themselves into guilds, to protect their rights; individuality was merged in exclusive associations and separation from the mass. The trade guilds have indeed a very ancient origin, dating back to a period before the spread of Christianity. Germany has always encouraged them, and the Free Towns gradually rose in importance, by the power they possessed of defending their citizens from the harsh oppression and injustice of the nobles. Numbers flocked within their walls; trade was encouraged by security; and every citizen enrolled himself in one company or another. All free-born men, irreproachable in conduct, and instructed in any craft, enjoyed equal rights, and regarded each other as brethren. One was chosen to be the head master or alderman, and any business belonging to the welfare of the whole was freely discussed. Thus the meetings acquired a very convivial character; the members drank their fill of Rhenish wine or German beer, and entertained each other with bacchanalian or warlike songs, which had come down from the days of the Vikings. The church stepped in at length, and proposed hymns instead of these heathenish ditties, establishing religious services for each separate guild—a custom still retained by such brotherhoods as the Odd Fellows and Foresters in England. The guilds became extremely popular, and crowned heads were often enrolled among the members at their own request, by which they were made amenable to all the laws of true brotherhood, and taught lessons of justice, such as they were little accustomed to. Thus it happened that a prince in Slesvig, having killed one of the guild to which he belonged, was so imprudent as to enter the town when travelling. His attendants warned him of the danger, when he haughtily replied, that he was not afraid of a wretched association of tanners and cobblers. They, however, rose as one man, sounded the tocsin, and, protected by their privileges, put the prince to death, and killed those of his followers who attempted any defence. In London, the Easterlings, or Emperor's men, formed the first of these guilds as early as the days of Ethelred, becoming a powerful company under the Plantagenets. Their house was in Thames Street, with a wharf on the river, at which their ships could freely load and unload: it was defended by stout walls, which had to bear many a brunt of battle from the jealousy of the London mobs, led by the 'prentices.' Here they lived in common, each having a separate cell, and were kept under the strictest regulations. Celibacy was a *sine qud non*, any infringement of the rule being followed by expulsion; not even a housekeeper was admitted into the establishment, and the worthy merchants had to make their own beds. These arrangements were not general to other guilds, but arose from the members living in a foreign land, where great secrecy as to their interests was necessary.

In the days when writing was an accomplishment known to few, it became a common custom for buyers and sellers to resort to the evening meetings of a guild, and there, in the presence of respectable witnesses, the bargain, after much time and ale had been consumed, was struck. The *leth kop*, or closing cup, was drunk, and the bond was felt to be as binding as if the lawyers themselves had drawn up the deeds and covenants. If, too, any serious crime had been committed in the neighbourhood, the officers of justice called upon the members of the guild to assist them in the search for the culprit—an amateur constableship which was never declined.

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Esteem and mutual confidence often gave rise to what was called a brotherhood of arms, in which honour alone was the object, as it gave no right of succession to property. The way in which it was contracted varied with the manners more or less refined of different nations. The knights of Constantinople, when they allied themselves with the French crusaders, made a dog pass between them, which they cut in two with their sabres, saying that thus should those be treated who failed in their engagement. The Irish are said to have observed this custom in the thirteenth century, as well as one still more horrible, which was that of mixing the blood of each of the contracting parties with wine: this they drank, saying that they were now brothers by blood. Alberic, Count of Tripoli, sealed his treaty with the Saracen sultan by submitting to this barbarous ceremony, as well as the vassals of the Lord of Toucy with the French. The ordinary practice of the Anglo-Saxons was to strike their shields or lances one against the other as a sign of amity; whilst others exchanged arms, being persuaded that they could give no greater mark of friendship than parting with what they held so dear. Christianity, whilst abolishing these superstitious ceremonies, introduced a fraternity which was made before the altar in the presence of a priest, who recited some prayers composed for the occasion. The new brothers then confirmed their alliance by a solemn oath sworn on the Gospels, and by receiving the wafer, broken in two, as a witness of their engagement, signifying that whoever failed in the fraternal union, should thus be divided from Jesus Christ. In one of the many quarrels which arose between the rival Houses of Orleans and Burgundy, an agreement was at last brought about, and the two princes went to church, heard mass, and received the sacrament, swearing brotherly love and fraternity. There is still a deed extant in Paris whereby Louis XI. 'takes Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, for his only brother-in-arms, to assist, support, and favour him against any man living, swearing the same on his body, his honour, and his word as a king.' Another treaty, not less curious, was that between Bertrand du Guesclin and Olivier de Clisson, two of the bravest knights of France: it formally explained what was intended by fraternity of arms. They were never to abandon each other, whatever might be the peril; to maintain each other's property against all attacks; to defend their mutual honour, and take up any gage of battle, if one should die before completing it. The only exception made was to the king of France, his brothers, and the lords to whom they owed fealty. Even the ladies, in those chivalric days, could not claim the protection of a knight, if his duty called him to flee to his brother's help. Their enemies were also in common. The Duke de Bourbon carried this delicacy of feeling so far as to refuse a considerable sum of money from the king of Castile, for the simple reason that he was the enemy of Boucicaut, his brother. When no extraordinary service retained them in the king's employ, they associated themselves together, to drive the brigands from a province, to deliver distant nations from the Infidels, to dethrone a usurper, or, still more frequently, to assist oppressed damsels. De Boucicaut had been so ashamed of the number of ladies who, having lost their lands during the wars, were obliged to bring their complaints in person to the throne, that he formed a brotherhood of thirteen knights, who, for five years, devoted themselves to the defence of all ladies who requested their help. Each bore on his arm a golden crown with a green enamelled ground, on which was engraven the face of a fair lady; thus their association was called the 'Chevaliers de la blanche dame à l'écu vert.'

The plague which devastated Europe in the fourteenth century, drew many people together for brotherhoods of charity. So few were found willing to bury the infected corpses, that some good people of all ranks joined themselves into a society to attend on the sick, relieve their sufferings, and watch over their decent interment. The gratitude of their fellow-countrymen poured contributions into their laps; and at the tolling of a bell, each member was ready to do his appointed service, either of nursing, giving clothing to the needy, or carrying the invalid to the hospital or the grave. In many parts of Italy and France, this brotherhood may still be met with, dressed in a long black cloak and hood, with holes cut out for the eyes; they pass you silently in the street on their errands of mercy, or shake the alms-box they carry as a petition for a small contribution.

Very different to this was another association of about the same period, which ended in wretchedness and misery. A wild Hungarian impostor, an apostate from the monks of Citeaux, set out on a preaching mission, and soon received into his brotherhood thousands of the populace. His long white beard descending to his waist, his pale thin cheeks and deep-set brilliant eyes, his voice of thunder, and the flow of tears which he had at command, gave him the appearance of a penitent; and the lower orders believed him when he declared himself sent by God and favoured with visions of angels. He divided his followers into companies, under different chiefs, with five hundred banners, on which were represented the cross, the Lamb, and the visions of the prophet; they were all armed, and formed a most formidable band. The chiefs, although laymen, heard confession, gave remission, cancelled marriages, and preached whatever they pleased. Their declamations were chiefly directed against the clergy and the monks, whom they painted in the worst of colours; a kind of satire which highly delighted the lower orders. It is computed that thirty thousand joined their ranks in Flanders alone. Amiens and Paris received the prophet with open arms; but when the fraternity saw themselves multiplying so rapidly, they grew audacious, pillaged the villages, and killed ecclesiastics and laymen. It was time for the government to interfere. At Bourges, the people defended themselves; many were killed, some hung by order of the magistrates, and the rest dissipated like a cloud of smoke—returning, as it seemed, to their flocks and the plough. Such was the miserable end of the Pastoureaux. In the baggage of the leaders were found a quantity of money, powders of a poisonous nature, and some letters written in Arabic, engaging to deliver up a large number of Christians to the Saracens.

It would scarcely be just to omit all notice of one of the greatest of the military guilds, which exercised immense influence over the civilised world for nearly two centuries, that of the Knights Templars. The chivalrous bravery of its members, the romantic end they set themselves to accomplish

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—namely, the recovery of the tomb of Christ from the hands of the Infidels—the immense possessions they acquired, and their tragic doom, have always excited the interest and pity of the world, and blinded it to their rapacity, cruelty, and pride. Hugh de Payens and Geoffrey St Omer, uniting to themselves six other knights, in the year 1118, formed the nucleus of the society, taking the vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity. A house, supposed to have been on the site of Solomon's Temple, was granted to them by Baldwin II., the king of Jerusalem; and here they agreed to live, in the greatest simplicity, for the protection of the pilgrims who travelled to the Holy Land. None but those of noble birth were admitted; and as at first they proved themselves courageous and self-denying, their supporters became very numerous, and that most eloquent of monks, Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, who roused Europe to a crusade, espoused their cause. By his help they received the sanction of the pope, and he assisted in drawing up a code of laws for their body. Never did they forget their duty as soldiers—to die rather than be conquered was their motto. They carried out the idea of fraternity with the most generous self-sacrifice, and ran the greatest risks to save a brother in danger. The initiation of the candidate was strictly secret; he was led into the conclave, and informed as to the rules of the order, when an oath was administered, and a white mantle, ornamented with a red cross, thrown over his shoulders. The same colours were adopted for their famous banner Beauséant, which became their battle-cry; many a fierce charge was made in its name, and the very sound caused Saladin and his warriors to tremble. At length, they were permitted by the pope to have a separate order of priests, which probably led to their ruin, on the charge of heresy. The frequent communication they held with Eastern nations, induced many to share in the secrets of those countries regarding magic and alchemy; and though it is impossible to believe in the ridiculous accusations made against them, we may at least gather that there was great laxity and free-thinking among them: enlightenment, which was then a dangerous enemy to the church, found a home there, with much religious indifference. Their great persecutor, Philip IV. of France, accomplished their destruction. The Grand-master and many others were burned alive in Paris, refusing the pardon which was offered if they would confess their crimes. The former ascended the scaffold, and said: 'The decree which condemns us is an unjust one; we die innocent; but there is in heaven an august tribunal where the oppressed never implore in vain; to that tribunal I cite thee, O Roman pontiff: within forty days shalt thou be there. And thee, O Philip, my master and my king, in vain do I pardon thee; thy life is condemned within the year: I await thee before God's throne.' Such a citation was not uncommon in the middle ages. In this case, the pope and the king died within the time specified.

But by far the greatest of the brotherhoods is that of the Freemasons; whether we look at its *long* existence, its widespread influence, or the grandeur of the principles it professes. Born and carried on in mystery, its secret is still supposed to be inviolate, though there are some of the uninitiated who profanely declare that they know it. It is impossible to say when it first sprang into existence; a curious old legend refers us back to the four children of Lamech who invented all the sciences; those of geometry and architecture being transmitted through Nimrod to Abraham, and from him, when he went down into Egypt, to a worthy scholar 'that was height Ewclyde.' It seems that the country was over-populated, and the lords could no longer afford establishments for their sons, so they issued a proclamation for some man to teach them a gentlemanly livelihood. Euclid undertook the task; geometry was carried into practice, and architecture became the fashion; the brotherhood of masons was established, and when Solomon reigned, he was Grand-master over three thousand. These spread over other countries, and Edwin of England was the first to draw up their rules in a book, and form a society. Other attempts have been made to refer their origin to the followers of Pythagoras, the Essenes, or the Knights Templars; but the only reasonable supposition is that they spring from the Stein-metzen of the middle ages.

The passion for building churches and monasteries, especially fostered by the Benedictine and Cistercian monks, drew around them colonies of various handicrafts; these requiring discipline, formed themselves after the fashion of their superiors into lay brotherhoods, who were taught that by working lovingly together, the highest style of thought would be elicited, and the spirit of piety and concord might be reflected even in the heavy masses of stone with which they had to deal. Thus arose the symbolism of Gothic architecture, which was to be a hymn of praise to the Deity; with its lofty spire pointing up to heaven, grand in its object, and full of meaning in every detail. Strasbourg formed the headquarters of the society, its cathedral being considered their masterpiece, the foundation so strong that it has stood the storms of centuries, and the carving of the spire so light that it may be compared to a piece of lace. It became the custom for those kings who wished to decorate their capitals with these exquisite specimens of Gothic architecture, to send to Strasbourg for the pupils of the masons to direct the work; thus the cathedrals of Cologne, Zürich, Fribourg, Vienna, and many others on the continent and in England, were built. The celebrated philosopher, Albertus Magnus, who resided at Cologne in 1249, was himself a mason, and drew up a symbolic code of rules for the practice of the art, in order to keep their secrets from the unlearned, and facilitate the work of those who understood the figures. The members of the Ban-hutten, or building-clubs, refused any communication with the ordinary mason, considering themselves very much his superiors. They had their special signs of recognition and secret ceremonies, each one being bound by oath to observe the guild laws; they divided themselves into masters, companions, and apprentices; took the square, the level, and the compasses for their sign; and endeavoured to erect in themselves a spiritual temple, having for its end the attainment of the threefold gifts of light, truth, and virtue.

When the apprentice had served his time, and was anxious to be admitted into the fraternity, a proof was required as to his birth and capacity of body and mind; a sign was then given him, which he was to cut into every work of masonry in which

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he shared. An assembly of unarmed members was called together; the candidate was proposed, and a messenger sent to fetch him. In imitation of an old heathen custom, he was desired to assume the attitude of a suppliant; half his garments were taken away; and with his eyes bound, his breast and left foot bare, he stood at the door of the hall and gave three distinct knocks. A warden led him in to the master, who made him kneel and repeat a prayer; then he was taken three times round the hall, halting at last with his feet in a right angle and opposite the master. Between the two lay a New Testament open on the table, a pair of compasses, and a mason's square, over which he stretched out his right hand, and swore fidelity to his duties and secrets. The manner of knocking and the gripe of the hand were the same as those now used in freemasonry. A banquet always succeeded the initiation; the welcome cup was drunk with three times three; it was taken hold of with a glove, the cover lifted, and lastly carried to the lips, when it was emptied in three separate draughts, and replaced on the table with three different motions. They also learned the mystical numbers: 3, 5, 7, 9 being especially sacred; as were also the colours gold and azure, which bore a symbolic allusion to their art; and white, to their secret association. The interlaced cord on their portals has reference to these.

Our English king, Edward III., perceiving the advantages of these societies, encouraged them by his patronage; he engaged the master of 'Giblim' to rebuild St George's Chapel; and in the following reign, William of Wykeham, also in close connection with the masons, rebuilt Westminster Hall. It seems probable that, in course of time, the guilds began to consider their private code of laws higher than that of the realm, and became refractory subjects; for Henry VI. forbade all meetings of masons; nor were they revived until 1607, when the Earl of Pembroke, a nobleman of great taste, set out on a continental tour with Inigo Jones the architect. They returned to their native country inspired with the chefs-d'œuvre of Italian architecture, and longing to improve the style of their own country. With the consent of the king, the lodges were again regularly constituted, and he was elected patron: a change gradually came over the admissions, which were no longer confined to that particular handicraft; any person who desired it was made a member. A century after, the entire separation of the Freemasons from the operative guilds was fully carried out, and the brotherhood became symbolic only in its building; professing to be engaged on the temple of the heart, and the improvement of the world by its enlightenment. Its after-history, in detail, would be only tedious; but in tracing the brotherhood of the Illuminés, that of the Freemasons will be seen to be intimately connected with it.

The eighteenth century was a most fruitful one for all kinds of secret fraternities, including curious rites involving the idea of an important secret. They took amazingly with the Germans, and thousands of men joined the ranks. One, which was ushered into the world in the most serious manner by the young lawyers of Wetzlar, had no name; an excellent way, they said, of preventing any attacks of justice, and defying all their enemies. The various steps of initiation were equally anonymous, that is to say, they were represented by abstract designations. The first, at the foot of the ladder, was called *transition;* then, *transition from transition;* and thirdly, the *transition of transition towards transition.* Such were their puerile subtleties; which, had they not been attested by the impartial historians of the time, would be considered as ridiculous inventions. The suppression of the order of the Jesuits in 1773 largely increased the importance of these orders. Having lost the power of ruling in one way, they were impatient to seize it in another; and no longer able to meddle with temporal affairs under the mask of religion, they took up with freemasonry. In a very short time, those of the Bavarian Jesuits who were men of action and intrigue swarmed in all the lodges, and the whole of Southern Germany would have been transformed into a vast Jesuitical association, had not the men of the north uttered a cry of alarm to rouse the careless. Nicolaï, a well-known author, and a man of scrupulous honesty, traversed Bavaria, Austria, and Würtemberg, unmasking the enemy and exciting distrust. The weakening of Christian belief, and the dryness of that philosophy which prevailed all over the continent in the last century, had opened the way to every kind of superstition; the old brotherhoods of the middle ages, the Rosicrucians, the Templars, and many others, were revived; and such was the mania, that some members of the Protestant clergy were united to the Rosicrucians, and actually became Catholics before they had time to think of what they were doing.

In the midst of this confusion, it was reserved for an old disciple of the Jesuits, and their implacable enemy, to defeat their manœuvres. A young lawyer, Adam Weisshaupt, of Ingolstadt, had been one of their pupils for many years; their tuition inspiring him with the most invincible repugnance; when, a few months after their suppression, he was appointed to a professor's chair in the university, which had been held for ninety years past by the order of Jesus. He was naturally the object of endless calumnies, but these private slanders could scarcely account for his conception of the society of *Illuminés;* it was rather the sudden, widespread, and mysterious agitation produced in the secret societies of Germany by the Jesuits, and the fear which this agitation, increased by public rumour, inspired in a man who well knew their power. Though without experience, knowledge of the world, or powerful friends, Weisshaupt determined to be an Ignatius Loyola of the philosophy and intelligence of the eighteenth century. An officer of the name of Ecker had just established a lodge of Freemasons in a neighbouring town, where alchemy, magic mirrors, and the raising of spirits were working wonders. He came to Ingolstadt to recruit his ranks, seeking his adepts among the very men whom Weisshaupt was trying to educate to his standard. Destined to oppose the influence of the Jesuits, was he to see them led away by the miserable and foolish practices which offered such scope to the intrigues of his enemies? He unveiled his plan, his secret, and his hopes to the most suitable of the students, and the society of the Illuminés was founded, to become the terror of the old despotic governments. For about four years it spread no farther than the neighbouring towns; but in 1780, the admission of a young Hanoverian gentleman, the

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Baron de Knigge, changed the scene of operations, and the continent was opened to the conquerors. Knigge was of a volatile spirit and full of enthusiasm; he assisted Weisshaupt to remodel the whole organisation of the society, established degrees of rank, instituted ceremonies, and determined for each their duties and rights. Its pretensions were, to raise the poor and humble, and cast down the haughty; to create a new world by morality and equality. Books written in the spirit of the Gospel, mixed up with the doctrines of Rousseau and the Stoics, were to be the chief agents of the revolution. The visionaries had the most ardent belief in the age, if practically and religiously taught; every member was to become the apostle of this faith. 'Ite et docete' was the motto; and they were persuaded that in the second generation an army of disciples would be constituted under one high pontiff, who would possess the government of minds, as well as the direction of temporal matters. Knigge travelled from lodge to lodge, and soon almost all the Freemasons joined the Illuminés; princes even, in their hatred of Jesuitism, inscribed their names on the rolls. The progress was immense; one recruit brought another, and in a very few years all the north of Germany, Scandinavia, and even Russia, were under the influence. One of the most useful converts was Bode, a celebrated writer and friend of Lessing; he became one of the leaders in the society, but pronounced it 'a system which, if it fell into the hands of badly disposed men, would cause misery to the human race, but if governed by men of wisdom might do much good.' It was, in fact, nothing but an introduction to Jacobinism; imposing virtue by means of a dictatorship—hidden, unknown, and irresponsible—which reached its fearful climax some years later in the hands of Robespierre and St Just.

But this society was not destined to last. In 1784, it became the subject of a violent proscription in the name of the Elector of Bavaria. The Jesuits had circumvented it; some members had taken flight, and betrayed it; Weisshaupt and Knigge had quarrelled on the subject of pre-eminence, and Bode withdrew. The following year, a general storm burst out; universal terror was inspired by the name Illuminé, and persecution of its members was the result. Weisshaupt fled, but found an asylum with one of the sect, Duke Ernest of Saxe-Gotha. Every crime was imputed to them by the narrow-minded conservatives: it was they who had laid the match to the powder, and brought on the French Revolution. When Gustavus III. fell under the pistol of Ankerstrom, the crime was attributed to 'the Illuminés, who were the assassins of kings, the destroyers of empires.' Their aim, it was stated, was to govern the world, appropriate the sovereign authority, usurping the place of a king, whilst leaving him the barren honour of wearing a crown; they had adopted the blind obedience of the Jesuits with the principles of the regicides of the seventeenth century; the proofs and exterior ceremonies of freemasonry; the raising of spirits, and incredible audacity of the Templars. Such was the state of feeling at the time. No doubt it was much exaggerated. But happily the time for secret societies was passing away; the light of liberty was to dawn on the world, and each man would be left free to hold his own opinion. Let us give the founders of such societies their due: they were generally men of great sincerity and earnestness of purpose, longing to regenerate the world, and create an earthly paradise founded on a mixture of Christian submission and philosophy. As such, they reveal a curious aspect of European society in the eighteenth century.

ABOARD THE SEA-MEW.

IN TWENTY-TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER XVII.

Now you might have thought that, under all circumstances, these four passengers would have been as thick as possible together; but no; Mr Bell seemed to have an idea of what Mr Ward's feelings were, and though polite and pleasant, that was all; and though Miss Bell never shewed a sign of giving him a friendly look, I couldn't help thinking that she did not quite dislike the young doctor.

That evening we had an ambassador from the fore-cabin in the shape of the fat passenger, who brought a message to say that they wanted water below. We let him come up after they had knocked at the hatch for some time, but all we could do was to pass him on with the message to Van, who swore out something, but would give no further answer; while as to going back, the messenger would not think of that, so that our force was strengthened, so Mr Ward said, but I only thought of the meat tins and biscuit.

Night again, and we set our watch, wondering whether we should get through it alive, for it was like living over one of those volcanoes, I thought. There might be an explosion at any time; and though I wouldn't make any show of my trouble, I was a good deal worried; and as for them as had been wounded, they seemed suffering as much as me.

Mr Ward had the first watch, with Bill Smith and Mr Tomtit; and when he woke me up, it was from a pleasant dream of home. But he reported all right; and with Sam Brown and Mr Bell for my mates, we began the second watch.

I said Mr Bell, but really it was his sister, for the poor chap seemed to me to be sinking, though, with the bravest of hearts, he fought against all of it, and held up to the last.

I'd been talking cheerfully to Miss Bell about there being safe to be a vessel cross our course next day, when suddenly she seized my hand, held it tightly, and pointed to something rising slowly up from the cabin skylight. Sam Brown must have seen it at the same moment, for he left the wheel, and the vessel fell off before the wind.

'What's that?' whispered Miss Bell; and do you think I could speak? Not a word; for there, slowly making itself known, was an enemy which I had never counted upon seeing, and I couldn't help giving a groan, as I felt that now we should be beaten indeed.

Accident, or done on purpose, I could not tell, but the ship was on fire, and the smoke rising in a steady column rolling slowly up, while I had hardly roused up the sleeping men, before, with a shout, Van, closely followed by Brassey and the other two, came over the poop on to the deck.

Fighting seemed no good, after what was taking place before us: our enmity seeming quite small now before this trouble, and besides what was the

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use of having a struggle for what would probably be burned to the water's edge in the course of an hour or two; so giving way, we slowly backed up into the fore-part of the ship, leaving the mutineers free to act as they pleased.

It was a bad plan, for the first thing they did was to loosen the men in the forksle, when out they came yelling and savage, but only to stand and stare for a few moments at the smoke rolling up through the tarpaulin, which now began to blaze.

That it was an accident, was now plain enough, for, taking no notice of us, they began, in a hurried sort of way, to draw buckets of water and throw over it; then two men got to one of the pumps, but what they did seemed a mere nothing, and then a panic seemed to seize them, and throwing down the buckets, they began busily to get one of the boats ready, throwing in a compass and anything they could lay hands on, some fetching rum and biscuit up out of the cabin, and all in a hurried frightened way, as if not a moment was to be lost, and they might expect the ship to blow up any minute.

All at once Mr Ward darts forward, shouting: 'Lend a hand here, and we shall save her yet!' and for the next quarter of an hour no one would have thought there had been a mutiny, for we were all working away side by side against what was an enemy to both parties; and bucket after bucket was poured into the burning hole, but with no more effect than if the buckets had been thimbles.

The fire and smoke came rolling up, and rising higher and higher, while, as if to fan the flames, a sharp wind blew seemingly from all four quarters at once, making the flames roar again; and first one and then another threw his bucket into the fire, and began running below for provisions to put in the two boats.

I think Mr Ward was the last man to drop his bucket, and that was when the flames had risen and risen in a column of fire to lick the rigging, and then began leaping from rope to rope and sail to sail, till the mizzen was one blaze of light, brightening the sea far and wide, till it looked like so much golden oil, without a ripple upon it anywhere.

They soon had one boat lowered, and were busy over the other, getting in everything that they thought would be useful, we all helping; and it was in this boat that Van seemed to intend going, for, letting Brassey take charge of the other, and telling him to push off and lay to, he kept back four of his party, and helped with a will.

All at once I missed Mr Tomtit, but he appeared directly after, and I knew what he had been doing —letting loose his birds; and there were the poor little things fluttering about, and uttering strange cries, as they circled round and round the flames, some only to scorch themselves, and fall in; but, as he said, it was better to set them free, than leave them there in their cages to be burned.

At last the boat seemed to contain all that could be put in, and Van's four men were waiting, when the fat passenger, who was all in a tremble, stepped forward to get down, but Van shoved him back, saying: 'Ladies first;' and crossing to where Miss Bell was kneeling beside her brother, he caught her roughly round the waist, lifted her, and made towards the side, when she shrieked out to me to save her.

'Best go in the boat, miss,' I had half said, when, like as I supposed she did, I seemed to see through Van's designs, and stepping forward, there was a short scuffle, and I had the panting bird tight in my arms; while before any one could take a step to stay him, Van slipped over the side into the boat, and stood up in her, shaking his fist at us, and laughing like a demon as he was, as he told us to 'burn and be d——d.'

It was hard to realise it at first; but there were both boats rowing slowly away, plainly to be seen in the golden light shed by the flames, and we eight souls, one a fair delicate woman, left to burn upon that roaring furnace of a ship.

CHAPTER XVIII.

I don't care who the man may be, but it is a hard struggle for any one to see two roads open to him, the first leading to life, and the second to a horrible death, and for him to force himself to take the last one. I 'm not going to blame Sam, nor I ain't a-going to blame Bill Smith. It was only natur's first law, when Sam says to me just one word, and give his head a nod seaward. 'Hot,' says he; and he took a header off the ship's side, and strikes out towards the last boat. Then, 'Come along, matey,' says Bill; and he takes his header, and swims arter the boat—and that was two gone. As for Mr Tomtit, he was so taken up with his poor birds, that he didn't seem to care a bit about hisself, till I goes up to him, and says: 'Hadn't you better try and make the last boat, sir?'

'Make the boat, my man,' he says, in a puzzled sort of way. 'No; I don't think I could make a boat.'

'Swim arter it, then,' I says.

'No,' he says mournfully; 'I can't swim a stroke.'

'More shame for you,' I says. And then I felt so savage, that I goes up to the fat passenger as was sitting on the deck of course, and I says, says I, giving him a sharp kick: 'Get up,' I says, 'will you; you 're always a-crying.'

'Oh, Mr Roberts,' he says, blubbering like a calf —'oh, Mr Roberts, to come to this!'

'Go overboard, then,' I says savagely, 'for now you 've pumped all that hot water out of your hold, you can't sink.'

Now all this time, the fire was roaring away, and sending a glow in all directions for far enough round, while the sparks kept on dropping like a shower. It was a beautiful sight in spite of the horror; and I couldn't help looking at it a minute, till I turned round and saw Mr Ward standing quite still, looking down upon Miss Bell, who was on her knees by her brother's side. But as I was looking, she got up pale and quiet, and looked first at me and then at Mr Ward, and then she says quickly: 'Why do you both waste time? Why do you not swim after the boat?'

'And you?' said Mr Ward, in a slow husky way.

She did not answer, only turned for a moment towards where her brother lay with his head on a cushion, and pointed to him with a sad smile, and then holding out her hand to me as she sank upon her knees again by her brother's side, she said: 'God bless you, Mr Roberts—good-bye.'

I took her pretty little white hand, and kissed it, and then stood back, for she held out her hand

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to Mr Ward, and he took it and kissed it, and then sank on his knees by her side, holding her hand tightly; and when she said once more: 'Go!' he only smiled and kissed her hand again.

It was so still, in spite of the fluttering roar of the flames, that I could hear every word he said, as he almost whispered to her: 'Eady, darling, I 'll never leave you.'

The next moment, her face was down in her other hand, and I could see that she was sobbing, when, feeling all wet-eyed myself, I turned away, when if there wasn't that fat passenger blubbering away more than ever!

'Get up, will you,' I says; 'I never did see such a thundering swab in my life as you are;' but all he says was: 'Oh, Mr Roberts!'

All at once I heard Miss Bell give a great cry; and turning round, I saw that Mr Bell had started up, and she was clinging to him; then he held out his hand to Mr Ward; but before he could take it, the poor fellow fell back. He was free of his trouble.

Now you know I wouldn't have cared if that there fat passenger would only have kept out of my way; but there, the more trouble one was in, and the more he was wanted out of the way, the more he piped his eye, and got just where you didn't want him. He always was a nuisance from the day he first came on board, and to make it more aggravating, he would look just as if he was made on purpose to kick.

'Why won't you get out of the way?' I says, for all this time I'd been turning over in my own mind a way to get out of the burning, if we could, and there was that great fat chap a-sitting on a hencoop that I wanted.

'Oh, Mr Roberts!' he whines again. And he cries: 'Oh, look there!'

And I did look, when, if there wasn't my two poor mates just coming up to the last boat—we could see it plainly; and if one brute didn't fire at 'em, and another stand up with the boat-hook in his hand, ready to shove the first one under.

'God help 'em,' I says, 'for I can't;' and then, Mr Ward helping me, we got a couple of loose spars overboard, and some rope to lash with, and a couple of hencoops; and as fast as Mr Ward and Tomtit, and the fat passenger, who seemed to have been warmed into life by the fire—as fast as they lowered the stuff down, I, who was over the side, lashed it together, to make something like a raft.

I couldn't do much; there wasn't time, for the fire gained upon us; and now there was no one at the helm, the ship had swung round so that the smoke and flame all came our way. I felt, too, that it was only to make life last another day or two, for there was no getting at any prog, as there wasn't a scrap of anything in the forksle; for I went down to see when I first thought of the raft. However, I shouted to them to lower down the water-breaker by the fore-mast, and they did, and then Mr Tomtit came over the side, and the fat passenger rolled down somehow, and shook my head, for the raft went low on his side. And now there was only Mr Ward and Miss Bell to come, and partly by coaxing, partly by dragging, he had got the poor girl to the side, when she turned her head to take another look, as I thought, of the poor fellow lying dead there; and as Mr Ward stood there holding her, the pair shewing out well in the bright light of the burning ship, I could not help thinking what a noble-looking pair they made, and then I shouts: 'Lower away, sir;' when, as if startled by my words, Miss Bell darted away from Mr Ward, when in a moment there came a roar as of thunder, the raft heaved and cracked under us, and beat against the side of the ship, while something seemed to strike me down, so that I lay half-stunned upon the grinding coops and spars.

But I contrived to get on my knees, struggling from under some heavy weight, and then every moment getting clearer, I understood that the ship had blown up, and that Mr Ward must have been dashed from the gangway, and fallen on to me.

And Miss Bell?

I dursn't ask myself the question again, but shoved the raft away, and began to paddle with a piece of board, so as not to be drawn down when the vessel sank. In place of being all bright light, it was now pitch darkness, except just here and there, where pieces of burning wood floated on the water, and then hissed and went out. From being so near, I suppose it was, we escaped anything falling upon us; and feeling pretty safe at last from being drawn down, I was trying to make out the lines of the ship by the smouldering hull beginning again to shew a flame here and there, when a husky voice close by shouts out: 'Help! help!'

'Here,' I cries, hailing; and the next moment we were lower still in the water, with Bill Smith aboard, and he says, says he: 'Tom, I was about done.'

'It 's only put off another hour or two, Billee,' I says. 'And where 's old Squintums?'

'On your weather-bow,' says a gruff voice, and then we went down another two inches with Sam aboard.

Well, there was some comfort in doing one's best to the last; and I began to feel Mr Ward about a bit; but he was coming to fast, and the first thing he wanted to do was to paddle back to the ship; and, thinking that we might pick up some pieces to lash to our raft, I gave way, dangerous as it was, though a very small sight worse than our present position; and we soon paddled up to the smoking mass, that I expected would settle down every moment, and then, getting hold of the side rope, Mr Ward and I got on deck.

It was not dark, for there was a little flame here and there, and in some places there was the glow of a lot of sparks, but we hadn't come to look for that; and, as we stood there forward amongst the smoke, I felt my heart heave, as, with a groan that seemed to tear out of his chest, Mr Ward threw himself down by the figure he was looking for.

She seemed to have run back to throw herself upon her brother's body, and there she was, with her arms round him, and though pieces of burning wood lay all about her, she did not seem to have been touched.

It was a sad sight, and in spite of all our troubles, I had a little corner left for the young fellow, who had clasped her in his arms, when he started up with a cry of joy.

'Here—water, Roberts, quick!' he cried; and almost as he spoke, Miss Bell gave a great sigh, and we gently lowered her on to the raft, when, getting hold of a bit of burning bulwark floating near, I squenched it out, and continued to lash it to us, so as to ease one side. Then we paddled slowly away, and lay by waiting for the morning.

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to get together more fragments, and make a better raft.

CHAPTER XIX.

Morning came bright as ever, and I gave a bit of a laugh as I saw Mr Ward and Miss Bell sitting tight hold of hands; for, in place of seeming to fear him, she was now looking up to him as if for protection. Sam and Bill, poor chaps, were in a queer state, for when they had reached the boat, Van had struck at them with the boat-hook, till they had turned and swum back; and now they lay on the raft with their poor heads seeming to ask Mr Ward to come and help them; and, with Miss Bell to assist him, he did all he could for them.

The boats were nowhere in sight; but just about a quarter of a mile from us lay the ship, smoking and burning just a little, her poop and midships a deal shattered, main and mizzen gone, and lying alongside, but fore-mast standing with nearly all the rigging. As to the fore-part, it did not seem much damaged; and, as she hadn't sunk so far, it struck me as she wouldn't sink at all while it kept calm; so, Mr Ward being of my opinion, we paddled our raft back once more. We two got aboard with Mr Tomtit; and what with one of the pumps left rigged and a bucket or two, we found we got out pretty well every spark and bit of flame we could find; made our examination amongst the black steaming ruin, and found that the powder on board, or whatever it was, must have taken an upward direction, and blown a good half of the deck off. Still, so far as we could see, there was no fear of her sinking; so, clearing a spot forward, we began to think of getting the others aboard.

But, first of all, we got a bit of sailcloth, and laid it over the poor gentleman as lay there stiff and stark, so as not to distress his sister.

Now the fat passenger had offered to help us, and no doubt would have done his best; but hang me if he could any more mount the side of the *Seamew* than fly. He panted and puffed for a bit, but that was all, and then he sat down again on the raft, puffing and talking to Miss Bell when he could get her to speak, which wasn't often. As for Bill and Sam, poor chaps, they couldn't hold a head up; and I was very glad when we'd got a bit of an awning rigged up, and Miss Bell on board and underneath it.

Next thing to be done was to find some biscuit and water, Mr Ward said, for they'd finished what was in the breaker, the two poor chaps being that thirsty they kept asking for it, and Miss Bell not having the heart to refuse. So Mr Ward said water; but, speaking for myself, I said rum. After a long hunt, we found, just where we should never have thought to see it, a tin of preserved meat, and had a hard fight to open it, but we managed that; and then I was in luck soon after, and turned up a bag of biscuits, half burned and smoked, half sound; while a little hard work laid bare a water-cask, and I filled the breaker.

It was quite warm, that water was, but in our state every drop was so much bottled pleasure, and after a good hearty draught, I was ready for any amount more work.

So, after forgetting them for some time, I goes up the fore-mast, and had a good look out for the two boats; but not a sight of them could I see, after a good half-hour's watch; when I came down, and helped Mr Ward and Mr Tomtit to get all the burned wood overboard.

Now, done up as we were, it wasn't reasonable to expect a vast deal of work done; but we kept steadily on till it was dark, when we finished the tin of meat, had a biscuit and some water apiece, settled that I was to keep the first watch; and then, without a mutineer within reach, the others lay down to rest, for we had settled, Mr Ward and me, that Mr Bell should be buried at daybreak.

Well, I took my place, and helped myself to a quid, leaned over the bulwark, and watched the clear bright stars, now in the sky, now as I saw them reflected in the water, and then I got asking myself questions about how it was all to end, when I thought I should be more comfortable sitting down. So, picking out a spot, I began to reckon up how long it would be before I must call Mr Ward to relieve me; and then I thought that he'd feel as bad as I did, and want Mr Tomtit to relieve him, and then he'd watch till daybreak, when he'd relieve the birds, and Mr Ward would put a piece of fresh bandage round the turtle-dove's head, and if the fire broke out again, the fat passenger would cry upon it till Miss Bell boxed his ears, when he'd relieve me, and I should—no, I shouldn't—yes, I should——

I started, saying to myself 'I was nearly asleep,' when I took a fresh turn at my quid, and Mr Ward asked me if I'd marry him and Miss Bell, and the fat passenger could give them away, and then go and sit on the raft with me, and sink it down, and down, and down, and always going down, and lower and lower; and instead of its getting darker and darker, it got lighter and lighter, and there seemed a warm glow as from the sun, only it was the water so far down seemed to choke; and I told Mr Ward I didn't think it quite proper, but I'd marry them if the fat passenger would not give them away, but get out of the way—and—avast, then—avast, then—yes, what?—all right——

'The fire has burst out again,' cried Miss Bell.

And that just while I closed my eyes for half a minute.

CHAPTER XX.

You see there's that in a fire, that it never knows when it is beaten: you drive it down in one place, and it comes up in another, just where you least expect it; while, after such a shock as we had had, there was nothing surprising in our feeling as most people do when there's a fire in a ship with a mixed cargo—afraid of an explosion. There were the flames towering up again quite fiercely and always in the most savage way, just out of our reach.

But if the flames could be savage, I felt that I could too, for, you see, I looked upon it as my fault, for sleeping at my post, when I ought to have seen the first flash out. So I got down amongst the smoke and steam, and as they handed me buckets of water, I placed them well, and by degrees we got the fire under again. It was just about daybreak as we turned all the glow and flame into blackness, half-hidden by steam; but even then we daren't leave off, for another such outbreak would have made an end of us. Even now, most of the cargo seemed destroyed, and it was cruel work, for everything fought against us except the weather, which certainly did keep clear and calm, or we must have gone to the bottom. But, as I said, it

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did seem such cruel work to have things that we were ready to die for the want of destroyed before our eyes.

We were all worn out; but sooner than run any more risks, we kept on pouring water into the hold, till it seemed quite impossible for fire to break out again; and there we were at last with the ship our own, what there was of it; but though there was a good-sized piece of the fore-deck left, and a little round the wheel, the only way to get from stem to starn was by climbing down amongst the burned rubbish, and then making your way through it till you reached the starn.

By means of a little hunting about, though, we managed to get at some provisions, and among other things a cask of pork, with the top part regularly cooked. We got at water too, and some rum; and then it didn't seem to matter, danger or no danger, fire breaking out or mutineers coming back, sleep would have its way, and one after the other we dropped off, the fat passenger in a corner, and Mr Tomtit with his legs dangling down over the burned hold.

I talked to Miss Bell and Mr Ward afterwards about my having neglected my duty, but they would hardly have a word about it, and now I found that though we had all slept, Miss Bell had been awake and watching; but now she went into the sort of tent we had rigged her up; and Mr Ward having the same thing in his head as I had, we went and had a talk together, and an hour afterwards we had poor Mr Bell neatly wrapped in a piece of sail-cloth, with some iron stanchions and bolts at the feet, and lying decently waiting for Miss Bell to wake again.

She came out of her tent at sundown, looking pale and haggard; and as soon as she saw what we had been about, the tears began to roll down her cheeks, and she came and knelt down by her brother's head and joined her hands.

I did not want the sign Mr Ward made me to do as him and Mr Tomtit did, and there we knelt for some time on that calm, solemn sort of evening, with the ship just gently rolling on what seemed a sea of orange. There wasn't a breath of wind stirring, but all was quiet and peaceful, with only Miss Bell's sobs and the twittering of birds to break the stillness.

I don't think I said so before, but there were a many of the birds escaped the fire, and perched about on the deck and the rigging of the fore-mast; and when Mr Ward and I had gently lifted the body of the poor gentleman on to a hatch by a port, we drew back, and knelt down again, thinking Miss Bell might like to say a prayer aloud before we gave the body a sailor's funeral, when one of Mr Butterwell's robin-redbreasts hopped down upon the deck, and then giving a flit, perched right upon the dead man's breast, and burst out into its little sad mournful song, making even my poor old battered heart swell and swell, till I was 'most as bad as the fat passenger, whose complaint I must have caught. I can't tell you how much there seemed in that little bird's sad song, but it was as if it took you back into the far past, and then again into the future; and weak as the little thing was, it had a strange power over all of us there present.

As if that robin had started them, the sparrows began to twitter just as though at home in the eaves; a thrush far up on the foreto'-gallant-yard piped out a few notes; and a lark flew up and out over the glorious sea, and fluttered and rose a little way, singing as it went, just as if it were joining with the others in a sort of evening hymn. And now it was that Mr Ward made a sign to me, just as he 'd told me he would; and I got up and went softly to raise the head of the hatch, to let the burden it had on it slowly slip into the golden water. But with a faint cry, Miss Bell started forward, seeing what I meant, and half throwing herself upon the long uncouth canvas wrapping, she sobbed and cried fit to break her heart.

It was a sad sight, and there was not a man there who did not feel for the poor girl. I felt it so much myself that I was glad to turn away; and there we all waited till the sun dipped down below the waves, lower and lower, till he was gone, and a deep rich purple darkness began to steal over the sea. From golden orange the sky too turned from red to a deep blue, with almost every colour of the rainbow staying where the sun had gone down. Then it grew darker and darker, with star after star peeping down at us, and the smooth sea was here and there rippled by a soft breeze that came sighing over us.

And now it was that Miss Bell's sobs seemed to have stopped, and leaning over her, I saw that she had gently slipped away, so that only her poor white arm lay across the body, and when Mr Ward gently lifted it, her head sank lower and lower, and we knew that her grief had been too strong for her, and she had swooned away.

I've been at more than one sailor's funeral, which has a certain sadness about it that seems greater than what you know ashore, but this seemed to me the worst I had ever had to do with. Trouble seemed to have been heaped upon trouble, and though in the heat and excitement of a storm or a fight you often go very near death, yet you don't seem to fear it as you do at a time like this was, when as I stood over that bit of canvas it seemed to me that I was nearer to my end than I had ever felt in all the dangers I had been through.

It was growing darker and darker; the birds had all stopped their twittering, and I was thinking and thinking, when in a slow sad way Mr Tomtit got up, and came and stood over the corpse, and tried to speak, but his voice seemed choked. He went on after a minute or two, though, and said, in a quiet deep voice, a short and earnest prayer, one that I had never seen in a book, nor heard before or since; and in it he prayed the great God of all people, who had seen the sufferings of this our poor brother, to take him to Himself, even as we committed his poor decaying body to the great deep—the Almighty's great ocean, upon which we poor helpless ones now floated—thanking Him for His preservation of us so far, and praying that His protection might be with us evermore. And he prayed too that as it had pleased God to bereave the sorrowing sister, might it please Him to put it into the heart of every man present to be a new brother and protector to the weeping one, even were it necessary, unto death.

And then there was a great silence fell upon us all; then came a slow grating sound, a soft rustle as I raised the hatch, and a heavy splash in the water, which broke up into little waves and flashes of light, to die away again into darkness.

There was more than one deep sob heard there that night from out of the darkness; and though dark, it was not so black but we could see Miss

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Bell at Mr Tomtit's feet, holding his hand as he bent over her, and she seeming to be kissing and crying over it.

No one seemed to care to move for a long, long time, but at last Miss Bell's dress rustled softly as she glided away to her tent, and then Mr Tomtit went and leaned over the side. And mind, I do not call him by that name from any disrespect, for though we had all been ready to laugh at him for his looks and ways, there was not a man there but would have gone and gladly shaken the hand which Miss Bell had kissed; and I felt vexed myself for not feeling before how good a heart the man must have who had so great a love for all of God's creatures that he would risk his life even for his birds.

That was a sad, sad night, though the ship seemed lighter now that there was no longer death on board; and I was in such a low miserable state, that I did what seemed to me to be the only thing I could do that night, I went and sat down beside the fat passenger.

CHAPTER XXI.

We had no time for sadness and sorrow; there was too much to be done. I would not fly a signal at the mast-head, for fear of its bringing the mutineers back, for, though it did not seem likely that it would, I did not wish to run any risk. But with the help of Mr Ward and the others, I set to, and we made a good strong raft, and provisioned it, in case of a change of weather, for, though keeping us up well now, I felt sure that a fresh wind must send the ship to the bottom. All I thought would be of use to us I got on the raft; and I spent a many days lashing on a cask here and a spar there, and even rigged up a little mast with a lug-sail, and had an oar or two for steering. I couldn't get myself away from that raft, feeling to want to make it perfect, which it wasn't at all. But there it was, and the best I could make; and day after day we rolled about in the long gentle swell of the great ocean, looking for something to heave in sight.

There was very little to occupy us beyond looking out, for sailing the ship was out of the question, since, if she had careened over, the water would have come pouring in at one of the rents in her side; so we waited on day after day, during which time it seemed to me that a sort of jealous feeling was springing up between Mr Ward and Mr Tomtit, for Miss Bell used to keep away all she could from the young doctor, and sit and talk hour after hour with Mr Tomtit about his birds. But Mr Tomtit, though he used to look pleased, only looked so in a quiet, sad sort of way, and I used to think that he felt it did not mean anything for him; and he'd go and feed his birds afterwards, and sigh as he did it, and always try to be good friends, as far as he could, with Mr Ward.

It was a fine thing for us that we had a doctor on board, for I believe he saved both Bill Smith's and Sam's lives, poor chaps, for they had been sadly mauled about by the mutineers, and for days and days all they could do was to lie still and talk wildly about things. Sam in particular would rouse us all of a night by shouting out that Van was striking him; but they both got better by degrees.

Last of all, what I was afraid of happened—the wind changed, and it came on to blow a little. It was nothing more than a pleasant fresh breeze, but enough to make the sea dance a bit, and the old *Sea-mew* to roll and pitch, so that I was obliged to have a man at the wheel, and a bit of sail set, to keep her out of the trough; but handle her how I would, I couldn't keep the water out, and the question got to be, how long could we wait without taking to the raft? and another question was, too, how long could we keep to the raft without being washed off? Thinking of this made me rig lines round it, and give an extra lashing here and there just where I could.

The next day, there was not a doubt about what our duty was; and getting the raft round to the lee quarter, we lowered Miss Bell down, and then made ready to join her; when, more from use than anything, I ran up the rigging to take a sweep round, when—I could hardly believe my eyes—there was a brig bearing down under easy canvas, and not three miles off! We were so busy, or we must have seen her before. Howsoever, my first act now was to hoist a signal; and then, there being no time to lose, I got aboard the raft, being last man to leave the vessel; and then we hoisted a bit of sail, and made towards the brig.

We had not left the *Mew* a minute too soon, for, just as we had got about two hundred yards away, a squall took her, and she bent right over, righted, careened again, and then settled rapidly down, and was gone.

We were all so taken up with the sight, that, for a moment, we forgot the brig, and when we turned to her again, she was bearing away. I thought that she had seen our ship, when we hoisted the signal; but from her acts, this could not have been the case, and now every second she was increasing her distance. We shouted, we yelled, and hoisted a handkercher on the end of a boat-hook; but she did not see us; and gradually we saw sail after sail dip down out of sight, and we were once more all alone on the great ocean.

If we had seen no ship, I should not have cared; but this seemed such tantalising, despairing work, and but for Miss Bell, I should have been about ready to give up.

That night I was sitting steering our lubberly craft, when Miss Bell came and sat beside me, and after being silent for some time, she points out seaward, and asks me if what she saw was a star.

I looked at it for a few minutes, for I hardly dared to answer at first, but I felt sure directly after, as I told her it was, and a bright one for us, being a ship's lantern.

CHAPTER XXII.

Soon after sunrise next morning, we were laughing, crying, and acting as bad as that there fat passenger, for we were aboard a large ship, whose light had shone out like a star of hope for us; and when they picked us up, I found that the vessel was bound for Sydney.

But our pleasure did not last long, for what with the exposure and excitement, Miss Bell broke down, and next day she was so far from being in safety that she was in a raging fever.

Perhaps I may be right, perhaps wrong; but measuring things as I saw them, it has always struck me that, true-hearted man as he was, Mr Ward would never have won his wife after all, if it had not been for that fever; but it must have

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been a fine thing for him, being the only doctor within reach, to have to tend on her, and most likely save her life.

It was in after-years that I saw them happily settled in Wellington; and as they had me seated there between them, they seemed to treat me quite as an old friend as we went over together the old days, and Mr Ward told me laughingly how hard a fight he had had to win his wife.

We talked long over our old troubles; and I had news for them of some of the mutineers—of how I had learned that one boat had been picked up, with the crew's story written on their faces, for they had suffered horribly before they were saved from certain death. As for the other boat, it was never heard of more.

I had news for them too of Mr Tomtit, whom I had seen in the street just before I left England on that cruise. He had shook me heartily by the hand, just as if I was his equal, and taken me home to shew me the collection of birds he was about to ship, with a lot of what he called baby-salmon, for Sydney. He was still a bachelor, and pressed me hard to go and see him again, and wanted me to stay dinner then; but my time was short, and I had to say good-bye, though not till I had asked if he had seen any more of the fat passenger. Mr Tomtit then told me that he had been to England, and called to see him, and shed tears when he said good-bye. I said it myself now; but he made me stop for a glass of grog, and a half-hour's chat about our perils aboard the *Sea-mew*.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

When the scientific soirées begin, it is a sign that the scientific season is half gone; and now the Easter holidays are over, and scientific investigators are working the harder to complete their self-imposed tasks before summer comes with alluring smile to entice them to the seaside or the mountains. General Sabine, the President of the Royal Society, has held two soirées, in which, as usual, science and art were exemplified in a very interesting way, and ingenious mechanical models were exhibited. Among them, was Mr Bidder's coal-winning machine, of which we have recently made mention; and Mr Price Williams' switch, which entirely does away with the numerous 'points' seen at railway junctions, and keeps the main line of rails always unbroken, whereby a frequent occasion of danger is avoided; and Mr Milroy's excavator, which digs equally well on land or under water, and is very useful in digging out the foundations of bridges, or in sinking cylinders. It may be described as a heavy metal ring suspended by chain and pulley, and carrying a number of hanging flaps. These flaps, when the ring is lowered into place, and agitated, act as spades; and when a sufficient quantity of earth or sand is loosened, they can be so regulated by another chain, that they bring it up to the surface, where it is dropped into a truck and carried away. From these particulars, it will be understood that deep holes can be dug, even under water, without sending men down to do the work.

Well deserving of notice is a much improved safety-lamp for use in mines, invented by Mr Story Horn of Newcastle-on-Tyne. It has long been known that the Davy lamp does not insure safety under all circumstances: it is liable to become choked, the light is dim, and in some conditions it may occasion an explosion. These defects are remedied in Mr Horn's lamp: the light is good; accumulation of soot cannot take place to render it dim; and whenever explosive gas finds its way in, the construction of the lamp is such that it becomes its own extinguisher, puts out the flame, and thereby prevents an explosion. There are other points in its favour; but these we may omit, as in the foregoing brief sketch the merits of this new lamp are sufficiently set forth, and because it has been tested in the severest manner, and proved trustworthy.

Mr F. N. Gisborne, who has for years past made himself conspicuous by his signals for use on board ship, in mines, factories, or dwelling-houses, has now brought out a method which, for simplicity and efficiency, excels all his previous inventions. First, he used galvano-electricity, then pneumatic tubes, and compressible air-chambers, both costly and liable to derangement. Now, with a balance-weight and a chain, he accomplishes all he desires with his system of signals. A captain standing on the bridge of a steamer can, by touching the indicator, send an order to the steersman or the engineer, and see at once whether they obey without changing his position. And that which can be done in a ship can be done in a house, workshop, or mine, and by a simple mechanical arrangement, which can hardly fail to be received with favour. It has been already adopted in the five leading navies of Europe; and the great Prussian iron-clad *König Wilhelm*, now building on the Thames, is fitted with a set of Gisborne's signals, finished in a style which may be truly described as royal.

A magneto-exploder, constructed by Breguet of Paris, was shewn, which will fire a fuse, and consequently a cannon, at any distance from two feet up to two hundred miles.—And Mr Clerk Maxwell exhibited a 'Wheel of Life,' containing what he calls dynamical diagrams, and these, when the wheel is set agoing, produce many remarkable phenomena of curves and their intersections. Thus, in the hands of a philosopher a toy becomes a means of illustrating the laws of curvilinear motion. Teachers of geometry and natural philosophy would find it useful.—And Mr N. J. Holmes, who is among the foremost of our telegraphists, exhibited his new magneto-alphabetical telegraph, which is one of the cheapest, if not the cheapest and simplest yet constructed. It comprises two circles of buttons, and the operator has only to touch button after button, and spell out his message as rapidly as he pleases. With this and other instruments before them, government will have a sufficient variety to choose from when they assume control of the telegraphs.

Messrs Silver & Co. exhibited specimens of their Norwegian Cooking Apparatus, adapted to different purposes and circumstances, and of different dimensions. One was provided with a thermometer to shew the slowness of the rate at which the heat is lost. In one of the small boxes, a pint of water locked up boiling hot at eight o'clock in the morning, was still warm at six in the evening. And in like manner, the apparatus can be used as a refrigerator, and for preserving ice a considerable time unmelted.

Mr Graham, Master of the Mint, by a singularly

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ingenious experiment, shewed the prodigious amount to which the metal palladium will absorb hydrogen: an amount exceeding by some hundreds of times its own bulk. Two ribbons of palladium, attached to the two poles of a battery, were seen loosely coiled in a water-bath. The current was turned on: the ribbons took in so much hydrogen that they expanded, uncoiled, and stretched themselves across the bath, as if alive. The current was reversed, the hydrogen was thrown off, and the ribbons resumed their coil. They might have been compared to a couple of writhing worms. The sight was amusing; but it exemplified the researches by which Mr Graham has thrown light on an important question in cosmical science, and led him to the discovery of the new metal, to which he has given the name of hydrogenium.

The Meteorological Office of the Board of Trade (we wish they would call it the Weather Office) exhibited diagrams, some shewing the recurrence of similar gales in January and December 1868; some, the weather returns from the seven British and Irish observatories during the gale of August 22d last, giving the direction and force of the wind, and the isobaric (equal-pressure) curves. Others represented the wind, weather, barometer and thermometer readings, as observed on board the royal mail-steamer *Sidon*, on her voyage from Liverpool to New York and back; and in this we have an important instalment of the ocean statistics which it is the business of the Board of Trade to collect.

From all this, it may be seen that a scientific conversazione represents a wide range of the progress of science; while, as we proceed to shew, it at the same time exemplifies the arts. There was a specimen of the first beet-root sugar manufactured commercially in this country; and specimens of the juice as expressed from the roots, and after defecation, and of the waste pulp which finds a ready sale as cattle-food.—There were two or three simple forms of filter which might be carried in the pocket.—There was a model of the viaduct now building across the Holborn Valley—A piece of inscribed bullock's hide, shewing three capital letters and a rude hieroglyph, brought from the south-east coast of Africa, and supposed to be a message from survivors of shipwrecked crews, now prisoners in the interior of Somali Land.—There were photographs of Mount Sinai and of the surrounding country, taken by the party now engaged in surveying that remarkable land, and very wild and striking prospects do they represent. By and by, a model in relief, made at the Ordnance Survey Office, Southampton, will be brought out, and then scholars will be able to study and follow the route of the Israelites.—Not less remarkable are a series of photographs of Abyssinia, taken during the march to Magdala by the Royal Engineers. The country therein represented must surely be the most rugged and precipitous in the world. Hannibal's march across the Alps must have been a holiday trip in comparison.—Of quite another aspect were the views in the Antarctic regions, which are now becoming important, because from some part of those regions will the two next transits of Venus have to be observed, and astronomers and others are beginning to inquire as to the best place in those desolate latitudes to establish a temporary observatory, and the preparations to be made for the voyage. It is impossible not to wish success to their endeavours, for the settlement of some of the most important questions in astronomical science depends on good observations of the transits.

It is recorded of some of the early Venetian painters that they laid on their colours with palette knives of different widths, and never used the brush. Mr White Warren has revived the process, and exhibits a number of pictures in oil, all painted with the knife, and with marked effect. Land and water pieces, houses, ruins, Gothic towers, and flower-beds present a sufficient variety to test the capabilities of the art and the artist. At present, he appears to be most successful in clouds, landscapes, and gardens.

THE SANCTUARY.

Not in the proud cathedral,
Where splendid thousands throng;
Not in the faint and formal plaint,
The loud thanksgiving song;
Not in the studied homily,
The doctrine vague and dim,
There comes that softening grace to me
That lifts my heart to Him.

I kneel in supplication,
But the truant thoughts will stray;
The lips repeat the words, as is meet,
But the heart is far away.
There comes no holy, blessed gush,
No tender yearning there,
Till the head bends low, and the warm tears rush,
And the spirit melts in prayer.

But alone, alone with nature—
On the everlasting hill,
That proudly arose at the world's birth-throes,
And stands unaltered still.
Down shady lanes where the wild-flowers grow,
In forest depths untrod,
In still small accents, faint and low,
I hear the voice of God.

On Saturday next will appear the first portion of a New Novel, entitled

A COUNTY FAMILY.

By the Author of *A Perfect Treasure*.

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A COUNTY FAMILY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'A PERFECT TREASURE.'

CHAPTER I.—SLOGAN.

On the northern coast of North Wales stands Slogan, with its foot in the sea. It is a great mountain; great in size, though that is its least remarkable attribute; great in wealth, for it is a treasure-house of useful stone; and great in dim historic memories. On its summit was once the camp of a British host, year after year; but the Roman eagles never flew so high. Around it still survive, like circlets about a monarch's crown, three mighty rings of *débris*, that were, a thousand years ago, three ramparts of stone. Within them are still visible the casemates in which the defenders lived, and watched as from an eyry, land and sea. Many a vale, now fertile, can be seen from it, stretched out like an open map, and the rugged outlines of a hundred hills. On the calmest day in June, there is wind enough on Slogan's top to belly out the folds of a royal standard, which mayhap (in some shape or another) in days of old it did.

But few folks care to climb to the summit now, or to concern themselves therewith. As with the maiden in the ballad, it is the face of Slogan which is his fortune. Not, however, as in her case, by reason of its beauty. It is scarred and seamed, as surely no other mountain ever was, by the hand of man. Not Xerxes, with all his power, could, in his insolent domination over nature, have so transformed a hill, as the patient hewers of stone have altered Slogan.

Naturally grim and stern enough, he has now, thanks to pick and gunpowder, become one scar. Like an ancient warrior, whose ferocity has been enhanced by the small-pox, he scowls upon the *smiling* summer sea. Fifty times a day he emits, volcano-wise, a little puff of smoke, and then the stones come rattling down, and there is yet another blemish in his majestic features. Some of him, in point of fact, is *gone*. A day will come (forty generations hence, however) when Slogan will indeed be literally, as well as metaphorically, a thing of the past. The last wagon-load of him will then have gone to pave the streets of what may be Liverpool and Manchester in one.

But at present he is high and huge enough, and though girdled about by tramways, and divided into stages by inclines (which should be rather called 'perpendiculars'), these are scarcely to be seen from the foot of him at all. You must toil up some winding path, worn in the slag and refuse, to discover them. Then you will also find that Slogan is a very ant-hill of human beings. About his forehead, men are clustering like ants indeed; appearing and disappearing, some with burdens, and some without, but all in motion. The mountain resounds with the stroke of their picks; with the echoes of the bugles, which give warning that a blast is about to take place; and with the roar of the blasts themselves. From terrace to terrace the stone is carried in huge trucks, that descend with immense velocity, and are connected by an endless chain, which by their weight at the same time hauls up 'the empties.' By the side of these inclines are ladders of stone, by which the quarrymen go up and down. These workers, whose calling lies in so weird a spot, two thousand feet and more above the fields in which their forefathers laboured (for this trade is comparatively new), are, in their appearance, different from other men. They are giants—often in height, but always in thews and sinews. The breeze of the mountain or of the sea blows perpetually upon them, and they thrive in it amazingly. The hammers which they use with ease, a field-labourer could scarcely lift. They are as good-natured as were the Goths, but, like them, are subject to fits of passion, and then——

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They are affable, but it is no use addressing them in the English tongue, because they do not speak it. They understand, however, the one word 'beer,' especially when accompanied by the exhibition of a silver coin. For the rest, the magistrates assure you that they are an extremely well-conducted race of people, and the Established clergy have nothing to say against them, or to do with them at all.

Upon this August morning there are six hundred of these Titans upon Slogan, armed with spade and pick; but it is now noon—the truce-time between them and Nature, when they lay aside their weapons, to dine. Upon the most elevated terrace, and approached from the rest only by these steep inclines, there are a hundred men or so, consuming their mid-day meal—generally a hunch of bread and meat that would last you and me for a week. Some of them sitting in the open, under the shadow of the cliff; some in the little bomb-proof huts, which are built very literally as 'shelters from the blast;' and a few even swinging against the face of the rock from the ropes that support them there during their labours. Dangling between sea and sky, in a manner that makes one dizzy to behold, they lazily cut and munch, and watch the white-sailed ships come out and in, that carry away the result of their labours from the little jetty; but otherwise they are not greatly interested in the spectacle that nature spreads before them, and which causes such exhibitions of enthusiasm in those summer visitors from the neighbouring village who have the hardihood to reach the spot. There is one such visitor even now; a tall young fellow of what is called 'distinguished' appearance, and certainly of an appearance very distinguished from the rest of the occupants of the plateau. His face is pale, and rendered still more so by the black moustache he wears, curved like a bow, and twisted at the ends; his small hands are as white as a woman's, and though his limbs are well and strongly shaped enough, he seems, by comparison with those sons of Anak about him, almost like a woman in man's clothes; he appears effeminate even by contrast with the young overlooker by whose side he stands, and who is explaining to him the details of the scene before him. And yet John Denton is no Hercules. He is only a fine strong-built young fellow, with an eye like a hawk, and a broad brow, over which the short brown curls cluster so thickly that it seems low: his fingers, it is true, are long enough to have pertained to one of much greater height, and are extraordinarily supple; his speech is precise and distinct, whether he gives directions to the quarrymen in their own tongue, or addresses his companion in English. It was in this, rather than in build, that the most marked difference between himself and Herbert Stanhope lay. The latter spoke with effort—used that languid mode affected more or less by all young men of his class, and which, to some ears (notwithstanding that the speaker may mean to be civil and well behaved enough), sounds always galling and contemptuous. And thus it was in the present case, where certainly no assumption of superiority was intended.

Herbert Stanhope was no drawling swell from the Row or St James's Street, but he had passed much of his life among those silly fops, and had contracted their manner. If he had been born a poor man, and Denton a rich one, their present positions might quite possibly have been reversed: as it was, the former was running through his fortune as quickly as racehorses (and other luxuries pertaining to 'fast' life) could help him to do it; while John Denton was making his way *up* the social ladder with as sure a foot as he scaled the inclines of Slogan. A parish orphan, he had risen at the National School to be pupil-teacher; then exhibiting considerable talent for figures, he had been employed by the agent for the quarries, first at his office, and subsequently on the mountain, and was now biding his time—preparing himself, meanwhile, by incessant study in leisure hours—for quite another line in life, that of civil engineer, an appointment connected with which profession had been promised to him by his present employer. It was the old story of a self-made and self-making man, but with a difference. John Denton's nature was not of that grasping sort which uses all things only to one end. He was ambitious, but not so greedy of success as to deny himself all refreshments upon the road to it, so that when it is reached at last, the appetite for them, so unnaturally thwarted, has fled for ever. One may wait for the enjoyments of life as one may wait for one's dinner—too long; and perhaps John Denton might have done so, his mind being deeply set upon getting on in the world, had it not been for one circumstance: he was not working for himself alone. His eyes were so bright, and his face so smiling—although, as we have hinted, it would now and again flush angrily at his companion's tone—because there was a certain modest damsel, on the other side of Slogan, who had promised to be his bride, in good time; by which we mean early; for he was still in that station of life in which it is found possible to marry on even less than three hundred pounds a year.

'Who is yonder old man with the big white head, Mr Overlooker? He seems too ancient for this sort of hammer-work, although I noticed that you (very properly) were not disposed to be hard upon him'——

'I do not understand you, sir,' interrupted Denton, with irritation. 'Mr Blackburn is no idler, I can tell you; although his arms may not move so fast as a younger man's.'

'*Mr* Blackburn, eh? What! have we gentlemen quarrymen here, then? Well, upon my life, now you mention it, there is an air of past grandeur about that old fellow, as though he had seen better days.'

These remarks referred to one, who, while certainly by far the senior of those present, wore also a look of superiority almost as great as that of Mr Stanhope himself, although it owed nothing (as in his case) to attire, which was that of a common labourer. This personage was sitting with his back to the rock, his arms folded, his lips compressed, and his eyes darting from underneath their shaggy brows no very agreeable glances upon Stanhope himself.

'Hush, sir!' muttered the overlooker sternly; 'do you not see that he observes you are speaking of him with pity; and that he does not wish to be pitied?'

'I will give him half-a-crown, and a better cigar than he ever smoked in dreams, to make my peace with him,' returned the young gentleman with a sort of good-natured scorn, as he drew from his pocket a sealskin case.

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'If you offer him money,' interposed Denton hastily, 'he will break your head in with his pick, sir. Anthony Blackburn is as much a gentleman as you are, every whit, although he is a poorer man than even I.'

'What!' ejaculated the other, in a voice that, in his great surprise, had lost every trace of languor, 'do you mean to tell me that that is Anthony Blackburn of Derbyshire—the man who was disinherited fifty years ago for marrying his mother's waiting-maid? Why, I've heard my grandfather tell that story a dozen times. My own house is within half-a-dozen miles of Redcombe Manor: I know the place as well as you know this quarry.'

'If you know anything about such matters, sir, for Heaven's sake, do not speak of them so loud. The remembrance of all that has past and gone is bitter to him as gall, and needs no revival. He was shamefully used by his own flesh and blood, as I have heard—parents, and brothers, and all.'

'Yes, it was hard lines. His father, Russell Blackburn (who was as proud as Lucifer, and as cruel), turned him out—eldest born though he was—in the cold, for marrying the girl for whom they do say the old satyr had a penchant himself; then, when he died, the three brothers followed suit. I don't suppose any one of them ever gave our friend there a farthing.'

'Ay, but they were punished for it,' answered Denton gravely. 'They were cursed in root and branch.'

'What! by the old gentleman yonder?' returned Stanhope with a cynical smile. 'Well, I daresay they were. But hard words did not break their bones, my good friend—it was hard riding that did that; at least, the second brother, Ferdinand, broke his neck in a steeple-chase; and something of the same sort happened to his son. Then hard living killed the third brother, Charles—he drank like a fish, and would not permit a woman to come within the Manor gates; but he had his good points, people said. Then Richard was drowned in the Dove. In fact, if it was not for young Dick, this old gentleman stonebreaker might yet enjoy his own again, for, as I have heard, his name was put in the entail by his father last of all, by way of mockery, since it seemed out of the question that he should survive three younger brothers and their children. However, against nineteen (for Dick is scarcely of age), sixty-eight (and old Anthony must be that at least) has not much chance; and, moreover, Dick's going to be married.'

'For Heaven's sake, don't tell him *that*, sir!' exclaimed Denton earnestly. 'It is a hopeless fancy, as you say; but, nevertheless, he clings to the idea that he shall still one day be master of Redcombe Manor. It is his dream by night, his castle in the air by day. He is always saying how that young Squire Richard has a short throat, and will die of a fit, notwithstanding Miss Ellen tells him how wicked it is thus to'——

'And who is Miss Ellen?' As though to recompense himself for the unwonted interest he had evinced in his recent talk, Mr Herbert Stanhope put this question with raised eyeglass and an elaborate indifference.

'She is Anthony Blackburn's orphan grandchild,' said John Denton quietly, after a little pause.

'And the only one?' inquired the other lazily. 'Gad, I'd take fifty to one, in ponies, about her coming into the property after all.'

'Ellen is only the grand-daughter,' observed Denton coldly. 'Anthony had another son besides her father.'

'*Had!* Is he dead, then?'

But before this question could be answered, a young girl came swiftly round the more distant corner of the crag with a covered basket in her hand, and on towards the spot where the old man was still sitting, with his eyes moodily fixed upon the ground.

'What a charming little fairy!' observed Mr Stanhope critically; 'with what a grace she carries herself as well as her basket! But it must be hard work for her coming up these steep inclines of yours, Mr Overlooker, eh?'

'She does not come up that way,' answered Denton curtly; 'there is a path over the mountain down to this top level.'

'How queer it seems to see a petticoat among all these rough fellows,' continued the other musing. 'It must be rather a dangerous experiment for her, surely?'

'What! for a modest young girl to bring her grandfather his dinner?' returned John Denton bitterly. 'It may be different—I have heard it is—among gentlemen such as you; but if any man here were to offer her an insult, the rest of them would pitch him down the mountain, as though he were a barrow of rubbish; and serve him right, too!' added the speaker with vehemence.

'To be thrown from the Tarpeian Rock for snatching a kiss from yonder pretty damsel? Well, that seems a severe punishment, considering the great temptation,' answered the other coolly. 'I had no idea the Welsh code of morals was such a strict one. The Registrar-general's Report upon the subject—— Ah!' cried the speaker, perceiving the young girl had seated herself by the old man's side, 'that is Anthony Blackburn's grand-daughter, is it? Then, now I see what you mean. There is something in good blood, after all the Radicals have said, which carries weight with it even here, it seems. You look upon this young girl as a sort of lady, eh! although she has been dispossessed of her property: well, it's very creditable to you, Mr Overlooker, and shews how the feudal spirit still survives in these outlandish latitudes.'

'You mistake, sir, altogether,' answered Denton in a voice that shook with passion. 'All blood is alike in my eyes, and all women have an equal claim to my protection, but Ellen Blackburn is my promised wife, and demands a respect from everybody which I shall take care is paid.'

'My good sir,' said Stanhope quietly, as he scanned the young girl with undisguised but not impertinent admiration, 'I do assure you I respect Miss Blackburn amazingly, and I congratulate you with all my heart.'

CHAPTER II.—OVER THE HILLS TOGETHER.

When Denton said that the quarrymen all treated Ellen Blackburn with consideration, he did not exaggerate the fact; and Stanhope also was right in concluding that the position her grandfather had once held in the world had something to do with it. They pitied the misfortunes of this old man, who had worked among them with such seeming patience for many years, and had done

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nothing to offend them; while the tender grace of the young girl herself—so different from the robust attractions of their own charmers—won from them a certain courtesy, which shewed itself in their abstinence from remark upon her actions. If other young women had brought dinner to their relatives to the 'top level,' they would, doubtless, have hardly escaped comment and rough compliment; but of this sprite-like messenger no notice was taken. She had tripped along past group after group, and save from a kindly nod from a giant head or two, which she had acknowledged by a grateful smile, had excited no stir. It was a sight they saw every day—this pretty but pale-faced girl, with her covered basket, which contained bread and meat for her grandfather; and they looked upon it, through their tobacco-smoke, approvingly.

'You are late, my dear,' said the old man, lifting up his gray head as she drew near, and regarding her with eager eyes. 'Was there any reason for it—any particular reason?'

'There was the reason of the wind upon the hill, grandfather, which was dead against me,' answered the girl smiling. 'See, I have brought you your favourite dinner—beef with mustard, and a nice fresh lettuce.'

'There was nothing for me by the post, then?' inquired the old man, without taking the least notice of these dainties.

'No, grandfather.'

This reply was given with a dejected air, quite different from that with which she had hitherto spoken. The fact was the post had not yet come in to their out-of-the-way cottage, but she had answered that same question a hundred times, and always in the negative. Anthony Blackburn was for ever expecting a letter that was to tell him that the last barrier between him and his rights was removed—he cared not how, but surely, if there was justice in heaven, the thing, however long delayed, must so happen at last. Was it not clear that a judgment had gone forth against his usurping kindred? First, Ferdinand and his son; then Charles; then Richard swept away; and now there was only Richard's brat between him and his long-lost wealth. Would not death take this one, like the rest? After fifty years of waiting—years of toil and gloom indeed, but which had been illumined occasionally by these family casualties, these spectral fires, in quite a brilliant manner—the goal would be surely reached at last! True, it was a boy's life against his own; but had not Ferdinand's boy died before he had reached this lad's age; and were not his father, and Charles, and Richard, all junior to him (Anthony); and yet all were dead! However, the news was not to come to-day, it seemed; and the old man, after one weary sigh, began to eat his meal.

Anthony Blackburn was, independently of his white beard and shaggy eyebrows, of a striking appearance; straight as a poplar, notwithstanding his weight of years, and the long use of the huge hammer which lay near him; his eyes had lost none of their fire; and his large limbs were still very powerful, although their elasticity had departed. Perhaps, if he had not been so strong, his fellow-workmen would not have paid him such respect; at all events, it pleased them to see in this old fellow, who had been brought up to no such trade, a skilful quarryman, who used the heaviest tools by choice.

In Ellen's basket there was neither beer nor spirits, but she took from it a glass tumbler—a vessel unknown among the other tenants of the top level, who used horn and tin—and having filled it with water from a spring that trickled over the rock, placed it by her grandfather's side. Scarcely had she done so, when a splinter flying from some rock where the men were resuming work, fell upon it and shattered it to atoms.

'My only glass,' was the old man's bitter comment. 'Misfortune never forgets me in small things as well as'——

'Sir, I thank you.'

Stanhope had marked the catastrophe, and stepping hastily forward, offered the silver bottom of his pocket-flask in place of the broken tumbler.

'If you will permit me to fill it with sherry instead of water,' said he politely—'I have more here than I require.'

'Nay, sir; I do not drink wine—at present,' responded the old man stiffly; 'and yet, since you are so courteous—yes, I will just taste it.' It was curious to see his look at the costly cup ere he put his lips to its contents. They had not touched silver (he was thinking) for half a century. How excellent was this liquor, the like of which (though it was but hotel sherry) had been so long a stranger to his palate. He had intended just to sip a little, but now he slowly drained the delicious draught to the lees. As he gave back the empty cup to Stanhope, his eye caught sight of something engraved upon it. 'Is that your name, sir?' inquired he with sudden interest.

'Yes; and my address—Herbert Stanhope, Curlew Hall, at your service.'

'Oh, indeed,' returned the old man with an affectation of unconcern, while his face, bronzed with sun and wind, turned suddenly quite pale.—'Good-morning, sir, and thank you: it's time for me to begin work again.'

With that he took up his accustomed weapon; but the visitor, who, at this hint, had retired to some distance, noticed that he did not make a stroke with it for several minutes, but stood leaning on the long handle, as if in thought. Stanhope looked round for the girl, but she had disappeared; and then for the overlooker, but he had also slipped away; so, shrugging his shoulders, he lighted a cigar, and betook himself down the unprotected incline, notwithstanding that a bugle had just blown to give warning to all to seek shelter.

A general opinion was thereupon expressed in the Welsh dialect among the occupants of the top level that their recent visitor was a cool hand, and it was not the first time that that observation had in other high circles been made with reason upon Mr Herbert Stanhope.

Not a quarter of a mile from this same populous spot, Slogan was as solitary as Sahara. You had only to turn the northern corner of the crag, and take the steep but winding footpath that led upwards, to find yourself out of all human sight and hearing. This would have been the case with Ellen Blackburn, already started on her homeward journey, but for the presence of John Denton, who had accompanied her so far, in order to carry her basket for her, and assist her up the cliff; a work which, considering that the basket was empty, and the young girl, although so delicate-looking, as agile as a chamois, may be set down as one of supererogation.

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'There, John, that will do,' said she; 'I will not have you come any farther. As it is, you have wasted half your dinner-hour.'

'I need no dinner,' said John quietly. 'The sight of you is meat and drink to me.'

'But you are also neglecting your duty, Mr Overlooker,' urged she with a charming pretence of rigour.

'No, I'm not; I'm *overlooking* them all now,' said John with twinkling eyes; for a little joke went a great way with this excellent young fellow. 'I don't intend to let you cross the mountain alone to-day, Ellen. There are hawks abroad, and I mean to see my pretty one safe to her dovecot. You need not look up at the sky for a buzzard. You know as well as I do what I mean; the bud upon your cheek is blowing, blowing into a bonny, bonny rose-blush. There! Yes, Ellen, I saw him stare at you, the insolent hound. We want no scented gentlemen of that sort on honest Slogan. I wish the big hotel yonder had never been built to harbour such folks, though its stones did come out of our quarry.'

'It appears to me,' said the young girl gravely, 'that Mr John Denton is jealous.'

'No, darling; it is not that. Only it makes me sick to see these idle supercilious scoundrels wasting their own time, as well as that of everybody they come across, simply because they have nothing to do but mischief. It angers me to have to listen to their long-drawn stupid drawl, not to mention the opinions (if they can be called such) with which they are sure to favour one, and which are simply infamous. If I had my will, there should be no such drones among us at all.'

'What! you would blow the whole hive to pieces with your favourite gunpowder, eh, John, sooner than not destroy them? Poor drones! and would you sweep away all the butterflies also?' and she pointed laughingly to an exquisite creature of that species, a very embodiment of light, and joy, and colour, flitting from sunlit stone to stone across their path.

'No, dear, I would not,' responded the young man; 'because, although I am not aware that butterflies are useful, in their beauty and in their grace they remind me of you. I said I was not jealous, nor am I, because I think you just the truest-hearted girl that ever breathed mountain air. Else, where rank is concerned, or even a little social superiority in the way of money, you women are as weak as water: of course, you would never disgrace yourself like Phœbe Morgan or Alice Jones—but, I sometimes think that even in your case, if you were suddenly to become rich, Ellen, and I was just as I am now, or, perhaps, a trifle more prosperous' (this was added with a certain pride), 'you might ask yourself whether you might not have looked a little higher—on such a young fellow, for instance, as we have just left down yonder, with a grand air, and well-fitting clothes, and pretty boots, and a sort of'——

She stopped him short with a grave face, and her slim fingers upon his wrist: 'And do you really think such things as that of *me*, John Denton?'

'I can't help *thinking*, Nelly. Don't be angry with me. *I* tease myself, as lovers do, with foolish thoughts of losing you—that's all.'

The firm strong voice of the overlooker had softened into speech as gentle as her own; his fine eyes were full of tenderness; and his hand trembled in her grasp.

'I think that must be all, indeed,' said she; 'but I am sorry even for that much. I do not tease myself with such thoughts of *you*, John. I feel quite sure, that though you should get to be as wealthy as Mr Rhys, who is king of Slogan, or were made the engineer to the great railway that is coming, at thousands a year, you would still take Ellen Blackburn for your wife, penniless as she is, and notwithstanding the shame that clings'——

He placed his finger gently on her lips, and kissed her forehead. 'Hush, darling, hush! no word of that. You are quite right. I have no other aim in life but to make you mine; and yet—although Heaven knows I have yearned for you—I have preferred to wait until I had earned something: until I had built a wall to shield you from the bitter wind of want, so solid that it should keep my darling safe for ever.'

'Do not set your mind so much on wealth, John,' returned the young girl seriously. 'I have every day the evil of that before my eyes.'

'Yes, Ellen; but what your poor grandfather longs for is a will-o'-the-wisp. I heard even to-day that this young Richard Blackburn, into whose shoes he looks to step, is engaged to be married. Whereas, what I have fixed my eyes on is a reality; the dream of *my life* has already come true, thank God! I have been promised an appointment upon this very railway of which you spoke. Mr Rhys put the letter in my hands only last night; and when I have got it, Ellen, and I am sure to get it—look at me face to face—put your hands in mine—now answer me: will you be John Denton's wife in three months hence?'

'You know I will,' said she with a bright blush as he folded her in his arms; 'that is, if you can get my grandfather's consent. To him I owe everything in life, John, and I am sure you would not wish me to forget it.'

'There is no fear of your grandfather, Ellen, since I shall have your grandmother on my side,' said the young man confidently. 'It is to tell her this news that I am crossing Slogan with you to-day, and have left my men to take care of themselves. I think that two hundred a year and a house with eight rooms will recommend me to her good graces, eh? To think that five years ago I was but a pupil-teacher—though at the same school with you, darling, and therefore well placed enough—without a penny in the world!' and Denton's face glowed with conscious triumph.

'And I have not a penny still,' said the young girl sadly.

'Nay, you have what *I* have, my darling; "with all my worldly goods I thee endow;" that's in the marriage-service, you know.—Oh, tell me,' continued he with unwonted fervour, 'are you as happy as I? Did the heather ever seem so springy beneath your feet, or the sky so bright above your head? And does not *our* sky, too, appear without a cloud, my darling?'

'It is very bright, dear John,' answered she with a grave smile, 'and I am very happy; but it is not without a cloud.'

'I guess what you mean,' said he; 'but I do not see why the fact of your uncle being an unsatisfactory sort of person—well, a scoundrel, if one must call things by their right names—should

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interpose between us and the sunshine. Why, the greatest people of this country, my dear, are mostly sprung from scoundrels—Norman robbers, courtly jobbers, and state intriguers of all sorts—and are certainly not thought the less of upon that account. Then, why should you and I distress ourselves about Uncle Will? Let us think of nothing but what is pleasant. See, upon your cottage window yonder, how the sun is glinting—the brightest welcome, notwithstanding that you are not within it, that it has ever beamed on me. It is surely an omen for good.'

CHAPTER III.—MOOR COTTAGE.

The cottage to which John Denton had ascribed the gift of augury was a homely one enough, but still superior to those inhabited by quarrymen generally. It had been once the residence of the bailiff of a great sheep-farmer; but since Slogan had borne a more profitable crop than scanty fleeces, the house had been unoccupied, and was rented very cheaply, by reason of its desolate and out-of-the-way position. It was fully three miles from any other residence, and set in the very heart of the hills. Not a tree, not a shrub grew near it, although in a deep gully close beside it were hid a few mountain-ashes; but yet in summer-time, as now, eye could scarcely light on a more charming spot. Rich people in town would have given much to be transported thither for a single August day. If the air could only have been bottled—as perhaps may happen some day—and the sunshine hermetically preserved within, it would have fetched guineas a dozen; and as it was, the view from the cottage door had been photographed, and delighted many a beholder who had never stood there in the flesh. A waste of purple moorland stretched before it, fringed to westward by a long jagged line of hills, beyond which rose still higher ranges, that in most days were lost in cloudland, but now stood out with the utmost clearness, each slab of stone distinct in its mountain wall. To the north, rose Slogan, immense, imperial; a giant cone unscathed on this side by man's ravages; to the east, lay the glittering ocean; and on the south, a promontory stretched far seaward, in the hollow of whose sandy bay a little town sparkled like a jewel.

Nature, however, which had thus put forth her best efforts to enhance this mountain dwelling, was but ill assisted by Art. The house—a one-storied building, with a roof of thatch, on which great stones were placed (as though it had been a mark for aërolites), to secure it against the violent winds—boasted but six small and scantily furnished rooms. Even in summer, the rough wind forced its way through the ill-fitting door and crazy windows, while in winter matters were wretched indeed; and it was to the inclemency of Moor Cottage that Ellen Blackburn chiefly owed her pale features and delicate frame. The fireplaces were not built upon scientific principles, and the peat-smoke, instead of taking the road provided for it to the upper air, wandered through the house, filling it with a cough-provoking haze, and blackening the low ceilings. The picturesqueness of the family poverty, in short (as usual), ceased with the external surroundings. Nor was the meanness or discomfort of the interior of the cottage redeemed by its solitary female inmate, who could now be discerned by the young couple, as they drew near, standing in the doorway, and screening her eyes with her hand from the glare of the sun. She was watching them intently, and a gleam of satisfaction sat on her large and somewhat coarse features as she did so. Age and poor living do not improve folk's looks, and it was difficult to detect in that bony frame, and that ruddy but haggard face, even the faintest traces of the beauty for which Anthony Blackburn, in the heyday of his early manhood, had lost caste and fortune. Yet, fifty years ago, Mary Gryll had been the village beauty of the place where Anthony was the young squire: tall and finely proportioned; dark as a gipsy, but with a tenderness of expression in her splendid eyes that never gipsy wore. Even now her eyes were brilliant, and perhaps looked the more so by contrast with the loose and shrivelled skin in which they were set. Her teeth, too, were very regular and perfect, for one who had lived so long on such hard fare. Otherwise, there was nothing to distinguish her from any of her age and class, upon whom the primal curse of a too toilsome life seems to have fallen more heavily than on the sex against which it was pronounced. Her dress was sordid and ragged; and as she stood with her sleeves rolled half-way up her arms, it was only too manifest that personal cleanliness was no longer one of Mrs Blackburn's virtues.

She welcomed John Denton very heartily, and dusted a chair for his reception in spite of his efforts to prevent her. It did her good, she said, to see him, almost as much (she added with a sly look) as it did her grand-daughter. How kind it was of him to leave the works where he was always so busy, to accompany Ellen across the moor. It was evident, in short, that Mrs Blackburn was anxious as ever was Belgravian mother in the case of an eligible *parti*, to encourage the young overlooker in the prosecution of his addresses, and that she did not even need to hear the good news he brought with him to favour his suit.

That two hundred a year, indeed, with the house with eight rooms, seemed to sound in her ears as almost too great a stroke of fortune, for after one involuntary lifting up of her hands, she began sighing and shaking her head.

'Ah, well,' said she, 'then, I suppose, this is the last visit as you will pay us poor folks, Mr Denton? You will be too proud and too great a man to come to Moor Cottage, I warrant; for that's only the way of the world.'

'I don't know as to that, Mrs Blackburn,' returned the overlooker with some indignation, for he did not understand the feminine craft of his hostess; 'but it is not *my* way, I do assure you: if I was ever so rich, I should be only proud because I had the wealth to offer Ellen. I value her far above house and income, and it was only for her sake that I have waited until I had won them, to ask your consent to our marriage.'

'And that you shall have, John Denton,' returned Mrs Blackburn enthusiastically, while she held out her two huge hands for him to shake. 'I won't kiss you,' chuckled she, 'because I daresay you had rather that that were done by deputy.'

Not to contradict a lady and his grandmother-in-law-elect to boot, John applied to the proxy thus indicated upon the spot, who executed the order accordingly, though not without some modest diffidence.

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'Deary me!' continued the old woman approvingly, 'how much better is this, Ellen—a hard-working, well-to-do young fellow, with his nice little income, and house with eight rooms—not more than you will want in time, young people, I daresay—than any of those fancy matches which your grandfather is always inventing for you, with the great folks of Derbyshire! A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush—that's my motto. I've lived on hopes too long myself not to know it's but lean meat. There's some as likes castles in the air, but I'd exchange the very finest of them, with park and grounds complete, for an eight-roomed house built of Slogan stone! Money we have not to offer with your bride, John; but I am an old housewife, and shall be able to come and give you many a hint or two as to this and that, which will help to save, if not to get.'

'Indeed, Mrs Blackburn, we shall be glad to make use of any hint you may please to give us,' returned John, whose naturally keen perceptions were entirely blunted for the time by the contiguity of his charmer, or he would surely not have thus surrendered hearth and home at discretion at the first blast of a grandmother-in-law's trumpet.

'You speak, I'm sure, most fair and kind,' said the old woman; 'and it's quite a pleasure to listen to such talk, after having nothing but complaints so long, and looking for nothing but disappointments: you shall have my good word, and welcome, with my husband, John Denton; and all I can say is, that if his answer is not "yes," when you ask for our Ellen, he must be downright deprived of his wits. I thought him foolish enough in opposing you of old (for I have always stood your friend with him); but now, if he objects to you still, being in such an excellent position, I shall get out of all patience, and speak my mind right out. However, let us hope he will not thus fly in the face of Providence.'

'Amen!' answered Denton with a grave smile. 'But, at all events, I do not think he will oppose himself to our happiness, for a certain reason, for which I should otherwise—for his sake—be sorry. I have heard to-day that young Mr Richard Blackburn *is* engaged to be married.'

'They Blackburns are always for marrying early,' said the old woman bitterly. 'But there, it's not for me to complain,' added she with a sigh. 'I will do Anthony the justice to say that, during all his trouble, he has never once reproached *me*, but only his own unnatural kin.—Going to marry, is he? and without a father to say him nay to whomsoever he chooses. *She* will not be flattered with hopes of being a grand lady, and then find herself even worse off than the poor stock from which she sprang. Her boys will be brought up delicately, out of the reach of all temptation—leastways, to do such things as the law takes count of.' Here the old woman's rough tones became strangely soft and pitiful, and her eyes filled with tears. 'There's a verse in the Bible somewhere as says that "The destruction of the poor is their poverty;" I wonder whether the rich ever read it, or know what it means.'

Denton and Ellen kept silence; but the latter rose, and put her arms about her grandmother's neck, and kissed her.

'You're a good girl, Ellen,' said the old woman quietly. 'Your father was a good man—too good for this world—and you take after him. But all of us are not born so gentle and enduring. Even John here, had he been tried as some has been tried'——

'Nay, grandmother, why should we talk of these things now?' pleaded the young girl.

'Ah, why, indeed,' responded Mrs Blackburn; 'why think of the absent and the erring, when all is going so smoothly with ourselves? That is what your grandfather says—although, Heaven knows, it is not because things go so smoothly with *him;* sixty-eight, and nothing saved against the poor-house'——

'What!' interrupted Denton suddenly. 'Do you think it possible, Mrs Blackburn, that I should permit those who had brought up my darling here so well and loyally, to come to such a pass as that? For the future, when you think upon your granddaughter, I beg of you to remember that you have a grandson also.'

'I thank you, John Denton, but I have a son of my own alive,' was the cold reply; and with that Mrs Blackburn stepped firmly across the room, and went out at the open door, while the two young people looked at one another with mutual embarrassment. The poor woman's pride supported her until she was out of their sight and hearing; but as soon as she reached the little gully of which we have spoken, and which was the only place of concealment for miles around, she sat down beneath one of the mountain-ashes, and sobbed as though her heart would break.

'O Willy, Willy,' cried she, wringing her large gaunt hands, 'why is it I cannot give them the lie, when men speak evil against you, and why must a stranger and not you be your parents' prop?'

As she sat moaning thus with her face in her hands, and rocking herself to and fro, she was unconscious of the approach of a little ragged boy, who came whistling leisurely up the glen. He addressed her twice, and even shook her arm before he could gain her attention. 'Here's a letter for you, missis,' said he, holding out a missive which had not a little suffered from contact with his dirty hands.

'For me?' cried she, snatching at it eagerly. 'Oh, is it from my Willy?'

'How should I know, unless I read it?' answered the young gentleman scornfully. 'And I think I ought to get summat extra for that. The postman says as how you were to pay me fourpence—'cause you're beyond the delivery. Mr Blackburn always pays that, he says, for all his letters, and it don't come to a thousand a year neither even at that price.'

'I'll go in and get the money, my lad,' said Mrs Blackburn, staring at the envelope she held tightly in her hand, and too deeply lost in thought to be cognizant of the small messenger's impertinence. 'Who can be writing to Anthony?' muttered she. 'It is surely the same hand that wrote the news of Richard Blackburn's death, and like it, it has a black rim!' As she looked up thoughtfully, she beheld far across the moor the form of John Denton striding swiftly away in the direction of Slogan. 'That's well,' mused she. 'I could never have kept it from him that something had come. How my poor hand shakes, and how my knees tremble under me!'

'Come, missis; I was told not to give up the letter without the fourpence,' resumed the shrill

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voice of the boy. 'You must please to fork out the money.'

'You shall have sixpence, if you'll only wait a minute,' gasped the old woman; 'that will be twopence for yourself.' Then she fell to turning the letter over and over, and feeling it about. 'It has something in it,' said she softly, 'or it must be a very long letter, and folks don't write long letters to beggars like us.' Then she looked upward to the blue sky, and into her eyes came an ineffable tenderness that brought back to them for an instant their beauty of half a century ago.

'If Anthony is right after all,' ejaculated she—'O dear, if he is really right, my Willy will come back to us again!' and still keeping her gaze fixed upon the letter, she slowly turned towards the cottage.

A TWO-WHEELED STEED.

I AM not ashamed to admit having always cherished a peculiar admiration, at one time amounting to awe, for anything that would go round. A wheel has never been without its charm for me. I remember, at school, the affection with which I regarded wheels of all sorts, and how all my favourite toys as a child were rotary ones. The knife-grinder who used periodically to stop in front of our play-ground gates to grind the young gentlemen's knives, has probably died without knowing the inward comfort he administered to my breast, through the opportunities he afforded me of seeing his wheel go round at public expense.

Only the other day, I confided to an old friend that I still possessed a sneaking regard for wheels, and though he rewarded my confidence with a pitiful sneer, I know that this wretched old hypocrite himself keeps a wonderful brass top that will spin for an hour, under a glass case on his study-table, and in secret delights to watch it in motion.

A clever marine engineer, who loves wheels too, once told me with great gravity that the human mind has never yet discovered anything so wonderful as the principle of the common wheelbarrow, 'an invention,' he said, 'to which that of the steam-engine itself is nothing. The wheelbarrow,' he went on, 'is the only example I am acquainted with in which the very weight of a load is fairly utilised as a locomotive power.' There was a copy of *Punch* on my table. Our conversation had turned to the subject of wheelbarrows from looking at Mr Keene's vignette, in which, some three years ago, Mr Punch was depicted as Blondin, but performing the impossible feat of wheeling *himself* in a wheelbarrow along a tight-rope in the Crystal Palace transept. My engineer friend then remarked that, putting aside the tight-rope business, he was firmly convinced that Mr Keene had in jest represented what would by-and-by be accepted in serious earnest as the only correct principle on which to construct a self-driven vehicle—namely, employing the *weight of the body* as a propelling power, and relying on the fact of motion as the means of balance. One thing will at least be conceded by any person who will take the trouble to turn to the sketch, and that is, notwithstanding all recognised notions and experience to the contrary, the picture of a man driving himself in a wheelbarrow looks strangely plausible, probably from the fact, that the mind of the observer communicates motion to the wheel, and is satisfied to receive that as the explanation of the balance.

The two-wheeled velocipede or bicycle is in part a realisation of Mr Keene's picture. It depends upon motion for its balance. The two wheels, one in front of the other, with a saddle between, whether mounted by a rider or not, will not stand upright for a single instant at rest; but, like the boy's hoop, *being kept trolling*, they maintain a perfect equilibrium.

The bicycle can hardly be called a 'new invention,' being to a great extent a modification of that very old toy-vehicle of our fathers, the hobby-horse, whereon the rider used to sit and row himself along, so to speak, by paddling with his feet on the ground; at the same time, the entire reliance on the principle that motion would be, under any circumstances, sufficient to produce balance, is sufficiently novel almost to justify the use of such a term. The French appear to be entitled to whatever of credit attaches to the original invention of the hobby-horse (a miserable steed at best, which wore out the toes of a pair of boots at every journey. M. Blanchard, the celebrated aëronaut, and M. Masurier conjointly manufactured the first of these machines in 1779, which was then described as 'a wonder which drove all Paris mad.' The French are probably justified, moreover, in claiming as their own the development of this crude invention into the present velocipede, for, in 1862, a M. Rivière, a French subject, residing in England, deposited in the British Patent Office a minute specification of a machine identical with that now in use. His description was, however, unaccompanied by any drawing or sketch, and he seems to have taken no further steps in the matter than to register a theory which he never carried into practice. Subsequently, the bicycle was re-invented by the French and by the Americans almost simultaneously, and indeed, both nations claim priority in introducing it. It came into public notoriety at the last French International Exhibition, from which time the rage for them has gradually developed itself, until in this present 1869, it may be said, much as it was a century ago, that Paris has again been driven mad on velocipedes.

Extensive foundries are now established in Paris for the sole purpose of supplying the iron-work, while some scores of large manufactories are taxing their utmost resources to meet the daily increasing demand for these vehicles. The prices of good serviceable velocipedes range from two hundred and fifty to four hundred francs (ten to sixteen pounds), at a less price than which a really good machine cannot be obtained either in England or France. The best French pattern is that of Michaux et Cie., which is the one now adopted by most of the English builders with more or less correctness. The height of the driving-wheel most suitable for general use is three feet.

The advantages of the bicycle over the three and four wheeled velocipedes are many and considerable. It is less than half the weight of the old machine, being but a little over forty pounds; and the friction is reduced to something like two-thirds. The power operating directly on the cranks, instead of being communicated through long levers, is wholly utilised, whilst the motion of the feet is more analogous to that of walking. When once accustomed to the use of the

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two-wheeled velocipede, it is not at all fatiguing, whereas the many-wheelers condemn their riders to a term of hard labour. As the result of several months' experience in driving a bicycle, I have no hesitation in estimating it as a clear gain of five to one in comparison with walking; that is to say, the rider may go five miles with the same expenditure of labour as in walking one, and after a journey of fifty miles he will feel no more fatigue than after having walked ten. Notwithstanding appearances to the contrary to the unaccustomed eye, the bicycle is, moreover, a *safer* machine than any velocipede with three wheels, and far more under control. To turn a corner with a three-wheeler at anything like speed, is a most hazardous experiment, resulting almost certainly in a 'spill'—because the speed lifts the hind-wheel describing the outermost circle, from the ground; whereas the two-wheeler, when on the turn, stands at an inclination like a skater's body, more or less acute according to the quickness of the curve to be described.

With regard to the speed which may be attained, fifteen miles an hour, under the most favourable circumstances, that is, good hard road, *not* level, but without very steep hills, and no wind blowing, is probably the limit of the velocipede's powers; but a pace of nine or ten miles an hour may be maintained for five or six hours without distress. Long journeys on level road are perhaps the most fatiguing, on account of their monotony, because then the feet, as in walking, are nearly always at work. Still, even in this case, the driver can maintain his speed with one foot, resting the other on the leg-rest; or, if disposed, he may even place both feet on the rests, and run four or five hundred yards without working at all. The slightly increased labour of climbing a hill is nothing to the zest imparted by a knowledge that there is sure to be a hill the other side to go down, and *that* is the most luxurious travelling that can be imagined. Descending an incline at full speed, balanced on a beautifully tempered steel spring that takes every jolt from the road — wheels spinning over the ground so lightly they scarce seem to touch it—the driver's legs rested comfortably on the cross-bar in front—shooting the hill at a speed of thirty or forty miles an hour—the sensation is only comparable to that of flying, and is worth all the pains it costs in learning to experience it. The velocipedist feels but one pang when he reaches the bottom of a hill, and that is, that it is over; and but one exquisite wish, which is, that the entire country might somehow become metamorphosed into down-hill. But the hill is bountiful even after one has left it, for the impetus derived from a good incline will carry the rider at least the hill's length on level ground before he need remove his feet from the rests and commence working again. The slightest incline on a good road is sufficient to obviate all necessity for working with the feet, so that what little labour there is (and it is of the easiest), is by no means incessant. In a journey of twenty miles on good road, a driver should not work more than twelve—the inclines do the rest. Of course, there are hills so steep that to ascend them is impossible: yet, for myself, living in a hilly county, which I have pretty well explored on my two-wheeled steed, I can reckon up their number on the fingers of one hand. There are also hills where the labour becomes as much as, or more than, walking, but these must be of a gradient something like one in twelve, and such hills are not frequent. When they do occur, the rider may, if he will, dismount. It is a subject of smiling pity to many of the uninitiated to behold a velocipedist dragging his horse after him up a hill—and cruelly realised, too, in the case of three and four wheeled machines; but the bicycle is better than any walking-stick to assist a person up an incline, even when only walking beside it. Resting one elbow on the saddle, and leaning the weight of the body on that, while guiding the handle with the other hand, the machine becomes a positive assistance instead of an incumbrance. This sounds like fiction, but it is fact. *Experto crede.*

There are persons who advertise to teach the use of the velocipede in 'a few hours.' Not long ago an enterprising French master advertised to teach the French language (in the intervals of sea-sickness) during the voyage from Dover to Calais. It should not be concealed that it requires as much time to learn the use of the bicycle as to learn to skate—and there are also occasional falls incidental to learning either. To urge the time necessary to acquire its use as an objection against the two-wheeled steed, would, however, be manifestly unjust. So difficult is it to balance the human body on merely two small legs and a pair of feet, in an upright position (a position such as would be scarcely possible to make an exact model of a man, even *without* life, retain for a single instant), that it has taken most of us a twelvemonth to learn how to do *that*. It is sufficient to say that a person may attain the management of a two-wheeled steed in less time than that of a four-footed one, and when he has done so, for speed, endurance, and inexpensiveness, the former will at least bear favourable comparison with the latter. As in skating, a week's steady and persevering practice is needful to acquire a comfortable balance, and gain control over the unaccustomed form of support. The 'falls' referred to above, as happening in learning the velocipede, are nothing to those incurred in learning to skate. No one should mount a bicycle until he is acquainted with the way to get off, which is really the first lesson. Whichever way the machine is going to fall, the learner has only to put out his foot on that side. His foot being not more than three inches from the ground, the horse, in the act of falling, will deliver him safe on *terra firma*, if he will only let it, whilst, by retaining his grasp of the handles, the rider at once balances himself on alighting, and saves the velocipede from falling. Some difficulty in remounting without help is sure to be experienced by a learner. For a month he must content himself with the assistance of the first post or gate or palings he sees by the wayside; but he will soon discard such assistance, and be able to vault on the saddle whilst his horse is in motion. Good hard road is essential for velocipede-driving. In muddy or loose gravelly road, the work becomes proportionately laborious. But with good 'going ground,' it is difficult to convey how little labour is really required to maintain a high rate of speed—in fact, the great trouble with beginners is to get them to restrain the expenditure of muscular force. Velocipede-driving is, I believe from experience, most healthy and exhilarating, since it exercises all the muscles of the limbs in a manner much more

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uniform than would at first be credited, and certainly without undue strain on any part of the body. To the spectator, the velocipedist appears almost wholly to employ his legs, but in reality the muscles of the arms are in strong tension in the act of grasping the handles, so as to counteract the motion of the feet on the pedals, which motion would otherwise tend to sway the wheel from side to side. In fact, after a long journey, the driver will feel more fatigue in his arms than in his legs. Once mastered, the two-wheeled steed is a docile and tractable animal, equally sensitive to bit and bridle, and a sturdy friend to the traveller. For him the pike-men throw open their gates without asking for toll. He needs neither corn nor beans, nor hay nor straw, neither hostler nor stableman. His stable is a bit of the passage-wall, against which he reposes, without taking up any room, until his master needs him again—his only food, a pennyworth of neat's-foot oil per month.

There is a Japanese sauce surnamed the 'Maker to Eat.' It will have little charm to the palate of him who drives a bicycle; for, be he the veriest epicure of the epicurean sort, he will, after a three hours' run, possess an appetite to which the most homely bread and cheese appears dainty.

At present, the bicycle is regarded, in England, very much in the light of a toy, and its practice as a pastime: not so in Paris and New York, where persons of all grades may be seen solemnly and seriously going to their daily business on two wheels. Now that the supposition about the new velocipedes frightening horses has been proved to be groundless, there seems little reason to doubt they will become equally popular in this country; and that after the first 'rage' for the novelty has died away, the two-wheeled steed may drop into its proper place as a serviceable nag, that can do a great deal of work in a very little time, and, after the first cost, at a very inconsiderable expense.

HISTORY *VIÂ* POETRY.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

When a great statesman (as has been more than once the case of late) puts forth a poem, or a theological essay, or when an actor, whose rôle has hitherto been comedy, essays to play Lear, we who have admired each in his proper part, are more curious than hopeful to see how they will acquit themselves under their new circumstances. We think of the great Wellington's statesmanship, of Liston, who would persist in maintaining that his genius was tragic, and of cobblers generally who have gone into the hat trade; but still we are very curious and expectant. It was with some such expectancy, some such doubt, that we saw advertised *Chaucer's England*, by Matthew Browne,* remembering that the same *nom de plume* was annexed to that most charming of booklets, *Liliput Levee*. What might not be expected in the way of humour, frolicsome glee, and pathos from that Laureate of the Little Folks; but then, on the other hand, only think of his writing a history! Dates! genealogies! products (tallow, hides, flax, &c.)! *Chaucer's England* too! Edward III.'s England, with *such* maps, and illustrations with women with horns, and men with toes tied to their knees, all out of perspective! It must surely, thought we, be only another delightful book for the young people.

And it is a delightful book, though not for the nursery. It is a strange plan to begin with, this proving of the Past upon the unconscious evidence of a poet, this reaping our information from the fields of song; but in Chaucer's case it is less difficult, perhaps, than from any other English verse-writer. It would be hopeless indeed for some future Matthew Browne to found a theory of how men and women in England lived to-day from the works of Tennyson or Browning. They are 'suggestive' enough indeed, but scarcely of solid matters of fact; whereas Chaucer was essentially the poet of observation. He sang of what he saw; of the visible external world around him; he drew such pictures of his time as Hogarth drew, except—and a very wide difference it is, though by no means a disadvantage to the duly qualified historical student—that he was also a poet. Everybody knows Chaucer was occasionally a coarse writer—and something worse. He has published his own disclaimer. 'God have mercy on me,' he says, 'and forgeve me my giltes, and nameliche my translaciouns and of endityng in worldly vanitees, whiche I revoke in my retraccioun, as is the book of Troyles, the book also of Fame, the book of twenty-five Ladies, the book of the Duchesses, the book of seint Valentines day and of the Parlement of briddes, the Tales of Caunterbury, alle thilke that sounen into synne, the book of the Leo, and many other bokes, if thay were in my mynde or remembraunce, and many a song and many a leccherous lay, of the whiche Crist for his grete mercy forgeve me the synnes.' In his youth, he wrote very loosely; in his manhood, loosely; in his old age, with gravity and repentance. But even this, as our author shews, is a curious corroboration of what we know of his times. 'He was too receptive a person not to take to that portion of the faith of his day which made repentance and bead-telling and a hortatory disposition the proper things in an old man. We, who look upon faith, devotion, and repentance of wrong-doing as things for the whole of a man's life, and not for his old age only, cannot help smiling at the medieval view of the subject. But we must take care not to smile unkindly. The whole theory of life and duty in those days was one of classification of persons, functions, seasons, foods, and occupations. That one part of life was intended to be more religiously lived out than another, would not seem so very absurd to a man whose church told him to eat no flesh on Wednesdays and Fridays, and gave him absolution for confessed sin upon penance done as often as he liked to come for it. In the middle ages, caste was moral as well as social and civic. The knight was to put lance in rest; the clerk was to be learned, "morall of sentaunce;" the parson was to preach, and to be a great deal more religious than his people; while those that "ben seculare" may, by the side of all this, do pretty much as they please. This is the organisation of life; virtues and offices are divided and apportioned; and the church overlooks the motley throng with blessing or ban in her power.'

Whatever Englishmen were in his own day, that we may be pretty sure Chaucer was: he is the most English of all our writers. Even his

* London: Hurst and Blackett.

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coarseness (which is certainly a national quality) may be partly excused upon that ground. He is a thorough 'good fellow.' 'His poetry is penetrated with the social spirit. He loves the haunts of men, the places where they dwell, the episodes of mutual need that bring and keep them together; meat and drink; industry and play; the uprisings and downsittings, the incomings and outgoings of men and women. . . . . A steady breeze of strong human feeling flows through his writing; he keeps you in the open air of life. Thus Chaucer, as an author, seems, even though he wrote in verse, especially fitted as a witness in the case we are considering, the habits of life of our ancestors of five hundred years ago. His social position also gave him peculiar opportunities of observation. 'He was a gentleman, a courtier, an ambassador, and a soldier; perhaps a man of business too, though we have no means of knowing *how* he filled the public offices which he held under the crown during some portions of his life. His descriptions of life and pictures of character could only have come from a writer who was a man of the world (as well as a scholar and a poet); he was connected by various links with persons and events which are prominent in one of the most splendid eras of English history; and his *Canterbury Tales* contain, more "Englishness" than any other poem in the language. For these reasons, he may fairly be taken as a typical person, so that no impertinence can be charged against such a title as *Chaucer's England*.'

In this book will be found the most exquisite appreciation of the poetry of Chaucer that it has yet received, not even excepting the graceful introduction of him by Leigh Hunt, who has acted as master of the ceremonies to so many poets, who, but for him, would be '*caviare* to the general.' Mr Browne reminds us of that bright affectionate writer very strongly: he has inherited his graceful fancy, his subtle yet sprightly wit, and also (for which we do not admire him the less) that excessive delicacy of appreciation which dull critics have termed 'finical.' In order to the complete enjoyment of the Chaucerian music, says our author gravely, 'the reader undoubtedly ought to know a little French, a little German, and perhaps' [think of this!] '*perhaps a little Anglo-Saxon*.' This is Leigh Hunt again, all over, and reminds one of his recommendation to use at family prayer (although he owns the thing *can* be done without it) 'some musical instrument, *such as a seraphine*.'

As most people are unacquainted with Anglo-Saxon, and are not likely to 'go in' for it, even with the object of 'the complete enjoyment of the Chaucerian music,' we shall use Mr Browne's translation when necessary, instead of quoting the poet's words. His style is equal to that of our best historians. This is how the time of Chaucer is introduced to us. 'The chimney is added to the house, the glass-window replaces the lattice or the shutter; the gun threatens the bow and arrow with extinction; Adam Scrivener "lothly" lays down his penner when the click of movable types becomes loud; dress begins to *think* of lopping off its entangling superfluities, and suiting itself to the wants of a people going busily to and fro; the dignity and prestige of the priestly person is threatened, and more remotely that of the soldier, an element clearly traceable in the spirit of the times; lastly, religious persecution lights the torch to burn the heretic—and we feel that we are in England. To-morrow the first printing-press will be set up under the shadow of Westminster Abbey; and after the Bible, Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* will be the first book printed.' It has been objected to this great poet that his thoughts are often without originality, merely the clothing of a saw or a truism in verse; but even this, as our author shews, was an illustration of the times. 'In his time, the very idea of originality as a supreme merit in literature had not taken possession of men's minds. The merit of a "clerk" in those days was to know what other men had written. His own peculiar skill was shewn in selection—unless he had genius, as Chaucer had, in which case the genius did its own work more or less unconsciously, and gave invention *in*—the originality was in excess of the bargain between him and his readers, but there it was.' Chaucer's own ideas of true worth were only too original—as compared with the flimsy and conventional notions of it which we find so prevalent to-day. Five hundred years before Burns wrote 'the rank is but the guinea's *stamp*, the man 's the gowd for a' that,' Chaucer wrote:

> Vice may welle be heyre to olde richesse,
> But there may no man, as ye may wel see,
> Byquethe his sone his vertuous noblesse;
> That is approperid to no degree,
> But to the firste Fader in Magestee,
> Which maketh His heires hem that doone Him queme,
> Al were he miter, corone or diademe.

Such arrogance, says he (in the *Wife of Bath's Tale*), as pride of birth is 'not worth a hen.'

> *Look who that is most vertuous alway,*
> Privé and pert, *and most entendith ay*
> *To do the gentil dedes that he can,*
> *Tak him for the grettest gentil man.*
> *Christ wol we clayme of him oure gentilesse.*

We are apt to imagine that the medieval times were much more influenced by caste than our own, but, as our author takes occasion to shew, the social feeling was much more active than the caste feeling. Human beings were thrown more *directly* upon each other for much of the help which they can now obtain at second-hand. People of diverse rank and culture were drawn together in a thousand ways, where they would now be apart; and 'high and low, layman and clerk, lady and soldier, would be kept in presence of the primordial facts of life, at no great distance from each other. The word truckle-bed would alone furnish a text for a discussion on this subject. The truckle-bed was a small low bed on truckles, which was placed at the foot of the great or state bed of a person of consequence. In the smaller bed would sleep the esquire of the knight, or the henchman of the esquire, ready to help his superior in the night, in rising, or in going to bed. Now this state of things, though it does not belong to an age of bell-ropes, gutta-percha tubing, dressing-rooms, and the like, is much more "human," and obviously brought people closer together. . . . . It must also be noted that, sharply drawn as were the lines of rank and station in the middle ages, the distinctions were kept up pretty much by superficial signs, which left the undermost roots of things very much the same in the consciousness of

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all persons concerned. . . . . The superiority of the privileged classes was signified and guarded more by trappings and splendour of apparel and furniture than by fundamental differences in people's habits.' Thus the idea of the Canterbury pilgrims all going in cavalcade together, the Knight and the Miller, the Country Gentleman and the Bailiff, the Lady Abbess and the Wife of Bath, is not socially outrageous; and whether or not, it is positively certain the tales told on the pilgrimage contain, both in the prologue and the stories, 'some of the most exact pictures of English life that ever were transmitted at any time in English history, by any pen.'

Take, for instance, his description of the miller. In all old-fashioned song, the miller is a prominent personage, since he belonged to 'a time when the relations of the man who grew the corn, the man who ground it, and the people who ate the bread, were much more direct than they are now; in Chaucer's time, indeed, the miller was the immediate servant of the lord of the manor, to whom belonged the exclusive right of grinding the corn grown upon his estate. One almost always likes to read of him, too' [and here dear Leigh Hunt's voice is recognisable in every tone], 'because he can scarcely be mentioned without recalling the picture of the mill itself; ever, to my thinking, one of the prettiest spots in a landscape.' Well, Chaucer's miller is a rough fellow enough, one who, 'as Mr Carlyle says of Oliver Cromwell, is decidedly not of the "man-milliner" or "patent digester" species. He has plenty of bone and plenty of flesh; he is a wrestler who could always feel sure of bearing away the customary prize—a ram; short-necked, broad-shouldered, and with, presumably, short thick legs, for I believe when an ox is said to be short-shouldered the legs are short. He could heave up a door with his shoulders, or knock it in with his head by running at it—the sort of head for the game of singlestick, or quintin, or any other of the athletic sports which were common in Chaucer's days, and much later. The next touch is very characteristic: you can imagine the red, bristly beard, in shape like a spade. At the top of his nose is a wart, with a tuft of red hair in it, "red as the bristles of a sow's ears." His nostrils are dark and spreading. His mouth is as wide as an oven. This is a description to frighten little boys and girls withal; there is no necessity to add that the miller carried a sword and shield with him. Naturally, he had a white coat, after the manner of millers; and then, for beauty's sake, a blue hood. Besides the usual vice of his trade—the tendency to take excessive toll—he is a noisy gossip and a teller of stories

> Of Moll and Meg, and strange experiences
> Unmeet for ladies.

It is a natural incident of such a character that the man should be noisy; and we are not surprised to find that he carries a bagpipe, with which he blows the pilgrims out of town, just, I suppose, as the old mail coach-guards used to blow their horns as the coaches rolled out at St Martin's-le-Grand in the evening. This last touch completes the strangeness of the picture; the bagpipe being mentioned quite as a matter of course, as if it were a common instrument; which it was in the days of Chaucer, though we are accustomed to think of it as an instrument quite unendurable except on the Scotch hills.'

Contrasted with the miller, drunk and unsteady on his horse, we have the reeve or bailiff. 'Dropping obvious anachronisms, this is pretty much the sort of figure a modern novelist would paint for a house-agent or attorney, or tax-gatherer or excise-man. We have here, upon a gray horse, called Scot (which is said to be invariably the name of a horse in Norfolk), a thin, peppery, close-shaven, close-cut man, with legs that were not only long, but so thin that they were "like a staff; there was no calf seen," says Chaucer. He was a treasure to his lord, whose accounts he had kept under hand since the lord of the manor was twenty years of age. No auditor could bring him in as indebted for arrears; but he drove sharp bargains with other bailiffs and with the herdsmen and others; "they knew his sleight and his covin;" and were afraid of him—"as of the death," says Chaucer. And no doubt in earlier times the power of life and death had been very much in the hands of a reeve who was on terms of favouritism with his lord; for under the feudal system, although the lord of the manor was bound to hold a manorial court, which was usually held in the great hall of the manor-house, upon offenders, yet, of course, the power of condemning a serf to death, *fossa* or *furca* (that is, the gallows for a man, the pond for a woman) was very much in the hands of the lord: the mere fact that any person might in those days be accused of witchcraft must have given immense power to bad people who had ends to gain. We are told that this reeve was a capital farmer, store-keeper, and stock-keeper, and that, like other middlemen, he knew how to enrich himself. He lived in a "full fair" house upon a common, with trees around it (a suggestion of a park evidently), and could even lend to his master; who would reward him occasionally with a new hood and cloak, and condescend to thank him. The reeve had on a long sky-blue coat, and carried a rusty sword; being stingy and more accustomed to use the saw and the hammer than to fight, for Chaucer says he was a good carpenter—which means, for those times, much the same thing as a builder, and implies that he was very useful to his lord in providing or altering the huts of the tenantry.'

The knight, again, presented by Chaucer is a thoroughly 'representative man.' He tells us 'he had ridden far, a chivalric adventurer, defending truth and the ladies, and fighting in his lord's wars—no man further—both in Christendom and in the Holy Land. He had often been served first at the board, because of his nobleness; and his ransom, when he fell into captivity, was high. He was wise (or humble and discreet), and, though brave as a lion, as gentle as a woman. Nor did he make any display in his person or dress. He rode a good horse, but was himself not "gay" to look at. His cassock of fustian was marked by his hauberk, but he had not changed his clothes on returning late from his travels: such was his devotion that he had gone straight on pilgrimage.' Accompanying the knight, and standing next to him in the order of courtesy, stands his son, the squire. 'He has been a good while "in chivachie;" that is, out of his apprenticeship as a knightly man, expecting some time to be himself invested. Being strong and brave, he will soon win his spurs; but at present his prize is "his lady's grace." He is

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courteous, and, according to the chivalric code, full of ready serviceableness. That he carves the meat for his father is a matter of course; it was the duty of an esquire. He curls his hair egregiously. He is exquisitely got up—"as fresh as the month of May" to look at; and has so many flowers about him, that he is positively embroidered with white and red roses—the flowers of love and knighthood. He is strictly in the fashion of the day, with the short tunic that the clergy so hotly denounced as indelicate. He can joust, of course, and dance well—which latter the clerk cannot do—and he has the clerk's accomplishment besides; for he can write and draw an illuminated letter. He is so eager a votarist of the faith of chivalry, too, that he scarcely sleeps at all; he is up all night (as the nightingale was *supposed* to be) composing or singing love-songs. This young squire appears to have a lady of his own, whose favour he hopes to win; but "so hot he loved" need not, by itself, imply that; for a young man might, by the laws of chivalry, love vaguely: not only a lady whom he had never seen, which was a common thing; but he might simply love . . . . . the universal essence of female beauty and goodness, if he could, as the metaphysicians say, posit it, so as to bring it within the range of an emotion.' This metaphysical sort of love-making is hard to be credited of so material an age—an age exhibiting the Wife of Bath, for instance, as a common type—yet our present author, in chapters much too long for quotation here, does seem to prove that what appears to us an absurdity in the romance literature of that date, was more or less a fact; that beauty and tenderness in women did elicit some mysterious sort of *cultus*, or worship, quite independent of the sexual passion. It is one of the few statements in these volumes in which we find ourselves unable to agree with Mr Matthew Browne.

Even more characteristic of their time than the knight or squire, are the pardoner and the sompnour—the man who had church pardons to sell, and carried relics in his pocket, also for sale. This gentleman was musical; he carried a vernicle, or picture of the head of Christ. In his mall or wallet were 'pardons come from Rome, all hot,' along with a piece of the Virgin's veil, and pigs' bones ('for saints'); yet could fill his place in church, and read and sing the offertory, well. 'The pardoner says that, when he preaches in church, he does it with a loud, commanding voice; for he has learned by rote what he has got to say, so that he has no need to hesitate. His theme is always one, and ever was—namely, that the root of evils is the love of money. "First," says he, "I declare whence I come (namely, from Rome), and I exhibit my bulls, and warn the folks that none of them be so bold as to disturb me in the holy work of Christ. Then I take care to speak a few words in Latin, in order to flavour my discourse, and to stir men to devotion. After this I produce my relics; for instance, a bone that was once part of a sheep belonging to *a holy Jew*, and I inform the rustics that this saint's relic will cure diseases of various kinds in his live-stock, and so forth."' This gentleman goes on to confess that he knows a hundred tricks more, and, among the rest, that his relic kills jealousy; 'a pleasant suggestion, once more,' remarks our author, 'of what ecclesiastical people were accustomed to think of the domestic life of the rude laymen of the period. Do you think, continues the pardoner, that I am going to follow the example of the apostles, and labour with my hands at basket-making, as Paul did at tent-making? No; I will go on begging, and have money, cheese, wool, and wheat, though I squeeze it out of the priest's errand-boy or the poorest widow in the village.' Now Chaucer's realism is admitted on all hands. 'He had no thought of posterity, nor of Protestantism, when he painted this portrait of a popish pardoner; and who can wonder, therefore, that Wickliffe arose in England, and that the echo of his footsteps did not die out till Luther arose in Germany.' The sompnour, or summoner (the ecclesiastical officer whose function it was to summon immoral folks before the archdeacon), is painted in still darker colours. By bribery and base compacts with bad people, this man is always contriving to impound something in the archdeacon's court, and to make money out of it. He thinks morality is for other people; and makes the worst possible use of his power over the young women in his diocese. When he is in his cups, which is often, he is full of law and scraps of Latin.

The friar comes off but little better than his two church confrères; one friar is described as begging, while another writes down on his tablets the name of any person who gives, assuring him that he would be 'prayed' for accordingly.

> Gif us a busshel whet, or malt, or reye,
> A Goddes kichil [*cake*], or a trip of chese,
> Or elles what yow list, we may not chese;
> A Goddes halpeny, or a masse peny;
> Or gif us of youre braune, if ye have eny,
> A dagoun [*piece*] of your blanket, leeve dame,
> Oure suster deer—lo! her I write your name—
> Bacoun or beef, or such thing as we fynde.

All is fish that comes to their net. They are not particular, as, indeed, how should pious friars be. 'A capon's liver, with a slice of soft bread, and a roasted pig's head, are all I want—indeed, I would not that you should serve up your best for such as *me*. I live chiefly on Holy Writ.'

Well may our author remark, that between monks, friars, clerks, and summoners, it is pretty clear, even after the humourist's licence has been handsomely allowed for, life in Chaucer's England must have been honeycombed with ecclesiastical meddling. It is true that the company were not without their good priest—the poor parson—the poor halfpennyworth of bread to all this sack. And it is a beautiful portrait—

> Such as the heaven-taught skill of Herbert drew,
> And tender Goldsmith crowned with deathless praise.

This excellent minister of God would rather forgive his tithes to his poor parishioners than press for them, and being satisfied with but little, he was, though poor, able to help others. His parish was a large one, the houses being far apart, but bad weather never prevented him visiting his afflicted people, high and low, up to the very boundaries of his cure, and he used to walk all the way. He *did* first and preached afterwards, so that he gave his sheep a 'noble ensample.' If gold itself rust, what can we expect of iron? If a priest lead a foul life, what can be looked for from secular people? He did not set his benefice for hire, or leave his flock to itself while he went to London to seek preferment. Nor,

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though so virtuous, was he untender and repelling to sinners.

There are good priests now, and let us hope that bad ones are (not, as in Chaucer's time) the exception, and not the rule; and we have also country-gentlemen, or rather what we now call gentlemen-farmers, as hospitable and wholesome as Chaucer's Franklin, whose face is ruddy from the country air, and beard white as a daisy; and who, if not believing in St Julian, the patron saint of hospitality, still keep open house—a house wherein it snows meat and drink. Let us now leave the male characters of the jovial procession and suite, and glance at the female ones.

SUBMARINE TREASURE VENTURES.

England, Holland, France, and Spain were much addicted to declaring war in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; and whenever this was the case, the enemies of Spain looked out sharply for the treasure-ships returning to Europe from the gold and silver mining regions of the Indies—the Spanish galleons. These galleons were very large ships, with three or four decks. Spain used to send them at fixed periods to the coasts of Mexico and Peru, to receive on board the gold and silver bullion extracted from the mines, and bring it to Spain. Commodore Anson, as is well known, was one of the lucky naval commanders who fell in with and captured one of these auriferous galleons. But the most notable instance was that at Vigo Bay, a few months before Queen Anne ascended the English throne. At that time, England and Holland were at war with Spain and France, in a struggle called the War of the Succession, relating as it did to the right of succession to the Spanish throne. Of course, being a war by land as well as by sea, all was fish that came into the net; and as it so happened that a fleet of Spanish war-ships was at that very time convoying a fleet of Spanish treasure-ships across the Atlantic, it was natural that the English and Dutch should look out for something in that way. Vigo was the place—a bay near the extreme northern end of the Atlantic seaboard of the peninsula, and separated from Cadiz by the whole length of Portugal.

What says Macaulay concerning this transaction? 'The fleet was off the coast of Portugal, on the way back to England, when the Duke of Ormond received intelligence that the treasure-ships from America had just arrived in Europe, and had, in order to avoid his armament, repaired to the harbour of Vigo. The cargo consisted, it was said, of more than three millions sterling in gold and silver, besides much valuable merchandise. The prospect of plunder reconciled all disputes; Dutch and English, admirals and generals, were equally eager for action. The Spaniards might, with the greatest ease, have secured the treasure by simply landing it; but it was a fundamental law of Spanish trade that the galleons should unload at Cadiz, and at Cadiz only. The Chamber of Commerce at Cadiz, in the true spirit of monopoly, refused even at this conjuncture to bate one jot of its privilege. The matter was referred to the Council of the Indies. That body deliberated and hesitated just a day too long. Some feeble preparations for defence were made. Two ruined towers at the mouth of the Bay of Vigo were garrisoned by a few ill-armed and untrained rustics; a boom was thrown across the entrance of the basin; and a few French ships of war, which had convoyed the galleons from America, were moored within. But all was to no purpose. The English ships broke the boom. Ormond and his soldiers scaled the forts; the French burned their ships, and escaped to the shore. The conquerors shared some millions of dollars; some millions more were sunk. When all the galleons had been captured or destroyed, came an order in due form allowing them to unload.' Admiral Rooke was with the Duke of Ormond, the one having a fleet of fifty sail, and the other a land-force of thirteen thousand men. Accounts are very conflicting concerning the ratio of treasure secured by the Spaniards, brought away by the English, and sunk. One writer states that the English brought away several men-of-war, and six galleons containing treasure to the amount of seven million pieces of eight; while the Spaniards sank eleven or twelve galleons laden to the value of six millions in gold and silver. Another, that the treasure sunk was more in value than that which was saved by the Spaniards, plus that which was brought away by the English. Another, that the total treasure was twenty million pieces of eight, of which no less than fourteen millions was captured by the English. Therefore, Macaulay's 'some millions of dollars' brought away must satisfy our curiosity as best it can. The English spoil was in great part embezzled by nefarious agents, but some reached England, and was coined, as a memento of the achievement.

What the pieces of money really were, is a matter that seems to be left in some confusion. Some speak of them as gold, some as silver, some as gold and silver; while others would treat the treasure as bullion in gold and silver, worth so many millions sterling. The designation 'pieces of eight' has had different meanings at different times—a gold doubloon of eight double crowns, and a silver crown of eight *ochavos*. Nay, it has sometimes meant a *value*, and sometimes a *weight* of silver; for the silver piece of eight had the weight which was at one time called eight royals. All things considered, we may perhaps better take the more modest estimate—that a treasure worth so many pieces of eight was about equal to so many of our crown pieces, or an ounce of silver each.

Now, there is a project on foot to send out an expedition, with the avowed purpose of recovering the sunken treasure, if possible. A *concessionaire* has had this matter in view for ten years past. He obtained from the Spanish government a concession (as it is called on the continent) or permission to do this; the agreement being, that whatever is raised from the sea-bottom of Vigo Bay, be it little or much, is to be shared in the ratio of three-fourths to him, and one-fourth to the Spanish crown, he to bear all the costs and trouble of the enterprise.

When Colonel Gowen, in the early part of the present year, examined the actual condition of the sunken ships, he found the following results: 1. The *Almirante*, in seven and a half fathoms water, has her timbers projecting two or three feet above the mud and shells at the bottom of the sea, all else being couched in a slimy bed; there are no indications that she has been burned, and the

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timbers below the mud have escaped from the attacks of the *teredo*. Although called a man-of-war, she more resembles a galleon. 2. The *Espicio* is in eight fathoms water, with her timbers nearly whole, but much perforated by the teredo. 3. The *Tambor* is more sound and perfect than the two above named, the deck being eighteen inches under the mud and shells. Colonel Gowen detected a layer of brickwork on a part of the deck; this he supposes to have been the floor of a cook-house. The deck is made of planks six inches wide by five in thickness. 4. The *Crusata* is in eight and a half fathoms water, sounder and less encumbered with mud than any of the three above named; on the ship lie an anchor, a mortar, and a gun-wheel. 5. The *Chaternan* has been burned to some extent, but her timbers appear to be quite sound. 6. The *Higuera*, lying in five and a half fathoms water, has been much burned, but her timbers are generally sound: several cannon-balls are on the deck. 7 and 8. The two remaining vessels, whose names are not given, have been much burned, and are immersed eight or ten feet in the soft mud.

The original names of the ships are not mentioned; those here given have been adopted by the divers who from time to time have examined them. All the sunken vessels form so many separate and complete mounds, above the general level of the bed of the bay, so great has been the accumulation of shells and mud above and around them. The galleon said to be the richest of the whole fleet, while being towed out of the bay by the English ship *Monmouth*, struck on a sunken rock in the South Channel, and went down. All hands were saved except two, but the treasure went to the bottom, and—like the old woman in the vinegar bottle—'if not gone, lives there still.'

The concessionaire has formed, or is endeavouring to form, a Company, with a joint-stock purse sufficient to defray the costs of the venture. Regarded as a speculative investment, as a source of profit, we have nothing to do with the matter here; but as a proposal for rendering useful that which is now useless (supposing there is really any treasure there after all), there are certainly points of interest about it. Colonel Gowen, for reasons presently to be stated, has been engaged to practically conduct the operations.

As to the means of raising the treasure, the armour-encased diver is looked forward to as the man of the future. Colonel Gowen says that he can only learn of one attempt having been made to raise the treasure, about twenty years ago. It was made upon two of the vessels only, by the aid of the diving-bell. This, as is now pretty well ascertained, is not an effective practical mode of procedure, seeing that the divers can make only a superficial examination, not beyond the lateral extent of the iron walls of the bell itself, and cannot possibly descend into the holds of sunken ships, or into any irregular cavities. The diving-dress—which leaves the arms and legs of the wearer free, while protecting his head from all access to water, and providing fresh air for respiration, and an exit for respired air—allows him to walk and scramble about into all sorts of holes and corners, always provided he does not break or entangle the ropes and pipes which connect him with the world above.

The exact plan which Colonel Gowen determines to follow will probably depend on the special circumstances of each ship. It is now known from practical experience that vessels can be, and have been, raised bodily from the bottom of the sea; while it is equally well known that divers can extricate and bring up valuable property from sunken ships. Floating pontoons have been used in a variety of ways for the first mentioned of these purposes. A remarkable instance of this kind took place last year. The *Wolf*, an iron-built mail-steamer, was sunk by a collision in Belfast Lough, and lay submerged in forty feet depth of water. After considering many plans of proceeding, Messrs Harland and Wolff undertook to raise the vessel. They constructed an immense floating raft of iron air-tanks, thoroughly water-tight. There were four of these tanks, arranged in two pairs, with a lateral distance between the pairs more than equal to the extreme width of the sunken vessel. Stout cross logs of timber in various parts connected the whole of the tanks into one float or raft, having a buoyant power of eight hundred and fifty tons—more than equal to the weight of the submerged ship. The vessel being embedded in eight feet of mud, there was no facility for passing chains under and around the hull, as has been done in other cases of ship-raising. Instead of this, chains were hooked into the side-light holes in the hull; there were fifty of these holes, fifty chains hooked into them, and fifty capstans or lifting-screws on the platforms of the float, to lay hold of the upper ends of the chains; each chain being capable of lifting twenty-five tons. Divers were employed to examine the exact position of the ship, and to secure the hooks into the side-light holes. These elaborate preparations being ready, the process of raising began. Two hundred and fifty men were set to work at the capstans or screws; they worked with a will; and in six hours the half-drowned *Wolf* fairly made an appearance above the surface of the water, and was towed triumphantly into Belfast harbour.

Whether Colonel Gowen proposes to adopt some such plan as this at Vigo, is not yet stated. Perhaps he holds himself open to vary his plan according to the circumstances which each vessel may present on examination; and perhaps he may try to bring up the treasure without raising the ships themselves. Certain it is that he *has* raised sunken ships; and it is on this account that his services have been secured for the Vigo enterprise. Those who are conversant with the details of the Crimean War will remember that on the 23d of September 1854, three days after the battle of the Alma, and three days before the arrival of the British army on the heights above Balaklava, Prince Menchikoff adopted the bold expedient of forming a line of Russian ships-of-war across the entrance to Sebastopol harbour, and sinking them by scuttling. It was apparently a reckless and unprecedented bit of strategy, but it fully answered the intended purpose; for the magnificent English and French fleets were unable throughout the war to make the smallest entry into the harbour, or to approach near enough for any effective bombardment of the fortifications. Again, on the 8th of September 1855, when the Russians abandoned Sebastopol, and retreated to the northern forts, they sank all the remaining ships in the harbour, to prevent them from falling into the hands of the besiegers. Thus it arose that the fine harbour of Sebastopol

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was choked up with sunken ships. Well, it is in this quarter that Colonel Gowen has already displayed his ship-raising ingenuity. He says: 'When raising the sunken fleet at Sebastopol for the imperial Russian government, I laboured under a number of difficulties which can scarcely be over-rated; and yet the most perfect success attended my operations, as I then raised and cleared seventy vessels of all sizes, some of which are now in commission.' Comparing Vigo with Sebastopol, he adds: 'My soundings in the Bay of Vigo shewed a bottom of mud in which the galleons are not more than half buried. When I compare this with the twenty feet of mud, clay, oyster-shells, and gravel in which the sunken fleet at Sebastopol was lying, I look forward with the most sanguine expectations to the result of the proposed undertaking. Instead of an open roadstead, as at Sebastopol, the small bay in which the galleons are lying is completely landlocked, so that operations can be carried on in all weathers, and through any season of the year.'

We shall see, therefore, whether Neptune can be made to yield up the treasure which, according to repute, he has for a hundred and sixty-seven years retained in his dominions at the bottom of the sea.

Another submarine Venture also invites our attention at present; but the lost treasure is of much smaller amount, and the episode has something like a century less of time to give romance to it. The facts are briefly as follow. In 1799, when Holland was waging war against France, and England aided the Dutch government with subsidies of men and money, a large amount of treasure was sent over in Her Majesty's ship *Lutine*. The government bullion or cash alone is said to have been a million and a half sterling in value; in addition, there were the crown-jewels of the Prince of Orange, which had just been repaired by Messrs Rundell and Bridge; while bullion sent over by private firms, and a large cargo of merchandise, raised the total value of the ship and its contents to a vast sum. Indeed, some accounts gave this total at three millions sterling. The *Lutine* was bound to the Zuyder Zee; but a storm raged so furiously on the coast of Holland, that she was driven on a sandbank between the islands of Vieland and Terschelling, and there wrecked. The circumstances were so unfavourable to anything in the way of rescue, that almost all the crew of two hundred persons were drowned. There was the treasure, then; and what became of it? During the first two years after the wreck, no attempt at salvage seems to have been made; but, at a later date, an English Company was formed, to endeavour to recover the sunken treasure, under an agreement that the Dutch government should receive one-half the proceeds. In the course of a few years, a sum of one hundred and sixty thousand pounds was raised, by such modes as were then known of employing the diving-bell, and divided equally between the Company and the government—that is, the Dutch government, for it does not appear that the English government put in a claim to it. The English underwriters or marine insurance firms lost heavily by the wreck; but the Dutch government for many years refused to recognise their claim to any of the salvage. More recently, however, Lloyd's, as the representative of the English underwriters generally, obtained twenty thousand pounds out of some of the treasure fished up; this sum has been invested at compound interest, and is to serve as the basis for a new adventure. Another attempt is to be made, under the management of the committee of Lloyd's, and probably under agreement also with the Dutch government, to raise some or all of the buried treasure. We believe the attempt is to be made next summer, and probably with the effective diving-dress, instead of the diving-bell. The public are *not* invited to subscribe to this new adventure; so we have simply to take up the position of lookers-on, and wish success to the operators on the drowned *Lutine*.

CHAMPAGNE.

Faster, faster, friend of mine!
Pour it not like vulgar wine;
'Tis a monarch—treat it so.
Let it frothing, foaming, flow
To the brim, o'er the brim—
Let the king his glories shew!

See it swell, and hiss, and froth
Like a maelstrom mad with wroth,
Roaring, raging, everywhere!
See uprise those tiny bubbles.
So our troubles, all our troubles,
Thus shall melt away in air.

Like a lion in its den
Startled by the tread of men,
Forth it foaming, flashing flies;
And each bubble, ere it dies,
Sparkles, sparkles, sparkles, sparkles,
Sparkles like a woman's eyes.

Ah! 'tis still! Its rage is spent
From mere want of aliment;
And its breath of life seems fled:
Fling the hungry wretch some bread.
Bread from thee! take bread from thee!
Sooner were the monarch dead.

Up he springs, and swells his tides
As to burst the glass' sides.
Bread to him who wears a crown!
Bread, the food of every clown!
Now, my friend, the bottle end;
Quaff the foaming monarch down.

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NOBODY'S LUGGAGE.

THE scene is a huge dock warehouse on England's great highway to the East and the West, where, coming in from the bustle and the sunshine, and the fresh air of the docks, one is impressed with a strange stillness and gloom. The air is fluffy with very old dust, and the big motes, floating in sunbeams that fall through heavily grated windows, move sluggishly and gravely. The place is hushed and tomb-like. No busy porters nor self-important custom-house officials are here, yet the place is heaped and piled and strewn with luggage—Nobody's luggage—in value many thousands of pounds' worth. Why don't the owners fetch it away? Nobody knows, and nobody cares, and as it belongs to Nobody, Nobody knows best. Much of this unclaimed luggage has been here five years and more; still, nobody asks for it, save in rare instances, and then Nobody often refuses to redeem it by paying the warehouse charges which have accumulated on Nobody's goods. These goods have either been wrongly addressed, or not addressed at all; or improperly advised, or not advised at all; or the consignee is dead or bankrupt, or won't pay the dock dues on them; and here they are in bond and keeping for six years' imprisonment. The dock authorities have power to sell goods unclaimed after two years to reimburse themselves, but it answers their purpose better to let Nobody's luggage 'eat its head off' in charges, as they put it; so that if Nobody should ever turn up after the goods are sold, he may get nothing. With this view, the unclaimed luggage is examined from time to time, and ticketed with the charges incurred for storing to date. Those packages are then selected on which the dock company's lien for dues being considered equal to the value of the goods, their heads may be supposed to be eaten off, and they are offered for sale by auction.

A strange assortment is Nobody's Luggage. One would have expected among so much unclaimed property to have found at least one or two prodigal umbrellas yearning to be restored to the arms of their long-lost and rightful guardians. But no—not even a stick of one. Where do they all go to—stray umbrellas? They do not enter here—'Nobody' hasn't got them.

What did Nobody intend to do with that five hundredweight of caoutchouc? (the dock-porter calls it 'ka-chook' for short—don't laugh at his ignorance—Knowles and Smart, the auctioneers, call it 'kô-chûk'); and why don't he take it away, and rub out the score?

Nobody sent twenty serons of Syrian tea without address or bill of lading. There it is in the great skin-packages in the warehouse. Nobody's tea has been waiting for him for six years: will the man never come to his tea, or has he gone for good to his bier?

There is indigo in maunds of buffalo-hide, a ton of it, that has been here seven years, and may stop here 'till all is blue' before it will get claimed.

Will Nobody ever come to fetch the ivory tusks, near a dozen of them, in canvas packages, which were sent to his order from the Brazils 'a long time ago?' Or, if he has not remitted payment for them, and is short of funds, why does Nobody not come and claim the *box of gold-dust*, marked and numbered—— But, no; this is a dock secret. Aha, Mr Nobody! you prick your ears. Untold riches which nobody knows await you here, and—the best and the worst of it is—Nobody can claim them. However, it will be long before the box of gold-dust 'eats its head off' in charges; so, set your wits to work.

At the time of the dearth in the cotton-supply, when many thoughtful minds turned their attention to seeking a substitute for cotton, a scientific man brought home from the West Indies an immense quantity of queer-looking roots. They are very fibrous, and fray out into strands stronger than flax, and as soft and shining as silk itself. But when he came back, the war was over in America, and the cotton-supply promised better, so he relinquished his project, and left his roots in 'pound' for the dock dues. There they remain to this day.

At the far end of the warehouse is an immense pile of chairs—Nobody's chairs. Hundreds, almost

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thousands of them. These are 'deck-chairs,' which the home-passengers by the Peninsular and Oriental steamboats bought for the passage home, and have preferred to be relieved from, rather than pay the sixpence dock dues on something so awkward to carry about as a deck-chair. They are of all shapes and sizes and sorts—American, French, and Indian—bamboo, birch, rattan, wire, and cane. They will accumulate, and no matter how often the storehouse is cleared of them, there is always a pile.

Here are sea-chests too, belonging to seamen—sent to the docks to be left—for seamen who never come. The chests wait in the baggage warehouse till all hope is gone, and when the time for hope has passed without inquiries, they come up here—dead men's chests—chests of orphan, homeless sailor men and boys, with the London and Foreign Bible Society's Bible in them, and no one to inquire even for *that*—till the Judgment Day.

At the last sale of Nobody's unclaimed luggage, among other stray strange things that were put up for sale was a band-box containing—guess?—a wedding bonnet! There it had staid in the musty old warehouse for nearly seven years. The label had been washed off, and there was no direction, and no clue to sender or destination; so it became Nobody's luggage. Every box is opened by the authorities before going into the unclaimed warehouse, and an inventory carefully taken of its contents. One item in this band-box, however, escaped the scrutiny of the examiner. The bonnet was taken out and displayed by the auctioneer—white silk and white *tulle* and white lilies it had been once. Now, it was all soiled and yellow—a poor sad, drabbled thing, limp and of a fashion long gone by. A labouring man bid two shillings for it, and got it, and was jeered at for buying it. But on taking it home he found sewed up in the bonnet's crown a sovereign, and these words on the bit of paper that wrapped it up: 'A wedding present to my dear Allie.' Nothing else.

And that was Nobody's bonnet. Who was 'Allie?' And had she expected the present, seven years before? Were there tears that it did not come? or would there have been more if it had? And was she married to Nobody after all? And now? Is she Nobody's bride?

A COUNTY FAMILY.

CHAPTER IV.—THE LETTER FROM DERBYSHIRE.

When Mrs Blackburn got within doors, she found Ellen with her elbows on the window-sill, staring through the diamond panes, as though a beloved object could be beheld by refraction, even though it had passed the range of the horizon.

'It is a good wind that blows nobody ill,' thought her grandmother: 'Mr John Denton is like to lose his mistress if Anthony gets his own.—Ellen,' said she, laying her hand upon the young girl's head, who started and blushed at her touch, 'there 's a letter come for grandfather.'

'Indeed, grandmother: what a pity that John has gone!'

The old woman smiled.

'I mean,' stammered Ellen, blushing again, 'because he could have taken grandfather his letter.'

'That may have been as though a schoolboy should carry the cane with which he is to be beaten to the master's hands,' observed Mrs Blackburn gravely.

'I do not understand you, grandmother,' said Ellen with wondering eyes.

'No, child; and perhaps there may be no need that you ever should. But listen—if, at least, you can hear anything but that handsome young fellow's last words, which are ringing in your ears like marriage-bells, I know.'

'What is it, grandmother? How strange you look! how your eyes glisten! Are you well?'

'Am I well?' repeated the old woman passionately. 'What a life I must have led these many years, if, when one seed of hope springs up in my withered heart, and makes my face to shine, folks think I have the fever!—Yes, I am well, child, and very well; that is, if *this* be well;' and she placed the letter just received in the girl's hand. 'Do you not recognise the handwriting?'

Ellen shook her head.

'What! do so many letters, then, come to Moor Cottage,' continued Mrs Blackburn excitedly, 'that you cannot tell one from the other? To be sure, I forgot that John Denton writes whenever he cannot come to see your pretty face. But I tell you there may be something in this letter worth fifty of your John Dentons, with his house of eight rooms, and his two hundred pounds a year to boot.'

'Worth fifty John Dentons!' ejaculated the young girl, with the air of one who says 'fifty millions,' and endeavours in vain to picture to herself so fabulous a sum.

'Yes, child,' pursued the old woman; 'and if you were not crazed with love, you would know what I mean at once. This letter is from the family lawyer—the Redcombe lawyer—the same who wrote to us, only a year ago, to say that Richard Blackburn was dead; and this, you see, has a black border and a black seal, as that had.'

'Do you think that poor young gentleman—his son—is dead then also?'

'I *hope* he is, child.—Poor young gentleman! He was never poor; he never knew what it was to fare hardly, and work for pence, while youth and health were stealing away. *Poor*, indeed! he that was rolling in ill-gotten wealth, while your grandfather and I were *here!*' and she looked round with scorn at the bare walls of the cottage.

'That was not his fault, grandmother,' pleaded Ellen gently, 'for you know that his first act, when his father died, was to offer to assist us.'

'Yes, to assist us out of our own money; that was a fine thing to do, indeed!' The speaker delivered herself of this last remark with the greater bitterness, because she herself, on the principle of half a loaf being better than no bread, had been for accepting the young gentleman's proffered aid, a suggestion to which old Anthony would not listen. Her grand-daughter, though well aware of this circumstance, was not so imprudent as to recall it to her; she contented herself with quietly saying: 'But how do you know what is in the letter, grandmother?'

'How do I know! Why, for what else can it be, except to say that the lad 's dead, that Mr Moffat writes? He promised your grandfather to do so, you know, whenever anything of importance occurred in the family.'

'But why should he not write, then, to tell us that young Mr Richard was engaged to be married, which John himself heard to-day on Slogan?'

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'I never thought of that,' said the old woman, falling into rather than sitting down upon a chair. 'Alack, this is worse than all! To be so buoyed up as I was, and now to be sunk deeper than ever!' Her voice, so jubilant, and even fierce, had at once returned to its old hoarse and hopeless tone; the gleam of her eyes was quenched; she looked ten years older than she had done a minute before, as the tears rolled down her furrowed cheeks without a sob.—'But why should the letter be in mourning?' observed she eagerly after a little silence.

'Well, grandmother, Mr Moffat himself may be in mourning, for all we know.'

'Ay, that's true,' remarked the old woman sadly. 'Everybody dies but them as ought to die.'

'Would you please to give me that sixpence?' observed a shrill voice at the cottage door. 'I promised to be back at the stable at four o'clock, 'cause some ladies and children has hired donkeys, and I 'm the donkey-boy.'

'It 's the lad who brought the letter,' explained Mrs Blackburn. 'I promised him twopence extra, because I thought it was sure to be good news; and now I wish he had never come with it at all.'

'Come, none of that reading first, and then not paying,' began this irrepressible youth; when, suddenly catching sight of the young girl, his countenance fell, and he added in tones that were meant to be respectful: 'I beg your parding, Miss Ellen; I did not know as you were at home.'

'That is no reason why you should be impudent, Jemmy,' observed Ellen. 'My teaching at school does not seem to have done you much good, I fear, since you are so rude.'

'O yes, miss, it did, leastways so long as you was doin' on it. But we ain't got no such teacher now; and besides, now I 'm a donkey-boy, I don't go to school at all.'

'Send him away, send him away!' cried Mrs Blackburn querulously. 'I have twopence here, and the other fourpence must be taken out of your father's box yonder, which holds grandfather's 'bacco-money.'

'There is only threepence in the box, grandmother.'

'Alack! nor more there is. I forgot it was the end of the week.—Look here, lad; here is fifpence for thee; and instead of the other penny, I will cut some bread and cheese, and give thee a draught of milk.—Dear, dear,' muttered the old woman, 'to part with money and good food, just to hear bad news that has been already told us!'

The boy had been fed and dismissed, and the afternoon was drawing on, but still Mrs Blackburn sat in the rush-bottomed chair, her generally so active arms quite still, and folded before her, and her eyes fixed on the letter, which had been placed on the mantel-shelf. Ellen sat by the window working nimbly with needle and thread, but without venturing to interrupt the silence.

At last, she rose, with a quiet 'Here is grandfather home already;' and she went out on to the moor, as was her custom, to welcome the old man.

He received her, as he always did, with a loving kiss; but she strove in vain to discover, from his looks and manner, whether John Denton had spoken with him or not upon the matter which lay next her heart. Anthony's face was haggard, and his step more slow, she thought, than it was wont to be; but this could be easily accounted for if he had heard the news of Richard Blackburn's engagement. On the other hand, she knew enough of her grandfather not to expect to find him elated, as his wife had been, by the young overlooker's improved prospects, even though John should have proposed for her.

In the first place, the old man thought his Ellen a prize for any man; and in the second, he still clung with a tenacity that neither years nor disappointment could weaken, to the idea that he should one day enjoy his own again, as the Squire of Blackburn Manor. It would have been ludicrous, were it not so mournful, to contrast with so grand an expectation the toilsome appearance, the mean attire, and even the usual topics of talk of him that held it. Whatever colour his dreams might wear, his waking thoughts were clad in drab, concerned themselves only with the practical realities of life, unless, as by the stranger that day on Slogan, that chord chanced to be struck which always vibrated too powerfully for Anthony's self-command.

Had the pane been mended, was his first question, which Thomas the glazier had promised to step up and see about, in the window of the bedroom; and when he heard that it was not, his brow grew cloudier than before. The winter would come upon them, he foresaw, with that job still undone, and he should have again that rheumatism in his joints, which had crippled him so last spring.

'I trust not, grandfather,' said the young girl affectionately; 'and as for the window, if that remains as it is, and since *I* am not subject to rheumatism, grandmother and you shall have my room.'

'To which we shall be all the more welcome,' remarked the old man grimly, 'because you hope to be elsewhere—eh, you jade?—where the panes of glass are sound.'

'Indeed, grandfather'——

'There, there; don't tell stories, girl,' interrupted Anthony pettishly. 'I know all about it; Denton has been talking to me for an hour and more. I daresay he thinks it 's a mighty generous thing to offer to marry a quarryman's daughter, he being the master of us all; but I can tell him—and indeed I did tell him—that Anthony Blackburn's grand-daughter has as good blood in her veins—from one side, at least—as any girl in England, and may one day yet hold up her head with the highest. Two hundred a year, indeed! Why, unless young Richard has kicked it down—which is not very likely, since he is still a minor—there is four thousand a year in land about the Manor; and the Mosedale property, Mr Moffat tells me, is worth ten times what it was, now that the town has sprung up.'

'There is a letter come for you from Mr Moffat, grandfather,' said Ellen quietly, to whom the opportunity for thus interrupting the old man's recital of his possible greatness was welcome enough.

'I expected there would be,' returned he coldly; 'and my expectations, when at least misfortunes are anticipated, are generally realised. John Denton took care to tell me that young Richard is engaged to be married; but there 's many a slip between the cup and the lip, and instead of the marriage-bed, the grave sometimes receives'——

'Nay, grandfather, do not talk like that; I am sure you do not mean it. You are too kind, too good'——

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'Do I not, grand-daughter?' And the old man stood still, while over his bearded face there stole a terrible look. 'I tell you, that if by raising my finger—thus—I could save that young man's life'——

'Yes; but you would not take it! Oh, say you would not take it, grandfather?' pleaded the young girl passionately. 'The seal of the letter is black, and there is black on the border of the envelope, and for all we know, we may be talking of one whom death has already taken.'

'Black on the border!' cried the old man, his eyes lighting with sudden fire, and his limbs moving with hasty strides towards the cottage. 'Where is the letter?—Where is it, wife, I say?'

'It is on the mantel-shelf next to your 'bacco-box, Anthony; and we took out your last three pennies, besides two of my own, to pay the lad as brought it, and until Saturday, we have not a farthing in the house. Yet it brings nought but bad news, Ellen tells me'——

'It brings the best of news,' exclaimed the old man excitedly. 'I say it must bring it.—Get me a chair, Nelly, for I feel my head go round; there is something dancing before my eyes, and I cannot make out a word. Read it aloud, child. But no; I can't bear that: let us know the news at once in a single word.'

'Mr Richard Blackburn is dead,' said Ellen in a solemn voice.

'Then justice is done at last,' ejaculated Anthony, clasping his hands. 'At last, after fifty years!'

'And there is money in the letter—notes!' exclaimed Mrs Blackburn, snatching both them and it from her grand-daughter's hand. 'There is fifty pounds, in case we may have present need of money, he writes, and to defray expenses on our journey home.'

'Home!' repeated the old man. 'Home at last!' Then his lips moved without a sound.

'It was appleplexy, and quite sudden,' observed Mrs Blackburn, looking up from the letter. 'You know we were once told that he had a short neck. How I wish that we had got this money in golden pounds; it don't look half so much in paper!—does it?'

The sight of such an unaccustomed sum within her very palm, prevented all speculation on the future; the letter itself, with its contents, was disregarded in comparison with such a present gain.

'What a terrible blow for the young girl who was engaged to be married to poor Mr Richard!' exclaimed Ellen sorrowfully, her genuine regret doubtless increased by the position in which she herself stood with respect to the young overlooker.

'My darling Nelly,' said the old man softly, 'let me kiss you! You are a good girl, and Heaven has rewarded you for it: that charming face of yours has now the fortune which always seemed by rights to belong to it. Within six months, you will be the belle of the county. I wish you joy, my dear, with all my heart.'

'Thank you, grandfather,' replied Ellen timidly. 'I hope that you and grandmother will find all the happiness from this change of position which you anticipate;' and with that she glided from the room into her own bedchamber.

'I am afraid she will hanker after that John Denton still,' said the old man slowly; 'and though, of course, he is not to be thought of now, it is lucky I did not give him a definite promise.'

'It is not that, Anthony, which makes Nelly sad,' said Mrs Blackburn earnestly; 'it is the thought that we are such a divided family: you don't know how she frets about that. Surely, now that you have got your own again, you will forgive and forget.'

'I cannot forget, woman,' returned he gloomily; 'the remembrance of which you speak forces itself upon me now with tenfold bitterness. But I will endeavour to forgive.'

An hour ago, one would have said that such news as they had just received must needs have made every member of the little household happy. Yet Anthony Blackburn, unable to dismiss from his mind the recollection which his wife had just evoked, took his way towards the little seaside town with no very radiant looks; and Ellen, filled with sad forebodings, lay on her little bed with her face to the wall, too sad to shed a tear.

Mrs Blackburn alone seemed to feel these sudden rays of the sunshine of prosperity strike to her very core. 'She could sit down to nothing,' as she expressed it, from sheer delirious joy, but moved briskly about the cottage, again and again stopping to smooth out the two bank-notes which her husband had left with her (he had gone to get change for the rest), and to murmur to herself that her Willy was coming home, for good, to be a gentleman.

CHAPTER V.—COMING HOME.

It is not many days since that eventful letter arrived, for which Mrs Blackburn had disbursed all the money in the family coffers; yet the cottage on the moor is tenantless; and a carriage-and-four is conveying its three inmates to the home that is so old to two of them, and so new to the third, as fast as the steepness of the Derbyshire hills will permit. The railway has brought them no nearer than within twelve miles of the Manor; and to Mrs Blackburn, eagerly desirous of beholding the great house of which she is at last the mistress, this distance appears interminable. Prosperity, if it has already taught her impatience, has, however, worked wonders for her externally; her attire, by no means sombre in its tints—for Anthony has peremptorily forbidden the least pretence of mourning for his deceased nephew, and she is far from wishing to be disobedient in this respect—becomes her well; the splendour, at which she herself would fain have aimed, has been judiciously mitigated by her grand-daughter's good taste, but enough remains for striking effect. The best remedy for her impatience seems to consist in regarding closely the texture of her costly mantle, or stroking the unaccustomed gloves that conceal her red rough hands. Beside her sits her husband, his eyes restlessly roving from object to object on the road, which, with every revolution of the wheels, seems to grow more and more familiar to him; still, every now and then, his recollection is evidently at fault; and this seems to pain him. He will then stand up and put a question or two to the nearest postboy, albeit he generally receives little satisfaction from that source. The postboy has not a map of the district around Blackburn Manor, fifty years old, before *his* mind's eye, so as to be able to appreciate minute changes, although he can indicate important ones. Thus, after having reached the top of a long winding hill, from which a vast extent of

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country could be seen, 'What's *that*?' cried Anthony eagerly, pointing to where from some far distant valley rose the smoke of a thousand fires.

'Why, Mosedale, sir,' answered the man, turning round in his saddle with great astonishment, while the panting horses rested for a minute. 'There's twenty thousand folks and more lives down yonder now, sir.'

'Ah, to be sure, I had forgotten,' returned Anthony with the colour in his ancient cheeks. 'But that high mound yonder to the left is surely new?' He pointed to the verge of the far-stretching purple moor, where something resembling earth-works seemed to have been recently thrown up.

'That is the new reservoir, sir, for supplying the town with water. They do say it cost fifty thousand pounds.'

Anthony nodded gravely, and his bearded face grew sad. The last time he had stood upon that moor—gun in hand, and full of strength and youth—not only was there no such mound to be seen, but no cloud of smoke hung over yonder valley. He felt like Rip Van Winkle after his long sleep; and, indeed, his condition was even worse, for not only were his people changed beyond recognition, and mostly by death itself, but the places in which they had dwelt had altered also. He felt somehow ashamed of his ignorance, and put his next question with a faltering voice, and in a form that admitted of retreat: 'That is not Curlew Hall with the tall turret, is it?'

'Yes, indeed, it is, sir; though I daresay the new wing, built by the late Squire, makes it look strange; and yet that must have been done these ten years. They do say he crippled hisself with the expense; but young Mr Herbert would have run through the money anyhow, so it's just as well spent in bricks and mortar.'

The carriage moved rapidly on, and the observations of the communicative postboy were thereby cut short; but they awoke a train of reflection in the old man, who lay back as if fatigued, regarding with half-shut eyes the pale features of his beautiful grand-daughter who sat opposite to him.

'That is the young Herbert Stanhope,' ran his thoughts, 'whom I saw on Slogan the other day, and whose grandfather was once my bosom-friend. He has a good heart, I think, even if he be a spendthrift, since he offered an old quarryman a drink from his flask. Perhaps it was for the sake of Nelly's pretty face; but if so, so much the better. The Curlew and Blackburn estates join at the Longacre. His family is the oldest in the county, except our own; and if he is in want of money, there will be less of scruple.'

Some unpleasant thought had here arisen in the old man's brain, for he sighed heavily, and once more raised himself and looked around, as though to avoid dwelling upon it.

'We surely ought to see Redcombe from here, man, ought we not?' inquired he. 'One used to catch the church-tower from all points of the moor, I thought.'

'Ay, sir, but that was before the woods growed,' bawled the postboy. 'You don't see neither church nor manor now till you comes close upon 'em.'

Even the very face of nature, then, was altered beyond recognition: changes such as the rapid growth of Mosedale—which had much enriched the Blackburn estate, by-the-bye—the old man had expected to see, but this strangeness of the material features of the landscape was entirely unlooked for. The home picture which he had had before his eyes for so many years in imagination, and which he had thought to see realised that afternoon, did not, then, even exist, but had been swept away with the generation which was familiar with it. Anthony ventured upon no more questions, lest he should learn that any of his usurping kinsfolk might have altered the Manor-house itself. But as the vehicle rapidly descended into the valley, where the village nestled beneath spreading elms, field after field was passed that he knew well, farm after farm, which, though with a new outbuilding here and there, were still very recognisable; the open green with apparently the self-same groups of children on it, and the same flocks of geese that he had seen there when he last beheld it; then the ancient ivy-covered church unchanged by a mere fifty additional years, and from which those bells were pealing blithely for his return, which had been forbidden to hail his marriage-day; and last the Manor-house itself, no stick nor stone of which seemed otherwise than the exile had figured it: perhaps the truth was, though Memory had enriched the picture with her softened lights, Time too, on his part, had invested the reality with his mellow charms.

Blackburn Manor was an Elizabethan mansion, not indeed of imposing size, but still of large proportions; with a broad stone terrace (upon which the peacocks strutted and screamed), approached by broad stone steps, with urns of stone ablaze with scarlet flowers. The whole face of the house seemed veiled from the evening sun by a network of greenery, out of which peeped many a blossom of rose and passion-flower; and upon the terrace balcony, as on the steps, the geraniums shone like lines of festal fire. These last had indeed been planted by order of the late Squire, to please the eye of his betrothed, but they now seemed to flash a welcome on the newcomers. A ring of 'ducking' villagers at the gates, and an obsequious courtesy from the lodge-keeper, was all they had hitherto met with in the way of greeting. The country-folk were puzzled as to the course of conduct they should pursue. Was joy at the reception of old Squire Anthony entirely to erase regret for young Squire Richard's untimely demise? or was a decent middle course to be adopted? In the carriage-sweep, however, and on the terrace steps, there was a considerable concourse of tenantry and others assembled to do their new master honour, who, the king being dead, were prepared to say, 'Long live the king!' Mr Mowbray Moffat, an ancient personage, much bowed in the shoulders, but with keen intelligent eyes, stood at the head of them.

'We are glad to see you back again amongst us, Squire, after so many years,' was his grave salutation; and 'Glad to see you, sir,' was echoed respectfully around.

There was no cordiality in the sound, however; nor indeed was it to be expected. Richard Blackburn, a youth of really noble promise, had been a general favourite; the heart of a landlord of seventy was not likely to be so impressionable as that of one of nineteen, and his dependants naturally enough regretted the change. Moreover, there were scarcely half-a-dozen present who had ever set eyes on Anthony before, and of course not one

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who recognised him. Still, they all knew he had been badly treated; had heard from their mothers' lips the story of his dismissal from his ancestral home, and pitied him. It interested even the dullest to behold by his side the woman for whose sake he had sacrificed so much and for so long.

'She is for certain most uncommon lovely,' muttered one young tenant-farmer thoughtfully.

'Tut, man, that 's his grand-daughter,' replied his neighbour, laughing under his breath.

'Ay, true,' returned the other slowly, and with that imperviousness to ridicule which seems peculiar to the profession of agriculture: 'I had forgotten it was fifty year ago. But I daresay the old one was a dainty morsel in her time.'

'Hush, man; the Squire is going to give us a speech;' and, indeed, instead of taking advantage of the open chaise door, and the score of outstretched hands that offered themselves to help him down, the old man had got upon the carriage-seat, and was beckoning with his hand for silence.

'Neighbours and friends,' said he in a hoarse voice, 'I thank you for your welcome. You ought to know me well, though you do not. But that is not my fault, nor yours. I thought to stand here, thanking you for drinking my good health, as your young Squire, when I should have come of age, just fifty years ago. That was when Mr Moffat yonder was as young as any man here, and long before most of you were born. I am like a dead man out of mind to almost all of you.' Here the old man paused, overcome with emotion, and a sympathetic murmur arose from his auditors. 'I cannot expect that you should entertain much regard for a man of whom you have probably heard nothing but ill from those who have wronged him. But I was sent forth from this place a wanderer on the face of the earth, like Cain, for no crime, but because I fell in love with my wife. Or, rather, I was like Esau of old, with Ferdinand and Charles and Richard—all Jacobs—for my false brethren. That is not your concern, you would say. But when I thus revisit the home of my fathers, through the good-will of no man, but by the judgment of God, I cannot but feel some bitterness. However, what has been ill for me will be good for you, I hope, inasmuch as I have known, like some of you, what it is to be poor, to work with these arms for bread.' Again a murmur arose from the crowd around, and one man cried out 'Shame!' 'Yes, my man,' continued the squire, turning towards the spot from which the voice proceeded; 'it was indeed shameful in those who were the cause, for they not only drove me to work, in which there is no shame, but to want. That seems strange to you, does it not, that the rightful owner of Blackburn Manor, and his flesh and blood here, should stand in need of daily bread?' The old man pointed to Ellen, whose pale face, made paler by emotion, or perhaps apprehension of what her grandfather, in his passion against his brethren, might say, seemed to bear out the old man's words. 'I swear to you that this tender, delicate girl beside me has been in need of bread.' Every eye was turned towards her as he spoke, and very many were full of tears.

'O grandfather,' pleaded Ellen softly, 'pray, pray say no more.'

'Yes, my friends,' continued he, 'the things which we have suffered in our own persons are easily forgiven; but there are some wrongs—I say there are some crimes which even God does not pardon; at least, I have seen that he punishes those who commit them from generation to generation. This brings me to what I had in my mind from the first to say to you. I hope to be a good landlord, a good neighbour, a good friend to you all. In return, I would ask one favour of you. Do not speak to me—try to remember not to speak to me—of those persons who have preceded me here. I will never forgive them, but I would fain forget them. I do not wish, if it be possible, ever again to hear their names.'

These words, spoken so calmly, and with such earnest preciseness, seemed to freeze speech and motion in those who heard them; not a voice was raised, not an arm was stretched forth to aid him, as the old man descended from the seat, and quitted the carriage. As if afraid of that stern bearded face and those implacable eyes, the crowd drew back on both sides; and through the living lane thus formed, the Squire slowly climbed the terrace steps, and passed through the open door into his home.

His wife and grand-daughter followed more rapidly, each leaning on an arm of Mr Moffat.

HISTORY *VIÂ* POETRY.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.

We have unfortunately no picture of the ordinary 'housewife' from Chaucer's fingers: the Dutch manner of painting, as applied to interior details, was not in vogue in his day; but we have a charming virtuous maiden, such as there are now in ten thousand English homes, we trust, notwithstanding the Girl of the Period. And we have also a character into which she could never grow, the Wife of Bath. 'This is the portrait of a vulgar rich *bourgeoise* of the west of England, where they made good cloth. She would allow no one to go up the aisle to the altar to deposit her offering or to kiss the sacred relics before her. Her head-dress, heavy with many folds, according to the fashion of the times (so that the neck was often invisible), might have weighed ten pounds—on Sundays! She has scarlet stockings and well-greased shoes. Her red bold face and her talk together tell us enough of her story to enable us to understand why she had been sent on so many pilgrimages, and was now going on another. She sits well upon her pony, with a pretty veil or wimple, and has a hat as large as a shield. She wears spurs—perhaps she rides across—and has a cloth around her wide hips. She is a free talker, and free laugher, and we scarcely need listen to her prologue and story to guess that she is a shrew.'

The prioress, although she is not so coarse as this lady, is as commonplace. She is full of affectation and self-consciousness; 'of her smiling full simple and coy;' she talks French, that is

> Aftur the scole of Stratford atte Bowe,
> For Frensch of Parys was to hire unknowe.

'She knows how to behave at table, keeping her fingers dry, and not dropping her meat from her knife—because forks, of course, were unknown. She affected courtly manners; and had the usual false sentiment of over-accomplished women in any age: she would weep if she saw a mouse in a trap, *if it were dead or wounded*, otherwise it would

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serve for a pet, like a bird in a cage. She had her pet dogs with her, which she fed with morsels from the table. If one of them happened to get hit by somebody's walking-stick, she cried. Her wimple covers her head, and hides her hair, but she has a well-marked forehead. Of her dress we are told little, because there was not much to tell of the attire of a religious person; but the lady had taken care to have her cloak well made. She wears a chaplet (called "a pair") of beads round her wrist, and her golden brooch bears a motto of the order in which the religion and the chivalry of the day may be said to have met and kissed each other: "Love conquers all things"—at the best an ambiguous motto for a religious fine lady.'

Again we have a pretty portrait of a vixen in that of the wife of Harry Baily the host, 'who, when he beats his servant-lads, brings out the thickest sticks, and urges him to break their bones out of hand—a pretty picture of the rights of a master and mistress in the days of Richard II. If people are not polite to the lady at church—St Mary Overy's, of course, is the church she went to—and if her husband does not resent the slight in a becoming manner, she calls him a milksop, and proposes to exchange her spinning-wheel for his dagger.' And lastly, we have a charming portrait of the old miserly carpenter's wife, aged eighteen. She is 'genteel' and slender. 'Her jacket is bordered or barred with silk. Her apron is white, and broad, being gored about her loins. Her "smok" open at the sides, and hanging by her shoulders like a pinafore, is "embroidered" with black silk, outside and underneath, where it shews. The strings of her white cap are of the same colour. She has a fillet of silk over her forehead, confining in front the peplum she wears over her hair. Her eyebrows are arched, and black. At her girdle hangs a leathern purse, ornamented with brass and silk. Her collar is low, so that her bosom has a chance of being seen, and it is fastened with a brooch as large as the boss of a shield. Her shoes are laced high up on her legs. She is as fresh as a primrose, and as dainty as a sucking-pig!'

Yet this fair young creature combed her hair opposite a metal mirror, or over a tub of clean water; was innocent of tooth-brushes, fed high, and drank beer in huge draughts.

Perhaps it was less easy to think delicately of women under such circumstances than it is now; but they were certainly coarsely treated, coarsely thought of. It was not unusual, we gather, for men to beat their wives in those times, though it was not held to be quite right to do so. The flogging of women in prison (a thing which would now set the whole country in a ferment) was a common thing. There were 'gags' and 'ducking-stools' for women who made themselves especially disagreeable. As for the chivalric idea of the fair sex, supposing it existed at all as a reality, that was for knights and dames only (a restriction which appears to us to have been fatal to its genuineness), not for burgesses, and much less for common people. Well may our author inquire: 'What effect did the romance spirit have upon the toiling swarms that the Black Death carried off by millions in medieval Europe? .... All this pageant of bravery and tenderness looks like a thing painted in the air, far over the heads of the multitude.'

In all medieval, nay, in all old writers, there is a tendency to jest, and somewhat brutally, against women; and Chaucer, notwithstanding his description of the maiden (Virginia), and his story of Griselda, was one of the chief offenders in this respect. But we are not, on that account, to consider that women were less faithful, or even modest in his day than they are at present. There were two reasons, according to Mr Matthew Browne, for this hard measure dealt to the fair sex. One was, 'the exaggerated and exaggerating conceit of men. In the time of Chaucer—a time when such a tale as that of Griselda could be accepted as presenting a type of womanhood not unworthy of imitation, however difficult the imitation might prove—the conceit of men, ranging as it did side by side with preposterous ideas of authority, dignity, and privilege in every direction, must have been, as we can plainly see it was, absolutely enormous. By the conceit of men, I mean their habitual estimate of their attractiveness to women from a low point of view, their superior importance socially, their rights over them, and generally their glory and grandeur in the scale of creation; including such notions as were founded on a false physiology, which, indeed, were, and still are, largely influential among the uncultivated and half-cultivated classes. One of Griselda's reasons for being ready to give up her child to be slain, is that it was *his*, her husband's—a reason founded on a mistaken scientific position.

'But besides all this, I fear I must add another reason, and that I think it was perhaps the strongest of all. That reason is the factitious prominence which certain topics acquire when the church of a country and its dominant religious opinion uphold the importance and dignity of celibacy, and large numbers of celibate men and women are present in society, contrasted by their peculiar position with the rest of the social body. If the pretence of what was called "purity" broke down often, as we know it did—if, in other words, the "celibates" were no celibates at all in a very large number of instances—we can imagine how much worse the case became, what perversion of the popular imagination followed. "If *these* checks, these rigid schemes of discipline, these awful oaths, do not suffice to bind people; and if these impulses are in themselves sinful, so that not even a sacrament of the church can do more than make them venial sins, and are yet so rife and so deceitful—why, what can we trust to?"' This explanation of the slights cast upon women by the writers in old times, appears to us to have great weight; and we cannot resist quoting another eloquent and forcible passage to the same effect. 'In the middle ages, the church had taken possession of all the critical periods of life. It had said: "There is nothing sacred but what we make sacred." Everything was, so to speak, excised and made to pay toll, in money or in sentiment, to the church. It seized the human being at birth, and said: "We must christen him, or he will be lost." It took him up again at marriage, and said: "The instinct which underlies the attraction of sex is deadly sin, but we will do what we can for you, and by a sacramental process we will convert this foul, corrupt, and damnable thing into something venial." It pursued the human being to his death-bed, and sent him out of the world with the tolling of a sprinkled bell (necessary for frightening away evil

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spirits) and the "sacrament" of extreme unction. From first to last it took possession of humanity; would neither let it come into the world, increase the world, or go out of the world without its authoritative interference—in the sense, not of a willing helper, but of one who had property in a vassal or villein, and could pronounce him and all his possibilities unclean and damnable, if without ecclesiastical sanction for his very existence and all his functions. Pleasure or delight was the especial hatred of an asceticising church; and, above all, the delight which we habitually roof over in our thoughts with the words "a happy home."'

One of the points which has always been much disputed in the comparison of ourselves with our remote ancestors is, whether, upon the whole, with all our civilisation and knowledge, we are *happier* than they—whether England deserves the name of 'Merry' so much as it did of old, or not. Now, Chaucer is the very man to tell us the truth about this; he described what he saw most accurately, and he had a keen sense of enjoyment, so that he would probably see all that could be seen in the way of merry-making. 'We look back through the mist of centuries as well as we can, and taking Jack-in-the-green on the way, permit our eyes to rest upon a heterogeneous picture of gabled houses, splendid shows, glancing colours, and rapid movement, with plenty of music. The midsummer watch is set, and the watchmen, with their cressets, walk the streets. Or the garland is stretched overhead, and the girls are dancing. Or the butts are fixed, and the lads are out in the meadow with their bows and arrows. Or the fool, in motley, shakes his bells and plays his pranks in some gay procession. Or the young Cockneys are up and abroad early in the first of May, to fetch in the sweet-smelling boughs. And somewhere in the air is the sound of the timbrel, shaken, as we guess, by a healthy maiden, and the ringing of bells, and even the horn of the huntsman, for perhaps the chase is up in Epping Forest. Was there then more *gaieté de cœur* in this England, or in a still younger England, than in the England that we all know to-day?'

There was certainly more public carousing, more 'set' holidays, and mirth to order; but it will not seem paradoxical to thoughtful readers to remark, that though the growth of personal freedom promotes happiness, it need not promote obtrusive visible merriment in a people. Nor does it. 'That external gaiety, that loud-voiced muscular mirth, that zest in pleasure, as distinguished from business or duty, which we think we notice in the merry England of our ancestors, is, in fact, the gaiety of half-cultivated creatures, who love noise and bluster, just as savages do; but in part it is the gaiety of a common people who were not free. It is the characteristic of the slave to make a noise over his pleasures when the hour of relaxation has struck. In the time of Chaucer, Englishmen had ceased to be slaves, the lowest and meanest of them; but the condition of the common people was of the kind in which the burden is felt, though the chain is away.'

The merriment of men and women in whom a sense of inferior position is nourished by a system of social privilege, is apt to be explosive. In an age when an architect could impress workmen and pay them what he chose—as William of Wykeham impressed labourers for his works at Windsor Castle—to have a holiday, to be set free from work, was to be set free from much more than work. Uproarious joy, while it lasted, was a sort of defiance of privilege, and yet it was often 'a mendicant joy.' The holiday-maker (to judge him by the ballads of his time) was a beggar also, and asked for largess. Our author has these and other excellent reasons to give why he 'cannot follow those writers who go into raptures over the feudal spirit, as if it had a natural tendency to make life joyful.' To place the ease or wellbeing of the individual in his own power, by making life universally convenient, that is the modern notion. To *make* the individual happy or jolly by efforts addressed from the outside, in a patronising manner, which ran naturally into splendour and gewgaw, that was the medieval view. We agree with Mr Matthew Browne that the present method is by very far the best. Moreover, as he suggests, even these scenes of festivity did not occur so often as one is inclined to imagine; they were picturesque incidents, and therefore were of course made the most of by the chroniclers of the time, and alluded to as often as possible. Even we, with all our modern advantages, might lead our descendants into great errors about ourselves if they mistook 'prominence' for 'frequency.' 'Look, for example, at the prominence which the topic of mountaineering assumes in newspapers and magazines! If an antiquary of five hundred years hence were to say that mountaineering was a common pastime of the English people, he would not make such a very bad hit for an antiquary, but what nonsense it would be!'

At the same time, it is likely enough that there was more unthinking joy in those days, more of well-founded hope—for how much of light and liberty was to come—than in our own. We are thoughtful, philosophic, regretful; in Chaucer's time, cakes and ale were in greater repute, and gave more pleasure than now. Our poets are no longer 'lightsome,' and, as our author remarks, it is curious to see how Autumn is a prominent symbol, or source of symbols, with them, whereas with Chaucer, and those after him, Spring was the favourite season. This is sufficiently marked to be significant, even after due allowance is made for the fact, that the badness of indoor accommodation, even in the best mansions, sent people earlier out-of-doors to meet the summer than they go now. Moreover, what delights there were of old (except as concerns theatrical display) were of a more striking and picturesque sort than at present. 'Think of my lady in green and gold, with her hair tossed and tangled by the wind in the morning sun, riding her pretty palfrey at a conscious *allegretto*, with the bells of the birds making music, and the excitement when the quarry is well in sight and the hawks go free from my lady's hand. . . . . Whether you could buy the best hawk-bells at Milan or at Dordrecht, was a nice question; and whether the bell on the right leg ought to be a semitone or a whole tone above the bell on the left, was another. We may well imagine a bevy of ladies out hawking on a sweet, fresh morning—it was said they hunted with hawks better than men, and I can well believe it—finding plenty to occupy their charming little tongues in discussing such questions.'

Or, again, let us take a town picture, of the

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Southwark folks coming in with boughs of May on the first of that month, and of those whom they meet in the streets where we now walk, without much thinking of our predecessors. 'One of these troops of Mayers, largely sprinkled with gawky boys and girls, is sure to find its way into the courtyard of the *Tabard*, and howl and jump till some of the guests throw them a largess. Or imagine a troop of jugglers or mummers, or a group of morris-dancers, with flags and garlands, attended by very energetic minstrelsy. While the dancing, singing, and mumming are going on, a scene full of movement and colour at all events, a maniple crosses the road from St Mary Overy, and a nun, perhaps, comes toddling from the priory at Bermondsey. I think nuns always do toddle, walking as if they had stones in their shoes. Perhaps the beadle comes by, holding by the collar somebody who is going to be put in the stocks; an abbot on a nag; a lady on a palfrey with her wimple down; or a page all in crimson and blue, who being charged with an urgent message, inevitably stops to look at the mummers; and, besides the loss of time, forgets half his business, for which his white-handed mistress, who is just now breakfasting on beef, salt herrings, and beer, will soundly cuff and rate him, later on, swearing at him by Goddes bones or Christes foot. The "long-haired page in crimson clad" makes better haste back than he did in going, and on his way hears the bell of St Mary Overy strike the hour. He is not disposed to linger for so familiar a sound, and perhaps, like Chaucer, he does not care for music; but in the Ladye Chapel he hears chanting. What he would *like* is a row across the Thames, say to be ferried to the Tower, where he could, perhaps, look at the wild beasts, by favour of some acquaintance of his among the soldiers, whom of course he greatly envies. The river runs bright and clear, between banks which are green enough to keep alive its recollection of the Cotswold Hills; and the gardens of the citizens slope down to the banks. The page is too accustomed to the sight to notice the little boats, laden with piled-up rushes, some of them, perhaps, for the floor of his mistress's boudoir. The Thames eddies and whirls with a great noise around the clumsy piers of the bridge, but he does not notice that either, as we should if we were dropped down upon the London bridge, which had a crypt underneath it. From every point the fields are in sight. He can see windmills turning, kine browsing, almost hear the tinkle of sheep-bells; but all this has no particular charm for him; he prefers a stroll in Paul's Walk to shew off his long hair, his pointed shoes, his new black and red trousers, and the paltock with the gilt edging, which he carries jauntily over his shoulder, something like a hussar jacket. Here comes a black friar, hastening to a deathbed. And here the odd figure that reflects the motley of it all. We all know him in *Twelfth Night*, and in *King Lear*, and at the Circus; but how astonished we should be to meet him in the street, himself part of the motley, or in the hall of a friend's house, before dinner, with a cock's comb, ass's ears, and a bladder full of pease at the end of a stick.'

If there was much motley in the streets, much diverse colour of garment, all was laid aside at night for flesh-colour. It seems certain that in Chaucer's time, even those connected with the great, such as he himself was, slept with no other covering than the bedclothes. 'As naked in my bed I lay,' says he, more than once, and he is a writer of accuracy. We learn from his evidence that the cottages of the poor were sooty because they had no chimneys to carry off the smoke. Even the carpenter, who was a rich man in his way, lived in a house which had no first floor. At dinner, guests were paired, and ate, every pair, out of the same plate or off the same trencher; and the use of napkins and finger-basins was obvious enough, since there was no such thing as a fork. Even the most fashionable folks in those days were what we should now call very dirty people. Nor must it be forgotten that it was something with those far-back ancestors of ours to be sure of dining at all: not only because the science of the Commissariat was but little understood, and Want might be at one spot, with a glutted market within a few miles, but also because one's personal liberty was always doubtful. 'Any king, queen, lord, or lady might have to eat prisoner's food; a fact that made it worth while to blow trumpets before you ate or drank your fill, and of which a trace remains in the Litany of the Church of England, "That it may please Thee to shew thy pity upon all prisoners and captives." As to the cooking, our author is of opinion that the articles to cook with were much the same as now; but certainly porpoises and peacocks are, in these days, very uncommon; and, on the other hand, we should doubt if a medieval *chef* could have possessed any article in which he could have cooked whitebait. Men were more from home than at present, and women had therefore leisure to make a complicated, if not a very perfected science of the art. 'When we look at the astonishing cookery of our ancestors—when we note the intrepid manner in which they put, or told you to put, fifty different ingredients into a dish or a drink—we wonder where they found time to do it all. Turn to an old receipt-book, and observe the easy indifference with which you are told, if you want a tansy-pudding or a basin of gruel, to "take" a score of the most impossible things in the world. *This*, too, is to be gathered when the moon is at the full, and *that* when the dew is on the grass: the witch-broth recipe in *Macbeth* is nothing to it. The ladies must always have been getting up at day-break, or watching for eclipses of the moon, or catching salamanders, or tying up marjoram, sassafras, borage, or mint; getting in benzoin, zedoary, gum this and gum the other—or else how did they produce those astounding boluses and electuaries?'

Thus from religion to cookery, our author has contrived to put old Chaucer into the witness-box upon all the social subjects of his day; not in matter-of-fact cross-examining manner, but with infinite assiduity and discernment, and again has set the evidence before us in the most winning and convincing way. No writer, we repeat, since Leigh Hunt has left us, has shewn himself so full of alacrity and grace, of appreciation and judgment, as the author of *Chaucer's England*. In some respects, he is even his superior. There are some reflections scattered through these volumes, not on literature, but on human life itself, which are beyond Hunt's last. For instance, here is a truth which few have had the wits to recognise, and still fewer the courage to write: 'No man can know another man as that other man knows

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himself; and I am unalterably of opinion that a human being's estimate of his own character and worth is usually far more truthful than the best estimate that can be made by all the ingenuity of his friends put together.'

PIT CATASTROPHES AND RESCUES.

ARE we or are we not to derive useful lessons from the terrific accidents in coal-pits, so often narrated in the newspapers, and so harrowing to read? Holding an inquest, and subscribing funds for the relief of bereaved wives and children, are both right enough; but half the work is left undone unless useful facts for future guidance are collected and recorded. Most of these appalling disasters arise either from fire-damp or from choke-damp—fire-damp kindling by the flame of candles and lamps, and burning up everything and everybody; or choke-damp stifling the poor miners with carbonic acid. Here the lessons to be learned are mainly those connected with ventilation and the safety-lamp. In the smaller number of instances, where a flooding with water, or the falling in of the sides of a shaft, has produced the mischief, researches and precautions of other kinds are obviously suggested. But experience has now taught us pretty clearly to learn this additional lesson—not to believe that even *a week's starvation* will necessarily kill the poor fellows who are deep down in the mine.

In the remarkable escape from the Edmonston Colliery, in Scotland, some years ago, the occurrence was neither the explosion of fire-damp nor the flooding of the workings, but the shutting up of one of the passages by a mass of brick and timber; nevertheless, the lesson taught was the same, to encourage hope until hope itself dies. A portion of the side-lining of the colliery shaft fell in, and the débris was sufficient in quantity to fill up from the bottom of the shaft to the level, and above the level, of the workings. Fortunately, there were only a few persons down the pit at the time—thirteen in number. It was before the termination of that disgraceful period when the gentler sex as well as the rougher was employed in mining; four of the persons were women. The attention of the men above ground was at once directed to the ventilating shaft, a few hundred yards distant from the main shaft; it was known that a horizontal air-passage extended from the one shaft to the other; and a fair probability appeared that the buried miners, unable to force a way through the mass of rubbish in the main shaft, would bend their steps towards the other, and there look for succour. Several men consequently descended the ventilating shaft; but the air was too foul to enable them to reach the necessary depth of five or six hundred feet; and after two attempts they desisted. Attention was then directed again to the main shaft, a mode of rescue planned—necessarily slow, but the best that could be thought of. A wooden cylinder or 'crib' was made, the same diameter as the shaft, to fill up a certain space while the rubbish was being removed. While this was in preparation, a messenger arrived in haste to say that feeble voices had been heard down the ventilating shaft. Of course all hands hastened thither, with a renewed hope of being able to effect a rescue. Men descended, battled courageously against the foul air, and shortly returned bringing up the youngest of the four women. Her first exclamation was: 'Eh, sirs, we have been praying a' nicht.'

Now what had the poor imprisoned thirteen been doing all this while? They soon ascertained the hopelessness of trying to remove the rubbish which blocked up the opening of the horizontal passage into the working shaft; they tried that passage to the other end, but, as it was only three feet high, and nearly filled with water, their progress was speedily barred, and they returned to the workings, which were in a sort of midway position. They knelt down to pray, and ponder on their miserable condition. Forenoon, afternoon, evening, night passed. At six o'clock next morning, they made another attempt to reach the ventilating shaft, and were again frustrated. Then their candles went out, and they sought a dry place where they might lie down to die. They sang a hymn, and prayed, and thus passed the second day. At five o'clock on the following morning, they raised courage to make one more attempt; and this time with good success. They found the water in the horizontal passage two inches less than on the preceding day, though still reaching up very near to the roof. They groped through, with their faces so turned up as to be above the level of the water. Two of the men who had the best knowledge of the way took the lead. All formed a chain, holding on by one another's garments, and the men carrying the women as best they could; one strong man carried the weakest woman on his back, and at the same time dragged along the weakest man. It was perilous work, for unless the mouths could be kept above water, survival would have been impossible. After two hours' laborious and anxious toil, they arrived at the ventilating shaft, where their feeble shouts were fortunately heard by the persons above. All the thirteen were, one by one, brought up, and restored by kind and judicious treatment.

In this case, the plan of operations at the main shaft was not needed; but the result shews that both those above ground and those below were fully justified in continuing their search for a rescue, even when timid hopers had looked upon death as speedy and certain.

The recent wonderful episode at Brierley Hill affected exactly the same number of persons—thirteen; but the duration of their misery was far greater. About two miles from Stourbridge, at Brierley Hill, are certain collieries belonging to the Earl of Dudley. On 17th March last, in the dusk of early morn, the men above ground at the Nine Locks Pits became aware that there was something wrong below; water from some unknown source was rushing into the shaft; it rose above the level of the working passages, entered them, and flooded the mine. Fortunately, the number of persons below was only small; but to extricate these alive seemed an impossibility. Nothing could be done but to set the powerful pumping-machinery to work. Five successive days did this process continue, until an enormous quantity of water had been pumped up. Early on the morning of the 21st, just about a hundred hours after the flooding, and during a momentary stoppage of the pumping, the men above ground, to their infinite astonishment, heard faint cries from the bottom of the upcast shaft. They all set to work on their new duties eagerly, but seven hours elapsed before they

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could reach the workings. They found four men and a boy, faint and exhausted, but still sensible; these they carefully brought up. But where were the other eight? On the same evening they found the dead body of one poor fellow, who had wandered away deliriously about a hundred feet from his companions, undressed, and lain down to die. The other seven, five men and two boys, were known to be in deeper workings. More pumping was necessary. At three o'clock on the morning of the 22d, some of the explorers penetrating the deep workings heard a feeble 'All alive!' in response to their shouts. By wading, swimming, and rafting, in passages nearly filled with water, they reached a spot where four men and two boys were assembled; these they tenderly handled and safely rescued. A few hours later the last man was found, insensible, and terribly emaciated, yet still alive.

But all the above-ground proceedings sink to mere uninteresting details compared with the story which the rescued miners had to tell. We will shape the scattered narratives into diary, for the sake of distinctness.

Tuesday, 16th March.—The men and boys went down to take their wonted turn at work during the night; and as the hour of descending was late in the evening, we may at once pass on to the events of the next day.

Wednesday, 17th.—Between four and five o'clock in the morning, one of the men rushed to the others and cried: 'For God's sake, make haste and save yourselves; we shall all be drowned!' Water had entered the workings, in immense quantity and from an unknown source. They ran towards the spot where the horizontal gallery opened into the vertical shaft, but could not reach it by a long distance; for the shaft was full of water far above the level of the opening, and a long way into the gallery itself (which inclined a little upward from the shaft towards the workings). The thirteen men and boys appear to have been working in two gangs at some distance apart; and these gangs had different stories to tell, although alike in general character. They groped to the edge of the water, entered it, waded in it, and sought for any possible means of reaching the shaft; but they were driven back in despondency. At length the increasing foulness of the air extinguished all the lighted candles, adding the horrors of utter darkness to their other miseries. The boys were hungry, and the men gave them what remained of the food taken down over-night.

Thursday, 18th.—Rousing up after snatches of feverish sleep, in profound darkness, they could hear powerful pumps working, and thereby knew that the people above ground were doing their best to empty the flooded shaft. But the imprisoned miners themselves could render no aid towards their own rescue. They gave up all idea of swimming or wading in the water, or even of drinking it to quench their thirst—so utterly foul, stinking, and loathsome was it. The workings, too, became filled with such contaminated air, that it was wonderful how respiration could be maintained; the men managed it by lying down close to the point where the water reached, and catching the air that came with the ripple caused by the pumping. But what air it was! The men could not see each other even when close together, so total was the darkness. They placed lumps of coal at the edge of the water, as gauge-points to determine by degrees whether the water advanced or receded; it advanced, and their hearts sank within them.

Friday, 19th.—Another day in this living tomb. They contrived to measure the lapse of time by carefully *feeling the hands of a watch* possessed by one of them; and this watch was kept duly wound up, as the only available means. Sometimes the men would venture to grope a little way, to search for a possible breath of purer air, or a draught of water a little less foul than the rest; but they kept mostly together, and near the edge of the water. The boys tried to forget their hunger in sleep, huddled in the arms of the men. Some of the men wrote notes to their wives, taking a last farewell in homely but touching lines, and put them in their pockets or tobacco-boxes; and one of them was particularly anxious that the much-treasured watch should be regularly wound up, as he thought it might afford some clue to shew about what hour they all died.

Saturday, 20th.—Each day was now very much like the preceding—no food, no water that they could drink, no light. Yet it is plain that the air must have become less vitiated, otherwise suffocation would infallibly have ensued. Some of the poor fellows chewed small bits of coal; and one of the boys cut out the leather tongue of his boot and eat *that*. The leather-munching *did* bring some kind of moisture into the mouth; but it is hard to understand how coal could have done the like.

Sunday, 21st.—One of the men, Benjamin Higgs, began to wander in his mind, and to shew a tendency to start off in the dark and quit his companions. He was the owner of the watch which had hitherto told them how the weary time was passing; and they feared to lose both poor Ben and the watch. The water was sinking, very slowly; but they had hardly strength to follow the receding edge—hardly strength to do aught except lie down. This was the day when the men in the upper workings were able to reach the upcast shaft, and utter the feeble cries which led to the rescue.

Monday, 22d.—At last the poor fellows in the lower workings, only just sensible, heard distant voices, and saw lights as if floating on a raft on the water. Their 'All alive!' brought them speedy aid; and when one of the rescued said to one of the rescuers, an old companion, 'Hullo, Yorkshire!' it was no small delight, we may be sure, to 'Yorkshire' and the rest of them.

How the twelve were tended, nursed, and restored, need not be told here. The point we would dwell upon is, the marvellous power of sustaining life exhibited on this occasion. Higgs, the last man, had been in his terrible position from five o'clock on Wednesday morning till two o'clock on Monday afternoon—a hundred and thirty hours. With the exception of the first few hours, during the whole of this long period he was utterly without food, drink, or light, and had only vitiated air to breathe. Nor was it otherwise with the two collected groups, who had been about a hundred hours and a hundred and twenty hours respectively, in their living tomb; they had all passed through a similarly astonishing ordeal of hunger, thirst, darkness, and unwholesome respiration; and their vitality had similarly withstood all these trials. If the people above ground, under the conviction that

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all were dead below, had slackened the pumping, the mouths of the side-passages could not have been cleared of water until after Sunday and Monday; and probably by that time life would have been extinct. The miners hovered round the pit's mouth day after day, hopeful to the last, ready to descend to the rescue at a moment's notice, and listening ever and anon for any sounds of voices below. They were right; their listening and their promptness were effectual aids. Where the water came from, was a question for the engineers afterwards to ascertain; at anyrate, there were fifty thousand gallons per hour pumped out for six days. Doubtless there is still much to be ascertained about ventilation and drainage, but we have at least learned *this* lesson—not to be *quite* certain that six days' abstinence from food, drink, and light will necessarily kill a man.

SLANDER AND LIBEL.

IAGO tells us that good name in man or woman is the 'very immediate jewel of their souls;' and we have it on the same unquestionable authority that 'he who filches from us our good name robs us of that which not enriches him, and makes us poor indeed.' The English law has endorsed both these statements of the Venetian, and has on the one hand provided a set of safeguards for the security of the 'very immediate jewels,' and on the other a series of punishments against those who in any way contribute to dim their lustre.

Formerly, the law was very careless about the reputation of any but that of the great men of the kingdom. Perhaps people did not backbite in those days—perhaps it was only the great folks' reputation that lay open to attack. From whatever cause, the laws of England did not take cognizance of slander or libel as offences if uttered concerning ordinary people. Such complainants were referred to the ecclesiastical tribunals, which could admonish slanderers, impose penance upon them, and caution them, as they loved freedom from correction, to behave better in future; but redress for injury done by backbiting the law gave none. As between the king and his subjects, whether barons or not, and as between barons and persons of inferior rank, the law was made stringent enough in the matter of slander. It was probably due to the numerous misunderstandings, accompanied by bloodshed, which arose between Henry III. and his people, that the statute of Westminster the First (3 Edward I. c. 34) included in its provisions a law for the punishment of those who reported slanderous news whereby discord might arise. Indeed, the law itself asserts almost as much in its preamble: 'Forasmuch as there have been oftentimes found in the country devisors of tales, whereby discord, or occasion of discord, hath many times arisen between the king and his people, or great men of the realm .... it is commanded that from henceforth none be so hardy to tell or publish any false news or tales whereby discord, or occasion of discord, or slander, may grow between the king and his people, or the great men of this realm; and he that doth so, shall be taken and kept in prison until he hath brought him into the court which was the first author of the tale.'

This punishment looks very much like perpetual imprisonment, for how a man who was in prison could manage to find a man who was outside, and bring him into court, is a question that might have puzzled even the framer of the statute. Practically, however, it probably meant imprisonment during pleasure. The nobles in Richard II.'s time felt the annoyance of slander which came 'betwixt the wind and their nobility,' and procured the statute of *Scandalum Magnatum*, a law which punished with considerable severity those who told 'horrible and false lies' of the great men of the realm. Another law of the same king punished those who defamed any of the great public officers. These laws, however, protected only the reputation of king and barons; and it was left to a later time, and to an unpopular court, to devise a safeguard for the character of ordinary men and women.

The Star Chamber was the place where the law of libel, as it has come down to our times, was moulded; and though in this, as in other particulars, the court came to strain its authority to the oppression of the subject, there cannot be any doubt that it supplied a manifest want in the common law, by prohibiting, under penalties, the clacking of idle tongues, and the wagging of pens by malicious holders. Hudson, a barrister who practised in the court of Star Chamber, tells us that 'in all ages libels have been severely punished in this court;' and that in the eye of the court a man was guilty of libel who 'scoffed at the person of another in rhyme or prose;' if he personated him 'thereby to make him ridiculous;' if he annoyed him by parading his effigy in a contemptuous manner; 'or by writing of some base or defamatory letter, and publishing the same to others, *or some scurvy love-letter to himself, whereby it is not likely but he should be provoked to break the peace;* or to publish disgraceful or false speeches against any eminent man or public officer.'

As a proof that Hudson did not exceed in writing thus, there remain records of cases where men were convicted and punished for speaking 'certain words against the Lord Cardinal,' for using uncivil words to the sheriff of London, and for saying that Lord Dyer, judge under Queen Elizabeth, was 'a corrupt judge.' In Charles I.'s time, a barrister was brought before the court for having advised a client that a commission issued by James I. was illegal; John Selden was summoned on account of a passage in his *History of Tithes*, wherein he had thrown doubts on the divinity of the right of the clergy to have tithes. Some law students of Lincoln's Inn were charged before the court with having, at a wine-party, drunk 'Confusion to the Archbishop [Laud]!' The informer was their own servant; and the Earl of Dorset, who sat at the board, took advantage of the circumstance to excuse the students, by suggesting that the man, being constantly in and out of the room, had not heard the whole of the toast, which he said was most likely, 'Confusion to the Archbishop's enemies!' The students were dismissed with a reprimand and a caution.

The punishment for libel varied according to the character of it, and according to the temper of the court. Sometimes a fine was imposed, sometimes the defendant's ears were cut off; or he was branded with F. A. (false accuser) on the face, and his nose was slit. John Stubbs, the Puritan, who wrote a pamphlet on the proposed marriage of Queen Elizabeth with the Duke of Anjou, was taken, with his publisher, to Palace Yard,

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Westminster, where their right hands were stricken off by the common hangman; and it is recorded of Stubbs that, as the executioner maimed him, he took off his hat with his remaining hand, and cried: 'Long live Queen Elizabeth!'

A distinction, which has been preserved down to the present day, was early taken between defamatory matter spoken and the same thing written, the law making very justly a liberal allowance for what a man may say suddenly, on the spur of the moment, and upon provocation. There are also many words, both nouns and adjectives, which are strictly applicable to scoundrels and others, and the uttering of which is a great relief to the feelings of a highly wrought man, which the law does not consider in the light of a real injury. It is not our province to state what these words are, but they may be calculated by reference to the standard of what the law does consider to be injurious slander. The standard is this—anything is legally slanderous, and therefore actionable, which may put a man in peril of the law, to accuse him of some crime, as that he has committed murder, or has perjured himself; anything which may exclude him from society, as to report that he has a leprosy or other infectious disease; anything which may injure him in his trade or profession, as to call a tradesman a bankrupt, a physician a quack, a lawyer a knave or a pettifogger, a magistrate partial or corrupt. Mere abuse the law will not notice, as when a man is called a thief or a humbug, but there is no intention on the part of the abuser to impute that he has actually stolen anything, or that he has cheated anybody by fraud. Mere scandalous words, imputing matters which are liable to censure in the ecclesiastical courts, the law will also not notice, so that it is not actionable to call a man a heretic, or to call a woman unchaste, unless the latter happen to be a denizen of the city of London. In that case, an action will lie in the city courts by virtue of the custom of London, which recognised a woman-trader, and protects her accordingly; and as to say of her that she is unchaste would tend to injure her in her business, the remedy is given against the slanderer.

Although, as said above, an action will not lie for merely abusive words, yet if a man or woman can prove that special damage was the consequence of the words spoken, the law will give redress. So that if a woman can shew she has lost a marriage through an imputation of unchastity, or a man can shew that he has been damaged by imputations, say of heresy, which have resulted in some substantial loss to him, redress will be given. For the rest, however, the maxim of law is that 'Hard words break no bones.'

For the advantage of everybody, and in the name of common-sense, the law does not consider as actionable certain communications which are nevertheless of themselves slanderous in their nature. Thus, in giving the character of a servant, a master or mistress may state things, so long as they do so in good faith, and not maliciously, which otherwise would be punishable as slander. It is also a good defence to an action for slander, if the defendant can prove the slander to be true, for it is considered monstrous to allow a veritable knave, a quack, or impostor, to call another man to account for having said, unavoidably, perhaps, and in the interests of truth, that which is indisputable.

A different view is taken of the more deliberate act of writing. People are not supposed to write in a passion, and words which, if spoken, might be excused on the ground of hastiness, assume a malicious complexion when they are quietly written down on paper. When written, they constitute a libel, in the legal sense of the word; and the law provides compensation in damages for injury done to any one by them, and also allows of their being treated as an offence against the state, because they tend directly to a breach of the peace. When proceeded against criminally, and convicted, a libeller may be sentenced to fine and imprisonment. All words which are actionable as slander are actionable also when reduced to a libel; and the law includes, in addition, under the latter head, all contumelious matter that tends to degrade a man in the opinion of his neighbours, or to make him ridiculous. It was held to be libellous to write of Lord Redesdale that he was a 'stout-built special pleader;' to write of Lord Hardwicke that he was 'a sheep-feeder from Cambridge;' and it was held in a famous case to be a libel by writing and publishing 'to possess the people with an ill opinion of the government—that is, the ministry.' In 1777, Horne Tooke was condemned as a libeller for having announced that he was ready to receive subscriptions 'for the relief of widows, orphans, and gray old men of our beloved American brethren, who, true to their character as Englishmen, preferred death to slavery, *and on this account were brutally murdered at Lexington and Concord by the king's troops.*' In 1790, the proprietor of the *Times* was sentenced to a year's imprisonment for libelling the Prince of Wales, because a statement had appeared in the paper that the prince 'had had differences with his father.'

There are blasphemous and seditious libels which tend to the subversion of public morals, and of the people's loyalty to the government. John Wilkes, the demagogue, or, as the Earl of Chatham called him when protesting against the conduct of the House of Commons with respect to him, 'the blasphemer of his God, and the libeller of his king,' was convicted of this kind of libel on account of his *Essay on Woman*, and his paraphrase on the *Veni Creator;* and it was while he was undergoing imprisonment in pursuance of the sentence that he was elected, under circumstances of great popular excitement, to the vacant seat for Middlesex.

Who is to determine what is a libel and what is not? Of course, when the Star Chamber existed, its members decided the question; and when, the Star Chamber being abolished, the mantle of its jurisdiction in libel fell upon the common-law judges, the judges arrogated to themselves the power to say whether a matter was libellous or not. The judges after the Restoration, and down to quite recent times, were the nominees of the crown, and dependent upon the court favour for a continuance in their posts. No wonder, then, that they were apt to construe adversely to the writer anything which might seem to tell against the power that could unmake them; no wonder that, being in the habit of treating libellers of the government as wicked persons, they got into the way of regarding libellers generally in the same light. Anyhow, the convictions were many, and frequently were founded not so much upon

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precedent, as upon what happened to be the fancy of the judge at the time of the trial. A jury was certainly empanneled, but the only questions they had to decide, according to the doctrine enunciated by the judges, were, whether the prisoner or defendant had written or published the libel, and whether the expressions complained of really bore the meaning they were alleged by the indictment to bear. The question whether the matter published was libel or not, was held to be a question for the court.

The confusion which a number of dicta, more or less partial, introduced into the law of libel, and the possibility of punishment which haunted even the most moderate critic on public affairs, or public men, became gradually intolerable. Certain prosecutions which took place in 1784 on account of matter which would pass unnoticed beside the most ordinary newspaper criticisms of to-day, roused a spirit of resistance, which found expression in Mr Fox's Libel Act of 1792. Not without staunch opposition did the measure become law: the government was unwilling to surrender a power which was so eminently destructive of its foes; and the lawyers of the day, excepting Lord Camden and one or two more, were opposed, as lawyers generally are, to innovations on established rules. But Mr Fox persisted, and aided by the spirit which the late prosecutions had aroused, carried the bill. The bill took away from the judges, and gave to the jury, the power to decide what was a libel; and the law now requires the judge at the trial of an action for libel to define to the jury what a libel is in point of law, and then to leave it for the jury to say whether the matter complained of falls within the definition.

The old rule, which allowed of slander being justified by the plaintiff proving the truth of it, was not allowed to apply in cases of libel until the present reign. Lord Mansfield only summarised the principle of the old Star Chamber procedure when he enunciated the maxim: 'The greater the truth the greater the libel.' It was supposed that such a principle prevented careless statements from being made, and that tale-bearing would be prevented. At the same time, it was supposed that the practice of duelling kept men in check, and stopped them from becoming brutal and offensive. Both ideas have been exploded, and an act of her present Majesty allows of people pleading by way of defence in a libel suit that the matter complained of is true. As a check, however, upon carelessness, perhaps also because of inability altogether to quit the old groove, it was provided at the same time that any one justifying the libel must shew that it was for the public benefit that the accusation should be made known. The same act afforded relief to editors and proprietors of newspapers and other periodicals, who under the old system had been held liable absolutely for any libels inserted in their publications. Such persons may now plead that the libel was inserted without malice and without gross negligence, and that as soon as possible after the character of the libel was brought to their knowledge, they inserted an apology in the offending publication. They must also pay a sum of money into court, to be at the disposal of the verdict, as proof of their willingness to recompense the plaintiff for any harm unintentionally done to him. Until a comparatively recent date, the law was such that it did not screen from an action the *bonâ fide* reporter of the proceedings in parliament; and it happened that words spoken by members of parliament, and for which they had the protection of parliamentary privilege, were made the ground of actions for slander and libel against the regular reporter and publisher of them. But this state of things could not be allowed to continue; and on damages being recovered against Mr Hansard for libel contained in a member's speech which he had faithfully and honestly reported, the legislature saw fit to protect their reporter so long as he acted *bonâ fide*, and passed an act to bar all actions against him for libels published in his official capacity. During the last session of parliament, a bill was introduced yet further to diminish the liability of editors and proprietors who have merely reported honestly the matter complained of, whether contained in a speech or otherwise. The remedy of the injured person is thus removed from against the reporter or publisher to against the original false accuser, who, speaking in a place where he might know his words would be reported, must bear the responsibility of his slander being converted into libel.

The object of the law as it now stands is to protect the character of all under the law from injury springing from a malicious tongue. Rogues and rascals of all kinds must lay their account with being called by their right names, without having the assistance of the courts to help them to damages. But the law at the same time will not encourage tattling; nor does it think it desirable that every filthy story, every blot on the fame of mankind, should be described in glowing colours, and trumpeted forth to the world. Hence it is, that before it will admit the plea of justification in answer to the suit of a plaintiff in libel, it requires in addition to proof of the truth of the libel, proof that the publication of it was for the public good.

HARD-UP.

'Come in!' I shouted.

'That's cool!' exclaimed Fred, as he darted into the bedroom, to hide his coatless person; then in strode Tom Brooks, looking very buttoned up and tight about the person, took the chair just vacated, pulled out a pipe from its worn case, helped himself from the jar of bird's-eye tobacco upon the table, lit up, and began to smoke.

'Where's Freddy?' he said, opening his lips for the first time, disallowing the slight parting for the admission of the pipe, for, upon entrance, he had confined himself to a slight nod. 'Where's Freddy?'

'Here he is,' said that individual, who had been listening, and recognising the voice, now made his appearance, coatless and bootless, and advanced sulkily to the fireside.

'Hot, ain't it?' said the new-comer with a shiver, as he glanced at Fred, who growled, banged the bit of fire about a little, and then emptied the battered coal-scuttle, so as to renovate the failing blaze. The next minute, Fred had drawn up another chair, relit his pipe, and begun smoking furiously, as, placing his hands deep in his pockets, and his heels upon the fender, he worked his toes about in his gray stockings in a wonderfully elastic way.

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Then came a pause, during which we all smoked furiously, till Tom Brooks leaned forward, and drawing the large pewter tankard upon the table closer towards him, raised the lid by pressing it with his thumb; took a long breath, and lifted the vessel to his lips; gazed into it for a moment, dropped the lid with a click, and set it down again with a sigh, for the vessel was empty.

Five minutes elapsed with nothing but smoke floating around, when, presuming upon a brotherly intimacy, the result of years of social communion, Tom removed his pipe from his mouth, and said gruffly to Fred: 'Put on your coat, man.'

Fred looked up, scowled, thrust his hands a little further down into his pockets, and his toes into his stockings, so that one nail glittered through the worn web in the firelight, and then smoked on, faster than ever. Then Tom Brooks spoke again: 'Where's Freddy's coat?'

'Uncle's!' I said laconically, for Fred did not move.

Tom winced a little before once more speaking. 'And boots?' he said, gazing earnestly the while at Fred's obtrusive toes.

'These are his boots,' I said grimly, bringing into notice the pair that graced or disgraced my own feet, for each would have contained a foot and a half, solid measure.

'Humph!' said Tom, with a blank look, and once more lifting the lid of the tankard, to make sure that it was perfectly empty. 'I came to borrow half a sov.'

'Oh, did you?' I said. And then we all smoked again, in a sort of blank despair, staring the while at the fire as if *that* were to blame for our common poverty.

'Can't do it for a fellow, I s'pose?' said Tom.

Fred looked up, first at Tom, and then at me, before bursting into a savage, Victoria-Theatre-ruffian laugh; after which, he seemed relieved, and looked again at his toes.

'Got nothing to drink?' said Tom after another essay at the tankard.

I shook my head, and we all went on smoking.

'I'll trouble you for those boots, Joe,' said Fred, at last bestirring himself; and jumping up, he swept aside the tankard, tobacco, and books upon the table, so as to set at liberty the checked cotton table-cover, red, purple, and gray, and ornamented with gummy rings and brown burned holes, which cover he wrapped round his shoulders after the fashion of the blanket of an Indian chief, what time I proceeded to get out of the large boots.

'How am I to go out without boots?' I said.

'Keep 'em on,' growled Fred, resuming his seat, and once more considering his toes.

'What's going to be done?' said Tom at last; but no one answered save by puffs of smoke.

'This won't do, you know,' resumed he, gazing round the room, and then tearing a pipe-light off an old brief, kept for appearance' sake. 'Let's think it out; but I can't think dry. Can't you get the pot filled? Ale, porter, half-and-half, anything—I'm choking.'

Fred rose from his seat, strode softly into the bedroom, and returned with the handleless water-jug, which he placed upon the table.

'What's the good of humbugging?' growled Tom testily. 'Can't you muster enough between you for that?'

I shook my head.

'Then send and get it filled on credit,' said Tom.

'Freddy sent it down two hours ago,' I explained, 'and they sent the thing back with the bill inside. Like to see?'

'No, thanky,' said Tom, fidgeting in his chair; for he had helped largely to swell that account, fully one-third of the liability having been incurred on his behalf.

'Well,' said Fred, whose pipe was now out, 'what's going to be done?'

'Ah!' said Tom Brooks, 'what's going to be done?'

'Just so,' I said; 'that's the point;' and then there was another pause.

'No one manage a draw from the old folks?' suggested Tom.

We both shook our heads.

'Any one we could borrow of?' said Tom again, but this only resulted in another head-shaking.

'Money's tight in the city,' said Fred grimly. 'Let's go and sing.'

'Do what?' I said.

'Go and sing,' said Fred, 'after spouting both your coats, to produce uniformity, and spending the result.—"All the way from Temple Bar, and got no work to do."'

'And who do you think would lend anything upon our coats?' said Tom. 'Might get something from the Jews, though.'

'But come, I say, be serious; what are we to do?'

'Anything, anybody, so as to turn up a sovereign,' said Tom. 'Oh, the glorious uncertainty of the law! One man starves, while another ascends the woolsack.'

'Too many in the profession,' growled Fred.

'Three, at all events,' said Tom. 'I'd go out of it, if I could find something a little warmer.'

Fred shivered and poked the fire.

'Why don't you fellows write something for the mags?' said Tom.

'We do,' I said, 'but they won't have 'em. Fred's are all "not suited," and mine are "declined with thanks," which sounds better, and is certainly more grammatical, but only comes to the same thing. There's my last,' I said, taking a soiled manuscript from the chimney-piece. '"Declined with thanks," you see.' And Tom took the sketch and began to turn over the leaves.

'What a horrible hand you do write, Joe,' he said; but I would not hear him.

'How are we to raise the wind?' I said to Fred.

'I'll raise a regular storm soon, if things don't alter,' he said savagely. 'If there was one, I'm sure there were a dozen briefs taken into Bulger's yesterday, and he's got a head like a block. Talk to him and see.'

'Wig-block?' I suggested; but Fred was too intent upon his toes to see the point.

'Why, this thing would sell like fun, if it were printed,' said Tom suddenly. 'Let's get it printed, and sell it.'

'Pooh!' said Fred gruffly.

'Pooh be hanged!' said Tom. '"How I was Garrotted;" why, the name would sell it furiously. I shall get it done.'

'But how?' I said; for I felt that if Fred's manuscript had been in question, he would have refrained from saying 'Pooh!'

'I can manage that: I know a man who will put it in type in no time. That's about the only thing

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I could get credit for. We'll have it done, and then take them round to the shops.'

'Who will?' I said.

'Why, I will!' exclaimed Tom. 'I'm not above doing anything honest for a living,' he continued pompously.

'And what price will you have them sold at?' I said, to humour his notion. 'A shilling?'

'A shilling! and sell one or two!' he exclaimed. 'No, sir: at the immortal penny, and sell millions. Why, this will be a regular golden egg, Joe. You see if it isn't. I'm off.'

In effect he was off; and that night he came rushing in with the wet proof-sheets.

'Now, then!' he exclaimed, dabbing them down upon the table; 'as few alterations as possible, and then we can have them out to-morrow.'

The corrections were made, and Tom departed, after declaring that a plum must result from the speculation; and we saw him no more till the next day at twelve, when he came in, closely followed by the printer's boy, bearing a large bundle of damp copies of the *brochure*.

'Drop o' beer, for bringing 'em, sir?' muttered the boy, hesitating at the door.

'You dog, how dare you!' roared Tom. 'Does Mr Galleys know that you go begging of his'——

He said no more, for the boy had made a precipitate retreat.

'Cuts me to the heart,' said Tom pathetically. 'It was a heavy packet, and he was very civil, but I had not a sou. Mind, I owe that boy sixpence, Joe. I'll pay him some day. I will, 'pon honour,' he continued, for I was laughing. 'But now, about taking these things out. I've been making inquiry, and I find that we must sell them at ninepence a dozen, and give one in. Now, who's going to take them round to the booksellers?'

'Why, you said that you would,' said Fred.

'Well, I did, certainly,' was the reply; 'but as I've managed the printing, I think you two ought to go with the things to the retailers. Wholesale business, you know; nothing to be ashamed of.'

'Got no coat,' said Fred gruffly, though he was now sporting an old shooting-jacket.

'Got no boots,' I said, shewing my feet, now encased in Fred's bead-worked slippers.

'Cowards both!' said Tom contemptuously. 'I shall be back by five, so order a steak from down in the court—steak and oysters, mind;' and then, after looking with great disgust at the parcel for a few minutes, he seized it, and hurried down the stairs; but directly after, he dashed breathlessly into the room. 'More briefs for Bulger's!' he exclaimed, 'and I didn't want to be seen.' Then after waiting ten minutes, he made a fresh start, when we saw no more of him for half an hour, when he came slowly in, and seated himself, looking blankly from one to the other.

'Sold out?' I said.

'Well, no, not exactly,' he replied. 'You see, I went into Thompson's first, in Holborn, that being the first place I cared about stopping at, for fear of being known. I hung about for ten minutes, before I could summon courage enough to go in, for it's awfully hard work when you come to try. There, you need not grin: if you doubt it, go and have a try yourselves. Well, I rushed in at last, with a couple of copies in one hand, and the bundle under my arm, when, hang me! if there wasn't Bulger, buying a cheap copy of *Ivanhoe*, and he nodded at me. Luckily, I had the presence of mind to stuff the two copies into my pocket, and to say to the man behind the counter: "Will you allow me to leave this here till I can send for it? The string has come unfastened."

'And you came away, and left the books there?' I said, interrupting.

'Well, what could I do, under the circumstances?' said Tom. 'Fetch them for me, there's a good fellow. He'll think, from your looks, that you are a man I've paid.'

'Thank you,' I said, trying to light my empty pipe, for we had finished the tobacco.

'Will you go, Fred?' he said, appealing to the man in the shooting-jacket.

'I'd sooner enlist,' said Fred stoically. 'I knew you'd both make fools of yourselves over it.'

'Make what?' said Tom wrathfully. 'Will you oblige me by repeating that expression?'

'I said'——

'Hush!' I exclaimed; 'here's some one coming.'

'Say I'm out,' whispered Fred anxiously. 'It's some one's bill; say I'm gone out of town;' and he darted into the bedroom, and closed the door, while the steps came higher and higher; there was a sharp double tap on the door, and a couple of letters fell into the box inside.

As a matter of course, I was not long in securing the missives, one of which was for me, the other for Fred; the one containing a cheque, and the other, what was nearly as good—namely, the proofs of an article.

'Only to think,' said Tom, 'of that dropping in just in the nick of time;' and he passed his plate for some more gravy. 'Trouble you for another oyster or two, Fred.'

'What shall you do about those tracts, Tom?' said Fred.

'Tracts—tracts?' said Tom thickly. 'Oh, ah, yes—I see; why, we'll get the printer to take it up.' Which he did, and handed over to us, at the end of six months, a balance in our favour of twenty pounds; and though, like many other young beginners who do not practise strict economy, and are not so particular as they should be in making ready-money payments, we have had more than once since to consider how we should 'raise the wind,' we have never yet been quite so 'hard-up.'

MID-DAY IN SUMMER.

Lo! lying in the fierce meridian heat,
The beauteous earth looks like a thing that dreams,
And, all o'ercome with stupor strangely sweet,
She wholly in the warm sun's clutches seems.
Cows seek the shed's cool shade; in sober wise,
So lazily through the languid noontide air,
A crow flies from the high green hill that lies
Aback beyond the flat. The heat, the glare
Chalks out the white highway that runs along
The distant upland. Not a bird makes choice
To warble even the fragment of a song,
And nature would not own a single voice
But for the restless brooks that, all alive,
Murmur like bees content in honeyed hive.

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WILL-MAKING.

THE right of testamentary alienation in its present ample extent was unknown to English law until a very late period. The feudal system, as is well known, stood long in opposition to any alienation whatever of land, except by descent. The right which an Englishman now possesses to dispose of his landed property by sale or gift, has been the result of centuries of struggle against the most unyielding opposition, and after all, owes its origin mainly to the guileful devices of crafty lawyers, who, in many notable instances, proved the earliest supporters of popular rights, by their ingenious discoveries in tyrannical statutes of that inevitable breach, existent, as is alleged, in all acts of parliament, through which metaphorical coaches and horses may be driven. By one of their happy inventions (the doctrine of uses), a freeman in the reign of Henry VIII. could, in an illicit way, devise his freehold lands; and seeing this to be the case, a parliament of that reign, with a bad grace, partly endorsed the custom, by a statute recognising testamentary dispositions of lands of socage tenure—a species of ancient freehold of comparative rarity. To this limit dispositions by will of real property were confined till after Charles II.'s restoration, when feudal tenures were abolished, and all freehold land was converted into socage tenure; but the same reign produced a statute, only lately repealed, which necessitated important formalities in the execution of a will. These requirements, together with a mass of ingenuously entangled *leges non scriptæ*, referring to the subject of will-making, made it an interesting speculation, till the year 1831, whether any of that large majority of Englishmen who prefer to make their own wills, unaided by legal advice (and who are known in the courts of law by the contemptuous designation of 'illiterate testators'), could, by any possibility, effect their intentions as to the disposal of their property after death.

Seeing by ages of experience that the stubborn inhabitants of Great Britain, in the face of the libraries of law reports which have been formed from debate over their illiterate wills, still declined any interference of lawyers in the important finality of putting their house in order, parliament some years ago considerately perpetrated two comprehensive acts, which in future are to assist all the lame dogs over the testamentary hedge; and provided the independent Briton will in time to come consent to affix his signature to his will in the presence of two witnesses, he may riot in the expression of any nonsense suggested to his illiterate mind, with the assurance of a very liberal construction being used when it comes to be judicially considered. This desirable consummation was arrived at chiefly by the enactment that all the honoured words which previously had significant legal meanings should be reduced to the ranks of common conversation, and lose their charming distinction; and further, that in the perusal of an 'illiterate' will thereafter, the law should regard indifferently what the testator had actually written, but, with a merciful consideration for his want of legal comprehension, should studiously attempt to discover what he intended to write, and decree accordingly. It will be perceived, therefore, that 'a freehold messuage or tenement with the appurtenances' may now be effectually disposed of, under the description of a 'Villa,' a 'Hermitage,' a 'Retreat,' a 'Rookery,' or any other affectionate designation that its owner may choose to distinguish it whereby; while the hereditary schoolmaster, who for many generations past has been persistently using the solemn word 'heirs,' in the contented anticipation that it would be held more distinctly to confer a life estate on the party with whose name it is associated, and invariably leaving it out at the point on which the whole of an important devise legally rested, is now likely to find his vagaries tenderly considered.

As to the exact place where the testator is to sign his name, it is only necessary to add that none but the most ingeniously eccentric can now err, for a special act of parliament contains a very long list of all the improbable places where a signature of the most perverse or most benighted testator can by any possibility be found—the beginning,

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the middle, the margin, the back, and everywhere else but the orthodox position; each one of these amusing singularities being now solemnly validated.

Feudal notions seem to have fettered, in early times, the disposition by will of movables even, though, as may be expected, this inconvenience was not of very lengthy duration. However, it is stated in *Fabian's Chronicle*, that 'in the 17th yere of Kinge Henry the second, this was ordeyned, that everye man shold mak his last Will in presaunce of his neighboures, or, at least, cause it to be read in ther presaunse—first, he shold recon what he owed, and to sett so much of his goods: and if he had a Wyf and Childrenne, then the residenue of his goods, his debts being payd, to be devided in 3 partes, one to the Wyfe, one to the Childrenne, and the third to be spent for the wele of his soule. If he had no Childrenne, then the halfe to his soule. If no Wyfe nor Childrenne, then to dispose of his goods at pleasure.'

Although these restrictions were not durable, the custom obtained, and is apparent in all ancient wills, of signing the will in the presence of numerous witnesses; and it is perhaps owing to this necessitated publicity that wills were formerly made only on the hastening approach of death—a fact generally evidenced by the short time elapsing between the date of the will and its probate.

At a time when the disposing power of a testator was limited, at least as to his landed property, it might be supposed that wills were not frequently made; but this would be erroneous. Though land was most commonly disposed of by settlements made in lifetime, yet it was a very general custom of all classes in independent circumstances to make a will, specifically bequeathing articles of furniture, wearing apparel, or jewellery, or particular farming stock, and making small pecuniary bequests to the poor, or for religious or charitable purposes. Moreover, a will was by no means an unimportant confession of faith, and generally contained minute directions as to the testator's burial. Many of these wills were of course not actually proved, but the great number that were verified in this way are all distinguished by these characteristics. The fact that two or three centuries ago the same antipathy to the interference of lawyers in the preparation of a will seems to have prevailed, is the cause of many documents, of which probate has been duly granted, containing much matter that is quaintly original and interesting.

The absence of the legal functionary is easily detected then, as now, from the irrelevant matter with which the testament is augmented; from the gushing fervour of the religious sentiments (formerly forming the first clauses of a will, generally coldly formal in the legally accurate will, and now invariably abandoned); by the intricate verbosity of bequests—as tokens of gratitude, or affection; by the unbusiness-like introduction of paternal advice, or friendly wishes, or the reference to rankling enmities; and the pious reiterations of the hope of resurrection.

Here is an instance, from an old will, of those cases where, through the pressure of approaching death, or intentionally, the man of law was not assisting in the preparation of a will, leaving, consequently, an opportunity for the exhibition of the ruling passion strong in death.

Sir Robert Bevill, of Chesterton, Hunts, who died at the age of sixty-two years, was the representative of a very old family, and a courtier in James I.'s reign. The old knight, three weeks before his death in 1635, signed and published, in the presence of three witnesses, a will, afterwards proved, wherein he first bequeaths his soul, in the then customary fashion, into the hands of his Maker, 'stedfastlie believeing, in and bye the meritts of o^r Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to obteyne fre pardon and forgiveness of al my sinnes, and at the last day to have and receive a glorious resurrection.' Then, immediately reverting to the things of corruption, he says: 'Item I give and bequeth to Sir John Hewett Baronett' [his son-in-law] 'Tenn Shillings, and noe more, in respect hee stroake and causelessly fought with me;' and having arranged this satirical memento, he proceeds in the same vein: 'Item I give unto my wife tenn shillings, in respect she tooke her sonnes part ageynst me, and did anymate and comfort him afterwards. These will not be forgotten.' The testator reserves yet another mark of the memory of his wrong, by following with a bequest to some now undistinguished Katherine Byng, of 'all such monies as is due unto mee by Sir John Hewett' [the bellicose son-in-law], 'by virtue of an order or Decre in the Chancery.' (Was this to keep the feud alive?) He then bequeaths all the residue of his large estates to his *second* son; and having in these ways finally confirmed, to the best of his ability, the family dissensions, he contentedly concludes his embittered testament by an exposure of his wife's desertion, as further apologetic of an ample provision for her not being made, 'she having taken all her own goods into her own possession, and disposed of them at her pleasure.'

Let us leave this retributive testator, grimly satisfied with his brief arrangement of worldly affairs, and in his happy confidences of the future, to consider the confessions of another unfortunate individual, who selected similar successful means of permanently recording his desertion and misery. Mr Gervase Holles saw the probate copy of this will 'upon record in the Prerogative Office, in a great vellum book entitled Wingfield,' and thought it worthy of a note among his other manuscript collections. The testator's name is 'William Pime' (or Pym), and he is described as of Woolavington, in the county of Somerset, gentleman. His will is dated 10 January 1608, and is to this effect: 'Item I give and bequeath to ye Church at Wells xiid. Item I give to Agnes (that I did a long time take for my wyfe till of late shee hath denyd mee to bee her husband although wee were marryd w^th. my friends consent her father mother and uncle at it and now shee swereth shee will nevyr love mee neither bee perswaded by preachers nor by any other w^ch. hath happen'd within this few yeres And Toby Andrews the beginner w^ch. I did see w^th. mine own eyes when he did more thann was fitting and this by the means of Robert Musgrove and theire abettors I have lived a miserable life this 6 or 7 yeres and now I leve the revenge to God) tenn pounds to buy her a gret horse for I could not this manny yeres plese her with one gret enough.'

This gloomy joke of the unhappy Pime was put on perpetual record on the 20th September 1610, by the oaths of the two executors, who obtained the grant of probate, swearing faithfully to administer according to their testator's directions.

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There is evidence in many unprofessional wills of fears of the testators lest any untoward neglect on their part should give birth to *post-mortem* litigation; and the way in which these fears are expressed, and the attempts to provide against any possibility of the calamity of lawyers' quarrels, are very various, and sometimes amusing.

One testator, in Queen Elizabeth's time, wishes that 'if thro' lack of knowledg or through haste he has dealte streghtleye in any way, that that point be reformed.' Another, in the same reign, in very quaint expressions, directs, as is frequently the case with some testators even now-a-days, that all disputes arising out of her will are to be settled by her executors; and that, if their decision is not accepted, the disputant is to take no interest under the will. The first of these directions, in the eye of the law, was, and is now of course meaningless; the second is ingenuously provocative of litigation, about a very clearly expressed will, and never was, or ever could with propriety be accepted by any legal jurisdiction. But here is a more energetic effusion of a similar nature, which apparently has been successfully effectual, for though some of the charitable trusts created by it are even yet in existence, there remains no record of any litigious dispute relating to their administration.

Alderman William Gee, of Kingston-upon-Hull, a wealthy merchant, and the founder of a Yorkshire family of importance, made a very characteristic will in the year 1600, which was duly proved, and which commences with these words: 'Wheras in the Scriptures the gret God of Heven and earthe has willed by the prophet to saye to Hezekia to mak his Will and put things in order for that he must die so I doe now pray and humbly beesech the gret and myghtie God to confounde and destroye al those menn lawyers and others whoever to the devel to dwel yn the pit of Hell who doe or shal doe or tak upon them to alter ys my Will Amen good Lord Amen in the name of God the fayther Allmyghtie Maker of Heven and Earthe the se and al that therein is Amen I William Gee;' &c.

Mr Gee died in 1603, and a very fortunate time it must have been for his neighbours and townspeople, notwithstanding their grief at his departure, for the money which he directs to be distributed at his death to the poor, to the town, and all its charities, is unusually liberal in amount; even the mere fact of dwelling in the same street with him, he makes a reason for a small legacy, thus: 'Item I doe give amonge my neybors in ye same streete wher I doe dwel in moneye to mak merrye withall L2. 13. 4. and soe to give thankes to my good God.'

The following is a specimen of a Yorkshire peasant's will, proved about the same date, singular for its rustic abruptness:

'I William Thorp of Aldborough soul into the hands of Almighty God my Maker and Redeemer to poor man's Box 12s.—to sonne Robert the lease of my house one stagess and one corn wayne and the wood that come home this year and also my couple of oxen—to Alison my dau'r 2 black kye—to dau'rs Anna's and Elizabeth 3 kye *between them*—to Anthony Robinson a Stott of 4 years old and a met of beans and to his children a met of ditto—son Robert and 3 daur's all executors.'

A glance into the very characteristic will of one Richard Coney, who was a Merchant of the Staple, in the reigns of Queen Mary and Elizabeth, gives us an interesting notion of the intimacies of life at that period. Coney lived near Boston, in Lincolnshire, while it was yet a port of great importance, and was the son of a very wealthy merchant residing there, and describing himself also as of Calais; and it was no doubt owing to the taking of that place in 1558, that the disasters to which the will refers were chiefly attributable.

After elaborately expressing his religious faith, and directing his burial to take place at Morton, he proceeds, with the careful minuteness of a man of business, giving, in his directions, a very good notion of what a sale by auction was in the Tudor times: 'Item I will that xx$^{d.}$ be dealte amongst the ringers in Morton and the dynner to be made in my farmehouse in Morton whereto be provided meate and drincke frome Burne needefull and necessarie for suche as shalbe there And ymmediatly after I will that straighteway and as sone as I ame depted there be good and perfecte Inventorie made and taken of all my howsehold stuffe and ympleaments of howseholde within and withoute my howse in pticulers euye thinge of yt selfe alsoe may Inventorie bee made of al my corne and cattell and of euerie thinge and things that onto mee anye waye belongith withoute anye prayse-mente mad then thereof Alsoe that what I owe as what I ame oweing me maye be collected And my Debts I wilbe paide to euerye man makeinge dewe prowfe howe it is owinge hym in convenient tyme as order best maye be takenne—w^{t} them my apparel alsoe I wilbe Inventories whereof at London I have in Jarrette Carrington's custodye a tailor a gowne w^{h} a standinge coller welted with velvette as good as newe and I have lyeinge at the wynde mill in thoulde Jurie' [the Old Jewry] 'a Cloke called a Spanishe Cape faced wth pincked taffetae And for as much as I perceaved ever that my lovinge Wyfe Elizabeth after my deptinge oute of this life will make noe tarryeinge in Burne Therefore and alsoe for that throwe manye and sounderye grete losses wch I have hadd my state is very sore altered at this daye I will my goods be ordered in this manno^{r} and sourte—for my howseholde styffe and ympleaments of howsehold I wilbe ordered and repaired upto the beste and euerye thinge and things ells aboute howse to the uttermost usinge noe deceipte And I will there be proclamacon made at Burne Crosse that there wilbe sale made of suche things assigninge one daye in the weeke to sell y^{t} and even as in Flannders they use there and nowe in London even so I would be that euerie thinge whatsoever I have or oughte anye way to have be soe and in that order solde in my woll folde howse called the guildehowse and if ther be none here in the Countrye that is experte or cunninge to use the hammer in that order and to be made sale in that order then I will that some honneste poore man in London that there have used to sell things in that order be hired to come downe and soe here to sell them And for all suche smalle ympleaments and things that may easealie thronen aboute I will they were bestowed in chests so as theye were not loste nor lackinge And y^{t} there be vi monethes daye geven uppon sellinge to paye for those thinges that shalbe soulde puttinge in good and sufficiente sureties Provided that my wifes apparell either lynnen or wollen that is or shalbe fashioned or made for her at the howre of my dethe be oute

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of Inventorie allowinge her the faireste cheste in the howse to putte the same in' [Generous Coney!] 'And in this sale makeinge there be no deceipte used But that he or she whoe offerethe or biddeth moste maye have it as well in howsehold stuffe as in horse sheepe neete or anyethinge that is mine my apparrel in London or elle what shalbe founde mine in London to be eye this order selled my entente is essey to be knowne that I woulde my goods were soulde to the moste So as my poore Estate and sustaunance by euerie meanes collected and gaethered togeder maye appeare.'

There is, at Doctors' Commons, a fund of surprising interest, readily accessible, in the older registers of wills kept there, and, by the more curious, the originals themselves may be inspected; but the public are effectually debarred from any continued indulgence in an antiquarian amusement of this kind by the office regulations, which require the fee of one shilling to be paid for the perusal of each separate will, and if the luxury of an extract be sought for, a further fee of sixpence for every seventy-two words copied is demanded; so that, most probably, a selection of this really interesting matter, in any extensive way, will never reach publication, were the chances of success even such as to tempt the cupidity of speculators.

To those who are personally interested in the matter of will-making, we follow the best legal authorities in entreating them when making a will to avoid the use of any book of forms, however professedly easy or comprehensive, and to use only language dictated by the ordinary judgment and perspicacity of business. The most complete instructions as to making a safe will are contained in these few words: write your wishes as to the disposal of your property, briefly, in your own terms, on paper, and let it be signed by yourself and two witnesses, in each other's presence.

A COUNTY FAMILY.

CHAPTER VI.—THE FAMILY PORTRAITS.

Mr Moffat joined the family circle at dinner on the night of their arrival at the Manor. He had been the only link between Anthony and his old home—the only man who had given himself the trouble to communicate with the exile during his long banishment, and he now reaped the fruits of this in the cordial friendship of the new Squire. At the time of the latter's disgrace, Mowbray Moffat had been articled clerk to his uncle Robert, who had himself, in the character of family lawyer, made some effort to mollify Russell Blackburn's wrath against his eldest born; but when he found interference worse than useless, and also, at his client's direction, had drawn up the deed which seemed to put Anthony's succession to the estate beyond human probability, the elder Moffat had taken no further interest in him, and even cautioned his nephew against the manifestation of such a feeling. But Mowbray had written, though guardedly and cautiously enough, whenever any event of importance had taken place at the Manor; and even these measured phrases of good-will had been very grateful to their recipient. A little kindness goes a great way when we are poor; nay, the very remembrance of us (whom so many have forgotten) appears a kindness. Whether it was genuine pity or only prudent forethought that impelled the man of parchments thus to act, is doubtful. He certainly ran some risk with at least two of his employers—tyrant Russell and spendthrift Ferdinand—who had strictly commanded all relations with the Disgrace to the Family to cease; not, it must be confessed, by reason of Anthony's first offence alone, but from his subsequent conduct. The letters he wrote to his father were not of a conciliatory character; and that which, on the occasion of the old man's death, he addressed to his usurping successor, was really quite a curiosity in the way of vituperation. But in course of years, passionate indignation had given place to patient watching for retribution—hoarded hate. He ceased to rave of his own wrongs, or to make comments upon the proceedings of his detested kinsmen; but on the demise of each brother he had put in a written protest against the continuance of the injustice which their common father had perpetrated.

To these letters, Mr Moffat had been instructed, on the part of his clients, to make no reply; but he had always written, on his own account, to express a decent sorrow for Anthony's misfortune; that is, for his banishment, not for the trials which poverty imposed upon him, for of those he knew nothing for certain, whatever he may have guessed. Anthony's pride prevented him from making that disclosure by letter, which his passion, excited by the sight of his old home, had just compelled him so openly to proclaim. The lawyer perhaps had his own reasons for not inquiring too nearly into his correspondent's actual circumstances; however willing to offer sympathy, and even advice, he might have shrunk from advancing money out of his own pocket to supply Anthony's necessities—the security being so exceedingly problematical. Of course, he knew that his old friend—for they had been playmates together, or rather he had been the young Squire's humble companion, while the next brother, Ferdinand, was still in the nursery—was very poor; but the fact was not pressed upon his notice, and he was glad to ignore it. Perhaps, if he had known how poor the inmates of Moor Cottage had been—how small a sum would have seemed a fortune to them—he would have drawn his purse-strings readily enough. Of late, however, Mr Moffat might well have defended himself from the charge of want of charity, upon the ground of fearing to wound Anthony's feelings—for it was upon the question of Richard Blackburn's affording his uncle pecuniary assistance that the lawyer and his present client had well-nigh quarrelled; Mr Moffat had accompanied his employer's offer not only with an earnest entreaty that it should be accepted, but even with an encomium upon the young Squire's liberality and good-feeling; and this the resolute old quarryman had bitterly resented. Indeed, no communication had passed between them since that period, except the one letter that had apprised the old man of his nephew's death. Their meeting, therefore, at least upon one side, had had something of embarrassment; but the few earnest words of gratitude that accompanied the Squire's warm grip of salutation had at once put the lawyer at his ease.

'I am a stranger in my own home,' the former

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had gone on to say, 'and it is to you, to whom I have so long been indebted, that I must for the future look for aid of all kinds.'

If Mr Moffat had been aware of the company which his host had kept perforce for so many years, he would certainly have marvelled to hear him use such well-chosen words; but he remembered Anthony as having had the pleasantest voice and the most winning address of all the Blackburns, who, to say the truth, had been (with one other exception) a rough lot, both in speech and feeling. He marvelled, therefore, not at Anthony's comparative culture (though there was much else in him to wonder at), but at the lack of it in Mrs Blackburn, which, indeed, throughout the repast was manifest enough. She partook of every dish, and every condiment which could be taken with them; she mixed her liquors in a really alarming manner; and in the intervals of the meal, she betook herself to balancing the silver forks upon her finger, with the relish of a person who partakes of an amusement for the first time. Moreover, though Mr Moffat was well acquainted with the local dialect, her talk was sometimes utterly unintelligible to him; the fact being, that the family, in their earlier days of poverty, had been migratory, and the consequence, in Mrs Blackburn's case, had been a combination of *patois*.

But the chief enigma of the little party to the astute man of business, very desirous of solving the three social problems before him, was Miss Ellen. Her features were not only well formed, but possessed that softened beauty which belongs in general to those who have been brought up delicately; who have experienced that hot-house training, the result of which is mistaken for that of aristocratic birth. Her hands were as white, if not quite so smooth, as those of any young lady in the county; and though her speech was more elaborate and stiff, the words were better selected.

The dinner conversation was not, however, general, but chiefly maintained by Mr Moffat and his host; the latter asking question after question respecting this man and that, whose face of fifty years ago had been familiar to him; and the latter, nine times out of ten, replying, with a shake of his white head: 'He is dead and gone, sir.'

And all this time the servants waited with wondering eyes, speculating upon their master's past, and endeavouring to forecast from it their own future. It was already evident to them that they would not, as some had expected, have everything their own way with him; yet he had only once spoken angrily, when he bade them let that day be the last on which he should see them in mourning apparel. Any reference, however undemonstrative, to his immediate predecessors at the Manor-house seemed intolerable to him. The dining-room was hung with full-length portraits of his father and brothers, and it was observed that an angry flush came over his face whenever his eye wandered towards them during the meal; but when it was over, and the ladies had withdrawn, and the obsequious butler was placing a bottle of rare port upon the table, with a few words of respectful encomium, he was arrested by the startling words from the Squire: 'Get a ladder, man, at once, and take all those pictures down.'

While host and guest were sipping their wine in silence, this accordingly was done; and some half-dozen huge frames, with their contents, were soon standing in a line against the wall, like criminals awaiting execution. They had most of them fine handsome features, but of an animal type.

'That is my father, of course,' observed Anthony coldly, as he pointed to a burly figure with puffed cheeks and sensual chin, who occupied the middle place. There was a twinkle in the eye that hinted of humour, or perhaps only of the pleasures of the flesh, but it was marred by an obliquity of vision which imparted malignancy; indeed, it was easy to imagine it becoming 'a damned disinheriting countenance,' if irritated by opposition, and such it unquestionably seemed to the present beholder. 'This must have been taken after my time,' continued he, rising and confronting the canvas, as though it were a thing of life; 'yet I should know it anywhere. He was a hard man, except where his own vices were concerned, and then he was weak enough.—Was it not so, Mr Moffat?'

'Indeed, sir,' stammered the lawyer, straightening his stiff white cravat, 'I had no certain knowledge of the late Mr Russell Blackburn. My uncle Robert, as you were aware, was the family lawyer throughout almost all your father's life.'

'Ay, true,' replied Anthony, cynically; 'and of course you never heard his character discussed. With the rest of this goodly company, however, you had a closer acquaintance than myself.—Is that my brother Ferdinand?'

His finger pointed to the portrait of a man of five-and-twenty, attired in a jockey's dress, and about to mount a sleek and well-bred horse. His hand was on the reins, but his face was turned round to the spectators, as though giving some final order before he set out.

'Yes, sir, that is Squire Ferdinand; and very like. He is painted with his famous mare, that won so many steeple-chases. I recollect her well. She realised four thousand pounds in stakes in a single year, though, it is true, she cost her owner thrice the money in lost bets. He would back her against anything, and so would all about here.' The lawyer, ready enough to exchange the dangerous topic of humanity for that of horse-flesh, or, perhaps, since he had some turn for sport, being really interested in it, waxed eloquent upon his glossy theme. 'She was a genuine beauty; and though, as you see, she had one white stocking, which was thought a blemish, her owner would never allow she was not perfect. She had a stall and a paddock to herself; two grooms to wait upon her; and during one very severe season, the Squire had the straw-yard roofed in for her, so that she might take her exercise under cover. Let me see, which winter was it?'

'Perhaps it was that same winter,' broke in Anthony hoarsely, 'when we nearly lost our Ellen, because coal was too dear for us to buy. Yes, sir, we starved and shivered, while yonder scoundrel lavished gold—*my* gold—upon his pampered pet.'

'She broke his neck, for him, poor fellow, at last,' pleaded the lawyer softly, 'as I wrote to let you know.'

'Was that the mare that did it?' ejaculated Anthony excitedly. 'Then I am sorry that I grudged her aught. I will have a statuette of silver cast of her, and underneath it written: "The Queen of Horses." Or stay; I'll have this rascal painted out, and the mare left; by Heaven, I will.' The vehemence of the old man's passion was even more

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terrible to witness than to listen to: it seemed to go well nigh to choke him before it found vent in words; and full a minute passed before he got the mastery over himself and it; then turning to the neighbour-picture, he inquired contemptuously: 'Whose brat is that?'

'That is young Ferdinand, sir, who died of the fever.'

'Humph!—And this is Charles the Sot, I suppose?'

'It is your brother Charles, sir,' answered the lawyer quietly. 'If he was fond of the bottle, at least he had no weakness for the fair sex. There was not a woman-servant in the Manor, nor one admitted within the lodge-gates for the five years he ruled the place. A most eccentric personage.'

'An idiot, sir,' ejaculated Anthony, 'who would have drivelled out his days in some asylum, if delirium tremens had not cut them short.—This is the fisher-fellow, Richard, I suppose?—And that his son, who died here this day fortnight, eh? Now all these rogues shall burn together, at once.' And the old Squire reached out a trembling hand and grasped the bell-rope.

'I pray you consider, sir,' interposed Mr Moffat hastily. 'If you are so ill resolved, at least do nothing in such sudden heat. Although these folk were not your friends, still you were kin, and blood is thicker than water, or is, at all events, so held to be in these parts. Your neighbours here would resent such conduct deeply, they would indeed, sir.'

'The neighbours?—You mean the flatterers, the lickspittles, all those who fawned on this precious brotherhood! What care I whether they are pleased or displeased?'

'For your own part, nothing, sir, doubtless. But for Miss Ellen's sake, you should wish to be on good terms with the country-side. To burn these portraits of the men they knew so well, would bring you into much discredit. Your kin are dead and gone to their account, and hate should not be pushed beyond the grave. Besides, there are some among them who have done you no evil turn, nor thought to do it. The boy Ferdinand here, for instance, who perhaps never heard your name; and this young Richard—if you would but have believed it, sir—no better-meaning and more generous lad ever drew breath. His people here adored him.'

'His people! They were mine.'

'The people of the village, I mean, sir; they did not know, remember—although *you* knew so well—but that they *were* his people; nor did he himself. He understood nothing of the rights of the matter, nor your wrongs. Do you think his father yonder told him: "We usurp this place, which should be your uncle Anthony's?"'

'And why did not *you* tell him?' inquired the Squire, facing round upon his guest. '*You* knew.'

'I did say much that moved him greatly, sir. You know yourself how instantly he acted upon it; and although you spurned his offer, I still think'——

'Ah, I see,' interrupted Anthony; 'you feared to tell the truth, else justice, reparation even, so far as he could make it, might have been done at last. You, then, are to blame, not he.—Among that nest of rogues, this Richard, then, was honest at the core. He has a comely face enough, now that I look into it, and a pleasant smile.'

'He has indeed, sir; and if I were one given to compliment, I could tell you how old folk about here used to say they found young Squire Anthony reproduced in this same boy. Indeed, I have often seemed to sit beside you when I have sat with him at this very table. He had, like you, his mother's gentle nature, rather than his father's. He fell in love too, just as you did, when he was quite a boy.'

Squire Anthony had sat down in front of this likeness of his former self, and was regarding it attentively. He did not hear one half of what the lawyer said. The fifty years that lay between him and boyhood seemed all swept away, and he was once more a lad. What airy dreams he had then indulged in! what rose-tinted visions of life had his fancy painted! How passion had swayed him! It was in that very room, whither, on the occasion of her taking her new place, his Mary had come to have a few words of advice from her mistress, that he had first seen his charmer in that house (he had only known her by sight as the acknowledged beauty of the hamlet, and his mother's favourite pupil in the village school, before). He even remembered where she stood, close by the window yonder, with her hands modestly folded; and the pattern of the simple gown she wore, and the colour of the ribbons in her bonnet. It was a foolish enough thing to do, but he had fallen in love with the new waiting-maid as honestly as ever duke did with duchess. He had never meant otherwise than honourably towards her. And while it lasted, what a transport it had been! He had not inherited the gross animal nature of his father; but his affections were very strong, his heart was tender, his voice and air were winning. All the beauty and physical grace that had departed from him so long were seen once more in the portrait on which his eyes had been fixed. They were now cast down upon the shining table, on which quite another picture was mirrored—an aged, furrowed face, white hair, white beard, and eyes that gazed dimly forth from beneath white bushy brows.

'You are right, Moffat,' said he thoughtfully, and after a long pause: 'the pictures must not be burned, though I will not have them here. Let them be put away out of my sight, till I am dead and gone like the rest—all but young Richard's there: he shall have the place of honour above the mantelpiece. If the lad had lived, and taken a liking to his cousin Ellen—— But there; he had a sweetheart of his own, you told me.'

'Yes, sir; Miss Lucy Waller; a sweet girl, whose father until lately sat in the House for Mosedale.'

'What a handsome pair they would have made!' mused the old squire, quite unconscious of the lawyer's reply. 'Both Blackburns too: I could have made a point of that.' Then suddenly: 'How do you think her looking, Moffat?'

'Miss Ellen, sir?'

'Of course; who else?'

'Indeed, sir, she is very beautiful, though, I should fear, somewhat delicate. She will cause many a heartache in the county with those large soft eyes of hers, doubtless; since, I suppose, if it is not an impertinence to ask it, she is fancy free as yet?'

'Yes, yes,' said Anthony hastily. 'She has formed no engagement: you have my leave to say that much. To see her married well, and

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happily, would make amends to me for much that I have suffered.—You hear her singing in the drawing-room even now. Yes, that is my Nelly's voice; and, as you say, as clear as any bird's.—If you have done your wine, sir, let us join the ladies.'

CHAPTER VII.—BENEATH THE OLD ROOF-TREE.

The Manor-house was not without its memories for Mrs Blackburn as well as her husband, although they were of a different sort. She had dwelt as a servant where she was now the mistress: she had returned in triumph across the threshold from which she had been driven with shame. It was no wonder, therefore, that she wore an air of triumph. A powerful ally, Death, had declared himself upon her side, and at last had conquered all her foes for her; for the Blackburns—fathers, and sons, and grandsons—were all enemies in her eyes: cruel and unnatural in their treatment of her husband—insolent and cruel to herself.

She had made a hasty tour of the house before dinner, and insisted on her grand-daughter's accompanying her. The handsome sitting-rooms had been expatiated upon, and in one of them, the library, she had whispered (it was one of the few touches of pathos she exhibited throughout): 'It was here that your grandfather confessed his love for me, and gave me his first kiss. Ah,' sighed she, stepping up to the old oak-framed mirror that stood over the fireplace, 'I was as bonnie a lassie as thou, Nelly, then, and a deal healthier-looking. But rheum and wrinkles is what we must all come to.'

In the best bedroom, which had been prepared for Anthony and herself, her reflections were of a more agreeable nature: 'It was here, Nelly, that I waited on my Lady—and a kind-hearted loving creature she was, with a brute for a husband. He was a bad man every way. Alack! how I have heard him bang and swear in that dressing-room, while I have been doing madam's hair. And how she would start and colour as our faces met in this glass.'

'Did she know how you and grandfather loved one another?' asked Ellen, with an interest which she had been hitherto far from evincing in any of the circumstances of the day.

'Not at first, although she found it out before the Squire did. She tried her best to stop it—for which, indeed, I don't blame her; it is best in a general way for folks to marry in their own rank, you may depend on that, Nelly—but when she found Anthony quite set upon it, she addressed herself to me.'

'And what did she say, grandmother?'

'Well, she spoke very fair, I will say. She owned that she was much averse to her son's marrying such a one as me. "But it's better, in God's sight, that he seek to marry you," said she, "than seek your ruin." (Poor thing, she knew more than people guessed of the wickedness that went on under her own roof.) She so moved me, indeed, with her kind words, that I almost made up my mind to give Anthony up; and I would have done so—yes, I do believe I would—rather than have got him turned out of house and home for my sake. But it was not in my power to stop that. Whether I had married him or not, that would have happened all the same. He and his father spoke such bitter words to one another; and no wonder, so far as Anthony was concerned; why, you would scarce believe it! but that wicked old man, your great-grandfather—think of *that*, Nelly, and I alive to tell it!—if he had not had a wife already, would have married me himself!'

The young girl shuddered, as well she might. These reminiscences of vicious passion, told by the lips of age concerning one far older, and whom Death had so long taken, seemed to have a smack of the charnel.

But the narrator herself had no such qualms. 'I only saw madam once after that dreadful quarrel,' she went on. 'Your grandfather and I were married then, and forbidden the house; but his mother wrote us word to meet her on a certain day in Redmoor Fir Grove, when Russell Blackburn was at York races. She looked white and thin as a ghost; and indeed she died within six months of that date; and if ever a broken heart was the cause of death, it was so with her. I thought she would never have unclosed her arms from Anthony's neck, they clung to him so at parting: he was her favourite son, as well as her eldest born, and she must have felt it was for the last time. I did not know then, as I know now, Nelly, what a bitter cup that was to drain; but I pitied her from the bottom of my heart. Besides, she had not a word of blame for me, nor even of warning; she had been such a good wife herself, that perhaps she had no idea of what some wives are; but she bade her son be true to me, even when the days should come, as they have long come, though I little thought of them at the time, when all the beauty that then gladdened him so in my face and form should have faded and gone.'

'She must have been a good woman,' sighed Ellen sympathetically.

'Yes, wench—too good for this world. Another one in her place, not so good, might have done better. She did not make the most of herself even in appearance, as I have told her, in this very chamber, many a time.—Hark! there's the first dinner-bell. The last time I heard it, and saw Anthony go down without me to take his place at table, I little thought it would be fifty years before I got my own. Well, better late than never; the tide has turned at last, though it is not at full yet; nor will be till my Willy has his rights. See, here is the girl coming to dress me; just as I used to come to madam, directly that bell rang.'

Ellen partook of none of this triumph and exhilaration. She tried to be glad, for her grandfather's sake, that their prospects had been so marvellously changed for the better; but in her heart she was sorely grieved. If the thing could have been postponed till three months later, when she would have been John Denton's wife, then she might have welcomed this stroke of good fortune like the rest, although it would have always been in an inferior degree; for she did not care for wealth for its own sake, and of the advantages it bestows she had had no experience. At present she only knew that the acquisition of it had dispelled her brightest dream. Her grandfather had sternly commanded her to break off all relations with John Denton; such an engagement, he contended, to which, even under other circumstances, he had always refused his consent, had

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now become utterly incompatible with her position, and was to be no longer entertained.

Not even her strong sense of gratitude and filial respect towards her grandfather could induce her to send such tidings to the young engineer; but she had written him word that for the present his visits, and even his correspondence with her, must cease. The pair were doomed to test the strength of that constancy of which each had boasted; and though she feared no danger from the separation, she deeply felt the pain of it. The fact was, now that the barren hope to which Anthony Blackburn had clung for near half a century of toil had at last begun to bear, he was greedy for the full fruition of it. He wanted to be all his ancestors the squires of Blackburn Manor had been before him, and by the help of Ellen, to whom he was sincerely and devotedly attached, even something more. He was in secret much more solicitous to secure the good opinion of his new neighbours than he pretended to be, and we have seen that he was content, for the sake of it, even to forego some taste of the pleasures of revenge. He well knew that the attempt to recover his old position in the neighbourhood would be a difficult one; that his own manners, address, and even language were not what they had been before he lost it; and that his wife would be totally unable to adapt herself to her altered fortunes. In the background, too, was a third member of the family, to whom we have not as yet been introduced, but who could not be kept away from Blackburn Manor for ever, and who was likely to prove a still more formidable obstacle to his views.

Indeed, without Ellen's aid, the case was well nigh hopeless, and therefore it was that he threw in the scale against her love for Denton the full weight of his authority, and piled upon it all the considerations of gratitude and loyalty he could call to his aid. Without her, how could an old man (however pitiable for his misfortunes), and an old woman, whose audacity in wedding above her station had, in their opinion, deserved all the misery it had earned, recommend themselves to the proud and well-born folk, with whom he hoped once more to mix—even putting out of consideration that more serious hindrance to his efforts which for the present he might contrive to keep out of sight? But, on the other hand, with his beautiful grand-daughter to help him, how altered was the case! A country-house that was the casket of such a jewel as Ellen Blackburn could not fail to be attractive. She had good blood in her veins, and looked and moved like a princess. She would be rich, for he would make her so. With whom, then, among untitled folk at least, might she not form an alliance? and that once cemented, her husband's kin would stand shoulder to shoulder with her own, and help them to keep their place. Thoughts of this kind had begun to fill the old man's brain from the moment that he had received the news of his nephew's death, and had even taken definite and material shape with respect to his young neighbour, Herbert Stanhope. But at all events he had quite made up his mind that the proposals of John Denton should be rejected; for let the young engineer's future prosperity be what it might in his own line, it could never be of the sort to further the family popularity. Perhaps in one who had himself sacrificed so much to mere sentiment, this resolve may seem harsh and unnatural; but it is easier to give way to the softer emotions at eighteen than at sixty-eight, and easier at all times to disregard the sentiment of other people than one's own.

Thus it was that Ellen Blackburn found small pleasure in the sudden prosperity of her kindred, and sighed in her well-furnished chamber at the Manor for that little room in the cottage, through whose latticed window she had so often watched for her lover across the moor, and smoothed the tresses, innocent of flower or gem, to welcome him. Still, she was not unconscious of the delights of her new position, nor so plunged in grief (since she had hope to mitigate it), as not in some measure to appreciate them. The view from her present apartment (even without that beloved figure in the foreground) was not indeed to be compared with that to which she had so long been accustomed; but it had a beauty and home quiet of its own which pleased her much. Beyond the terrace and the carriage sweep, and separated from the latter only by a deep-sunk fence, lay a small but undulating and well-wooded park, with here and there a herd of deer. Upon one side was the village, with its ivied church-tower, from which the joy-bells were still pealing dreamily; and on the other, field after field of richest pasture-land, with luxuriant hedges (so different from the stone walls about Slogan), that seemed to grow so near to one another in the blue distance that they enclosed no space at all.

Her bedroom opened upon a still more charming boudoir, from whose windows, if the prospect was more restricted, it was not less fair. Immediately beneath them lay the well-kept garden, a chess-board of flowering squares of various hue. A quaint old arbour, built of fir-cones, and ornamented with painted glass, opened on what had once been the bowling-green, but was now in course of alteration into a croquet-ground—a change which she rightly guessed had been made by young Richard for the sake of his betrothed. Beneath the shade of those spreading cedars, and on the levelled turf, he had doubtless stood with her, and shewn how all things were to be, under her coming reign. They had paced together the winding walks of the shrubbery beyond, and climbed yonder little hill with its gay pavilion, from which all the fields and farms which owned him for their master were to be seen. The boudoir itself had been recently fitted up, and for whom but for this poor girl, of whose very name she was ignorant, but whose fate—divorced for ever from him she loved—touched her eyes with sympathetic tears. How it would vex this poor creature, when she came to hear it, that the new Squire had forbidden his people to breathe young Richard's name! That had been a bitter speech of her grandfather's, and painful to listen to; and although she did not doubt that his affection for her was genuine, though he shewed it in such mistaken fashion, it was plain wealth had already made him hard and stern; and might not his nature keep that mould for the future? She could refuse to be false to her love, but she could never act in defiance of the old man's express commandment.

It did not need, then, the cold hand of death to keep asunder John Denton and herself. But against such thoughts as these she had a simple charm, that for the present at least proved efficacious.

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She drew from her bosom John's last letter, written on receipt of her harsh tidings, and which bade her be of good cheer, and to wait in hope. There was not a syllable of anger in it against her grandfather, who he frankly owned had at no time encouraged his addresses. It breathed nothing but love and trust in her; and as she read it softly to herself, the words seemed like a song, to which the summer breeze that came in at the open window, laden with evening odours, was the fit accompaniment; and her whole soul was lapped in comfort, and grew calm. Her toilet suffered from the use of this specific, for the second dinner-bell sounded before she had time to assume her evening attire. Her appearance, however, as has been shewn, proved sufficiently attractive in the eyes of the only guest, Mr Mowbray Moffat; while the lack of splendour in her attire was fully compensated for by that of Mrs Blackburn, who, having had her pick of the family jewel-box, had not confined herself to mere satin and pearls.

After dinner, while the elder lady made an elaborate tour of the drawing-room, and approximately priced the furniture, the younger sat herself down at the piano and played a few sacred airs, such as she had been used to evoke from the harmonium in the little church, of which she had been organist, under Slogan; and presently, as we have seen, this attracted the notice of the gentlemen, and brought them in from the dining-room. Wrapt in the melody, she did not notice their arrival, but continued to play on, her pensive features with a chastened glow upon them, and her eyes full of devotional fire. Even Mr Moffat, a man not given to enthusiasm of any sort, was struck with her rare and ethereal beauty, and stopped in the doorway like one spell-bound.

'She is a thorough Blackburn, is she not?' whispered Anthony admiringly; 'as handsome as the dead lady we have just been speaking of, and with a look besides such as the angels wear. I have sometimes feared that she would be taken from me because of that.'

'Does she inherit any delicacy of constitution?' inquired the prosaic lawyer. 'Both her parents died very young, sir, did they not?'

'Yes, but they were a hearty couple. The mother, a pretty girl enough, but not like this one, died in giving her birth. Her father, as strong a man as myself, came to an untimely end.'

'Yes, poor lad. He fell down some precipice in Wales, as you wrote to tell me: that mountaineering' [he had been killed on Slogan by a powder-blast] 'which is so much the fashion now-a-days has been the death of many a fine young fellow. But though you have not mentioned him for years — your letters were so brief—this sweet young lady here is surely not your only hope—your eldest son is still alive, I trust?'

This was the question which the lawyer had had in his mind from the first, but had not hitherto ventured to put, since it was evident that his new client had reasons for his strange reticence on so important a matter. Mr Moffat put it now with such directness, that an answer could scarcely be avoided, but kept his eyes averted from his host, and fixed on the young girl at the piano, otherwise he would have seen old Anthony's ruddy colour change to deadliest white, as he replied stiffly: 'My son William is alive, or I should not have failed to let you know, sir. At present, however, I do not expect him home. He is abroad.—There at last she sees us!—I am afraid we startled you a little, Nelly. But pray, play on; Mr Moffat dotes on music as much as I do.'

THE LAND OF THE DIAMOND.

Captain Burton has lately given to the public the results of his exploration of the Highlands of the Brazil, and an account of his voyage down the São Francisco on a raft, a distance of fifteen hundred miles, from Sabará to the sea.* His narrative is instructive and entertaining; and its practical result, if his expectations are realised, will be to turn the stream of vacation-tourists in the direction of the only monarchy on the American continent, the newest empire in the world, and assuredly the most beautiful country, with the most enviable climate on the face of the earth. 'A thousand vacation-tourists will learn that yellow fever is not an abiding guest in the empire; that her shores can be reached in ten days from Europe; that no long sea-voyage is more comfortable or more pleasant; that the Highlands of the Brazil, which popular ignorance figures to be a swampy flat, are exceptionally healthy, and have been used as sanitaria by invalids who had no prospect of life in Europe; and lastly, that a short visit to Barbacena, in the province of Minas Geraes, *vid* the D. Pedro Segundo RR., will offer the finest specimens of the three great geographical features of the land—the Beiramar or seaboard; the Serra do Mar, maritime range or Eastern Ghauts; and the Campos, commonly translated prairies.' This is an attractive programme to any mind accessible to the delights and beauties of such a revelation of nature in its most lavish grandeur; and he afterwards adds another touch to the picture, completing its charm by his description of the Niagara of Brazil, and curtly informing us that Paulo Affonso, King of Rapids, is more accessible than Northern Scotland. To think of such a journey, of such scenes, of such a climate, of air, and space, and sunshine, in which mere physical life is enjoyment, is a holiday for the imagination. What a holiday for body and mind to 'go and do it!' And how pleasant to know that it would not cost more than one of the conventional 'trips' to semi-Anglicised continental places, in which the travelled Briton has the advantage of living very expensively among bad imitators of his social surroundings in England. From Rio to Peteropolis, and thence to Juiz dé Fora and Barbacena, the road, on which travelling is quite easy and well regulated, lies through scenes of incredibly varied and entrancing beauty, and leads to the grand *Campos*, the wonderful, fertile, sterile, flower-decked, stone-strewn, forest-laden, bare-stretching prairies of Brazil, where the pure air is laden with perfume; where fatigue is put to rout by a strange all-pervading exhilaration; where, though in a tropical land, the weary European recovers full vigour, and acquires such animal spirits as he never previously knew. 'There,' says Captain Burton, 'the mornings and evenings are the perfection of climate; the nights are cool, clear, and serene as in the Arabian Desert, without its sand. Nor are the prairies deficient in the highest beauties of form and tint. There is grandeur in the vast continuous

* *The Highlands of the Brazil.* By Captain Richard F. Burton, F.R.G.S., &c. London: Tinsley Brothers.

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expanse fading into the far distance. The eye can rest upon the scene for hours, especially when viewing from an eminence, while it is checkered by the afternoon cloud, whose eclipse seems to come and go, and thus gives mobility to the aspect, as it walks over the ridged surface of the light-green or pale golden earth-waves, upheaved in the intensely blue atmosphere of morning, or in the lovely pink tints of the "afterglow," from the shadowy hollows and the tree-clumps glooming below. If we analyse the charm, its essence seems to be the instability of the ocean, when we know that there is the solidity of earth.'

When the way lies no longer through the prairies, but by the cultivated lands, and through the Brazilian cities, gaudy, bright, interesting, and tenanted by good-looking, gay-hearted people, all is still beautiful. The forest-paths are glorious, the air is gemmed with hundreds of the bright birds of Brazil, rich fruits grow wild in lavish profusion, streamlets, waterfalls, lakes, adorn the scene. Through such paradisiacal scenes Captain Burton's way lay to Minas Geraes, where, according to him, the exploitation of gold and diamonds has but just commenced. In the immense resources of the Brazil, in its possession of wealth to an extent which may hereafter change the significance of the term, he is a firm believer; and he has left no detail of the working of the present system of mining, insufficient and merely inauguratory as he believes it to be, uninvestigated. He earnestly deprecates the general opinion that Brazil is an unprofitable field for the employment of capital, and steadfastly maintains that the disasters which have given rise to the unpopularity of the empire in commercial esteem, are due to the dishonesty and incapacity of English speculators. 'Charlatanism' is the mildest term he applies to the 'promoting' manœuvres adopted for the formation of companies, the statements, utterly irrespective of truth, the subtraction of distances, the falsification of figures, the unmitigated, shameless extortion for the comfort and accommodation of 'Mr Commissioner.' Humour is by no means a characteristic of Captain Burton's writings, but he certainly succeeds in being funny at the expense of the prospectuses. Thus he adds: 'In the mines, as in the railways of the Brazil, the fault, the cause of failure, lies at our own door, and not with the Brazilians. There has been the grossest mismanagement both at home and abroad. Private interests have been preferred to public; in certain notorious cases, a system of plunder has been organised, impossible schemes have been floated through the market, and money has been buried as though it were expected to grow.' The result is a rooted distrust of the Brazil, to the removal of which the author applies himself diligently. He has the most splendid conceivable visions respecting the future of the Brazil. He regards the gorgeous, beautiful, bountiful, tropical land as the future home of the perfect race which is to people the earth, and to supersede the necessary but unpleasant negro, and the mongrel mixed blood. It is doubtless against his will, and contrary to his intentions, that the author produces rather a pleasing impression of the 'anthropoid,' the object of his scorn and loathing, whom he holds to be a brute in a rough imitation of human shape, soulless, and ill smelling. On the head of 'the black miner,' he accumulates every possible epithet, in prose and verse, calculated to inspire disgust, and to express ignominy, but his facts do not quite bear out his theory; for instance, in his account of the Revista, or muster of the blacks, which takes place at the Morro Velho Mine every second Sunday, he presents a pleasant picture of placid, cleanly, contented working people, and concludes thus: 'Muster over, both sexes and all ages are marched off to church. The day is then their own. The industrious will look after house and garden, pigs and poultry; they will wash and sew, or fetch water, wood, or grass, for sale. The idle and dissolute will keep the day holy in African fashion, lie in the sun, smoke, and, if they can, drink and smoke hemp, like the half-reclaimed savages of "Sá Leone." Dinah, here and elsewhere, is proverbially fond of trinkets and fine rags. Parades over, she will doff her regimental attire, and don a showy printed gown and blazing shawl, the envy of all beholders.' This is very horrible, no doubt, to Captain Burton; but we feel many of his readers will fail to perceive its peculiar atrocity, or to recognise that the separation of Sambo and Dinah from the ranks of humanity, is to be inferred from the depravity of Sambo's lying down and smoking in the sun, after a week's work underground, and Dinah's fancy for a bright-coloured gown.

The mine in which the despised negroes labour is a wonderful thing to see. Here is Captain Burton's brief description of its interior appearance, in one of the best passages he has ever written: 'And now, looking west, the huge Palace of Darkness, dim in long perspective, wears a tremendous aspect. Above us, there seemed to be a sky without an atmosphere. The walls were either black as the grave, or reflected slender rays of light, glancing from the polished watery surface, or were broken into monstrous projections, half revealing and half concealing the cavernous gloomy recesses. Despite the lamps, night pressed upon us, as it were, with a weight; and the only measure of distance was a spark here and there, glimmering like a single star. Distinctly Dantesque was the gulf between the huge mountain-sides, apparently threatening every moment to fall. Everything, even the accents of a familiar voice, seemed changed; the ear was struck by the sharp click and dull thud of the hammer upon the boring-iron, and this upon the stone; each blow invariably struck so as to keep time with the wild chant of the borer. The other definite sounds, curiously complicated by an echo, which seemed to be within reach, were the slush of water on the subterranean path, the rattling of the gold stone thrown into the kebbles, and the crash of chain and bucket. Through this Inferno, gnomes and kobolds glided about in ghostly fashion, half-naked figures muffled by the mist. Here dark bodies, gleaming with beaded heat-drops, hung by chains in what seemed frightful positions; there they swung like Leotard from place to place; there they swarmed up loose ropes like the Troglodytes; there they moved over scaffolds, which, even to look at, would make a nervous temperament dizzy. It was a place

> Where thoughts were many, and where words were few.'

The capital of the mining district is Sabará, a very interesting town, situated in the midst of a Swiss landscape. (Every country seems to repeat itself in this wonderful land.) The foreground is a green flat, with a single noble tree; the river

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bends away to the right with graceful sweep, exposing the slope upon which sits the loftily placed city, whose many steeples tell the pride and piety of the old population. Sabará is a picturesque city now; when the mines are more prosperous, it will be made stately with marble and tasteful decoration. Here Captain Burton concluded his land-journey of five hundred miles, through the richest portion of the Minas Geraes, having seen nature in her most beautiful and varied forms, every mile of the road being rich in all the splendour of feature and colouring. Such forest tangle, such wondrous luxuriance of vegetation, such mighty lords of the woodlands, and infinitely varied crowding parasites, struggling and writhing upwards towards the pure perfumed air, and the glorious sun of the tropics.

At Sabará, Captain Burton began his voyage on the unknown river São Francisco, in very good spirits, though quite aware of the hardship, privation, and fatigue which lay before him, together with 'just enough risk to enliven the passage,' before he should have accomplished thirteen hundred miles, in the craziest of crafts, calked with Sabará clay. He thus describes the craft and the crew: 'The Ajôjo is a bundle of three canoes, the longest occupying the centre. The canoes are lashed together by hide ropes, with an interval of six to eight inches. Round poles, fastened by leather thongs to the gunwales, support the *soalko*, or platform, which should fit tight to the sides, otherwise, the craft, when "broaching to," may be waterlogged. This boarding of ten planks, laid horizontally, projects laterally into *coxias*—trampways eight to ten inches wide—where the men work. The standing awning was made fast by five wooden stanchions, of which the two pair fore and the one aft were supported, besides being nailed, by strong iron knees or stays. Facing the head, and in the coolest place, was a tall deal writing-desk, which rivalled the awning in catching the wind. Behind this, on each side, stood a *girão*, or boarded bunk, for sofa and bed, raised on four uprights. Amidships, was the table, a locked box of provisions, and two stools. In the stern stood the galley, a similar bench lined with brick, the *batterie de cuisine*, not forgetting the invaluable frying-pan. Two large jars of porous earth carried the supply of water. My crew numbers three—old Veira and his sons. My sole attendant is a Morro Velho boy, named "Agostinho," lent me by the superintendent. He knows something of the river, of gold-washing, of diamond-digging, and of rough cookery. Negra, the mastiff, wild-eyed as an ounce, is the terror of those who see her for the first time, and will prove useful—in these parts, all men travel with fierce dogs.'

With this queer equipment, Captain Burton set sail, no doubt forming a complete puzzle to his crew, and to every human being with whom he subsequently came in contact. Down the beautiful varying river he floated, sometimes easily, sometimes with infinite difficulty, by cultivated lands, growing sugar-cane and coffee; by rich banks of flowers and orange-groves; by splendid sweeps of forest; by swampy plains, where water-fowl and the river-pig abounded; by many a beautiful tarn and fierce rapid, and day by day approached the home of the diamond. Through all the wildness and the desolateness, the traveller's mind was busy with what is to be, when the desert stream shall have become a highway of nations, an artery supplying the lifeblood of commerce to the world. The sandbank where he lay and took in the silent magnificence of the scene may be the landing-place of a wealthy town. The 'Ounce Rapid' and the 'Fierce Sandbar' will be silenced for ever; 'and,' says the author, 'the busy hum of man in time will deaden the only sounds which now fall upon our ears, the baying of the Guára wolf, and the tiny bark of the little brown bush-rabbit.' So, to Diamantina, where the whole population lives on the diamond mines, as that of Sabará lives on the Morro Velho; and to the Jequitinhonka Diamond Diggings.

As Brazil has borrowed her gold-mining through Portugal from the Romans, so she has taken her system of diamond-washing from Hindustan. The process is very laborious, and highly interesting in its material aspect; how suggestive to the imagination need hardly be mentioned. The mind runs in a moment over a wide range of fancy, fiction, and fact—from Sindbad the Sailor to Mr Harry Emanuel. One thinks of all the beautiful historic baubles, and the misery and guilt they have caused; of all the fairy tales in which diamonds have figured; of all the strange stories of theft of them, and its discovery and cruel punishment. Tavernier's pretty story of the young jewel-purchasers of Hindustan, and their grave organisation, recurs to the memory when Captain Burton tells how children are employed in the Diamond Diggings. Their sphere is the *lavagem*, or washing. Their keen bright eyes detect the lurking treasure when older optics fail; even at twenty-five years, there are few which can be trusted to let no crystal prize escape amid the gravel. The simple expedient of the magnifying-glass is not yet in use, and the toil of the sifter is laborious and slow. It is during the lavagem that robberies are generally effected. 'Few,' says Captain Burton, 'swallow the diamond, not because it is considered poisonous, as by the Hindu, but on account of the difficulty of doing so unobserved. In India, the miner jerked the stone into his mouth, or stuck it in the corner of his eye; twelve to fifteen overseers were required per gang of fifty light-fingered men. The civilised thief pretends to be short-sighted, and picks up the plunder with his tongue-tip. A favourite way is to start as if frightened by a snake, and thus to distract the attention of the superintendent, who, if "clever," is wide awake to the trick. Most of the stones disappear by being tilted or thrown over the top of the pan during the washing, and are picked up at leisure. They are easily sold to the huckster, the pedler, or the keeper of the nearest groggery. Thus may be explained the number of slaves who have purchased their liberty, and taken to the bush. Even the white man has owned that his first impulse is always to secrete the diamond.' The diamond-bearing hills are singularly barren, the least beautiful portion of beautiful Brazil. Captain Burton tells some new diamond stories, but we feel that the diamond wants a Sir Emerson Tennent to do it the same justice as that which has been meted to the elephant. Of the unrivalled *Estrella do Sul*, which every one remembers at the International Exhibition, he says: 'This superb brilliant was found in July 1853, at Bagagem of Minas Geraes, by a negress. In the rough state it weighed 254½ carats. The owner parted with it for thirty contos (L.3000); at the Bank of Rio de

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Janeiro it was presently deposited for 300 to 305 contos, when it was worth L.200,000 to L.300,000. After being cut by the proprietors, Messrs Coster of Amsterdam, it was reduced to 125 carats; and now it belongs, I believe, to the Pasha of Egypt. Though not perfectly pure and white, its "fire" renders it one of the finest gems extant. This diamond has one exceptional circumstance attaching to its history—it has caused no bloodshed; not even the finder was murdered. She was only deceived and ruined, and died broken-hearted. This was the negress who brought the gem to her inhuman master, hoping for her freedom; but he took the jewel, and kept the slave.' How comes Captain Burton to concede the possibility of an 'anthropoid,' having a heart which could be, and was, broken? Is there anywhere, in any palace in the world, a band of jewels on any stately neck, a star in any shining hair, a flashing gem on any slender hand, but has blood-drops or tear-drops upon it, and the curse of tortured, vengeful hearts?

As yet the Diamantine formations of the Brazil have been barely scratched, and the works have been compared with those of beavers. The rivers have not been turned, the deep pools above and below the rapids, where the great deposits must collect, have not been explored; the dry method of extraction, known long ago in Hindustan, is still unknown here. 'The next generation will work with thousands of arms, directed by men whose experience in mechanism and hydraulics will enable them to economise labour; and it is to be hoped that the virgin gem-bearing waters will be washed up-stream. This was the sensible provision of the old Diamantine Regulation. Unfortunately, it came too late, when the channels had been choked with rubbish that was hardly worth removing.

After a close inspection of the Diamantine district, Captain Burton resumed his adventurous voyage, and his close observation of nature, which became increasingly beautiful. The banks of the great river are rich in magnificent sugar-cane, and on both sides offered the most tempting inducements to emigration, while the climate is superb. At Coroa do Gallo, the author says: 'To-day we passed over immense wealth. The Rio Pardo, like the Paraná, drains highlands rich in diamonds and gold, whilst the bed of the Rio das Velhas is a natural system of launders.' Here the splendid Burity palm grows in great luxuriance. No weariness could come to the voyager amid such scenes, under such a sky, breathing such air, and nearing with every day the King of the Rapids, which he reached in safety at last. Niagara is always the same; Paulo Affonso varies, but is ever sublime, ever awful. 'The general effect of the picture,' says the author—and the same may be said of all great cataracts—'is the "realised" idea of power, of power tremendous, inexorable, irresistible. The eye is spell-bound by the contrast of this impetuous motion, this wrathful, maddened haste to escape, with the frail steadfastness of the bits of rainbow hovering above; with the "Table Rock," so solid to the tread, and with the placid settled stillness of the plain and the hillocks, whose eternal homes seem to be here. The fancy is electrified by the aspect of this Durga of nature, this evil working good, this life in death, this creation and construction by destruction.' The age of the King of Rapids is estimated to be 2400 years.

In the presence of this mighty phenomenon of nature, Captain Burton concludes the story of his latest feat of travel, one which is no less remarkable for its wonderful interest, than for the ease of its accomplishment. His admiration of these western lands is deep and enthusiastic, his belief in the splendour of their future destiny fixed. He says: 'They are emphatically the Lands of Promise, the "expression of the Infinite," and the scenes where the dead Past shall be buried in the presence of that nobler state, to which we must now look in the far future.'

A REVOLUTIONISED TRADE.

It has often been a subject of wonder to me, that no one of that really unfortunate body, the London cowkeepers and dairymen, have ever come forward to describe some of the trials which have so completely changed their trade, and to a great extent injured or absolutely ruined nearly all its followers. This has all been done within the experience of men still pursuing the calling; and many of my readers must remember the 'murrain' of 1841 and the subsequent year, which was as terrible to cattle as the devastating 'plague' of two or three years back, only its area was narrower, and it was chiefly confined to milch cows. What the technical name of this disorder was, I do not know, nor, most assuredly, do the majority of the dairymen themselves; who call it indifferently the 'rinderpest' and the 'foot-and-lung disease;' the swiftness of its progress, however, combined with the unknown cause of its rise and contagion, and the impossibility of curing it, combined to produce a mysterious scourge, which seemed sent on purpose to ruin the wretched proprietors. Nothing like it had ever been seen before, at least not in the memory of recent generations: what the old murrains were could only be guessed, but the worst were probably not more fatal or irresistible than this.

From this great evil arose one still greater for the time; a general prejudice against milk prevailed, and while its consumption was diminished in nearly every household, it was in many entirely discontinued. At first, this was wholly from the dread of some infectious property being imparted to the milk, which, it was naturally enough argued, might, even unknown to the dairyman, be drawn from cows in which the disease was fermenting; but to this dislike soon became added others of a far less rational character; and for years, almost ever since indeed, the most absurd assertions respecting the adulteration of milk have found ready and general credence. Twenty years ago, the statement was gravely made, and repeated in almost every newspaper in the kingdom, that to thicken and whiten the milk, weakened almost to transparency, a mucilage of dog's brains was commonly employed. The utter impossibility of dissolving the brains of a dog or any other animal in milk, and there holding them in complete suspension, had no effect whatever in checking the general belief. The mildest form of adulteration allowed by public opinion was the adding of chalk to the watered milk. Now, this is just as impossible as the other; and if any reader believes that chalk is put into milk, let him grate a knob into his next pint of milk, and see how he can prevent it from shewing itself.

That milk is sold to the customer precisely as it

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is drawn from the cow, few persons believe: it is not so sold. The deterioration which it suffers occurs in two ways—one is taking the cream from it; this of course impoverishes the milk; but when it is intended to sell it as 'new milk,' much less cream is taken than when skim-milk is to be the residue. The other mode, as no one will be surprised to learn, is by the addition of water. Nearly all the milk sold in London is watered, 'washed' or 'bobbed,' to use the dialect of the trade; but I am quite sure that no other adulteration whatever is at all extensively practised. Spanish annotta, it is true, is occasionally used, but only in very small quantities. The object of this is to give a richer colour to the milk or cream; partly because a colour unnaturally high is looked for and admired by the customers, and partly because the 'washing' gives a bluish cast to the milk, especially to the margin when the vessel holding it is tilted; added water can generally be thus detected. One very curious fact, however, must be borne in mind—the milk from a black cow is bluer than that of any other cow. The reader may perhaps smile incredulously at reading this, but it is true nevertheless, and can no more be accounted for than the equally puzzling fact, that all white cats are deaf.

By no means, however, could the dairyman make his trade a profitable one during the murrain, nor has it ever since been so good as of old, for the price of milk, oddly enough, does not seem to vary like other commodities, but remains the same whether cows sicken or thrive, rise or fall in cost. No practicable advance, however, would have met and sufficed for the emergency in which the trade found themselves placed; and a single illustration will shew this. At that time, cows were not nearly so dear as they are now; and I remember a cow-keeper buying, on the Monday, three very fine healthy cows for fifty-seven pounds; but so swift, as before remarked, was the progress of this disease, that these identical animals were sold on the following Friday for six pounds, being, excepting as offal, worthless. There was one West-end dairyman who had a 'staff,' as one may say, of thirty-two cows; that was the number usually in his shed; and some idea of the virulence with which the murrain raged may be formed from the fact that he, in six months only, lost thirty-seven cows from that stock and its renewals. There was no fault in his shed, which was warm, roomy, and dry, and was, strange to say, in the second plague, almost the only one I knew in London which entirely escaped its ravages. The owner never lost a cow all through the recent cattle-plague, so capricious and so baffling have been these scourges.

The first murrain, although subdued, yet seems never to have wholly disappeared, and a few cases occurring now and then kept up the memory of the foot-and-lung disease; its chief commercial effect had been to induce some of the trade to look to the country for their supply, instead of depending entirely upon their own cows. Now that this has become rather the rule than the exception, we wonder to read that great dislike and prejudice existed in the customers to this course, and that the country milk-trade was left in the hands of the lower dealers. The public, in short, seemed to think there was the same difference between a dairyman who sold milk from his own cows and the one who imported it, as there is between the boot-seller who makes his articles at home and his rival who has them all from Northampton. Squabbles, amusing to the looker-on, would often arise between the regular vendor and those who sold the disliked railway milk. A certain eminent nobleman was reported at that time to be labouring under a cutaneous affection, for which immersion in milk was the only palliative, and I have heard the orthodox milkmen exasperate their rivals by taunts relative to the latter having to wait until the 'duke had come out of his bath' before they could go their rounds.

It soon began to be evident that the carriage of milk by railway was destined to grow more important almost day by day; for, while the price of the article remained unchanged, the purchase-money of the cow had increased fully one-third, and the cost of her keep had risen in a very much higher proportion. A first-rate cow still yielded a profit, but then they were not all first-rate cows; one really deserving the name would yield, perhaps, fourteen or sixteen quarts of milk per day; a few rare animals have given twenty quarts, but the average may be taken from ten to fourteen. The trade do not keep a cow if she does not give at least six quarts per day. They usually give a good supply of milk for ten months, but some have been known to continue in full milk for more than two years; a cow has yielded for three years, but this is extremely rare. The little Brittany cows, which have become rather popular of late, do not furnish more than four quarts a day, and are only kept for pleasure, not profit.

In London, at anyrate, the cost of keeping cows depends chiefly on the price of grains, the demand for which, even now, is almost in excess of the large quantities produced by the metropolitan breweries and distilleries. This would naturally make them dear, but would not account for a most remarkable and sudden advance which took place in their price a few years back. The price of grains at the time of which I speak was about one shilling per quarter, but they quickly rose to two shillings, and then all at once became very dear—so suddenly, that a dealer, buying grains on the Monday, gave two shillings per quarter, and on the following Saturday, the same quantity cost the same man six shillings. They are now about eight shillings per quarter, and as they form the staple of food for cows in London, this advance is a very serious one. A cow will eat about a quarter of distillers', or a quarter and a fourth of brewers' grains weekly; this difference arises from the quarter of the one trade containing eight bushels, of the other only six bushels. They are considered equally nourishing, and when judiciously changed with other food, conduce more than anything else to increase the supply of milk. Several dry seasons in succession had caused hay to be dear beyond all precedent, and probably this had a great deal to do with the almost fabulous price to which grains advanced, because, as is well known, the production of these depends on an entirely different trade, and cannot be governed by any fluctuations in the milk business, so an extra demand will no doubt increase their price rapidly.

At anyrate, there was another blow struck at the trade, and gradually the better shops began to draw their supplies from the country. The causes

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alluded to were still in operation, when, all at once, came the terrific 'rinderpest,' and scores of sheds were cleared at once and entirely of their stock: what the disease passed over, the alarmed and often inexperienced inspectors would condemn, until it seemed as if there were about to be put a complete and final period to the trade of cow-keeper. This last catastrophe decided the matter; and, as we now see, there has sprung up on all our railways an important milk-carrying trade, which gives every promise of its becoming larger year by year; thus knocking away about the last item in which London was self-supplying, and rendering it still more dependent on the provinces. The change will do some good to the trade if it only emancipates them from the tyranny of the servants of their patrons; all tradesmen have to fee and court these people, but none of any calling are so thoroughly at their mercy as the milkseller. If he fail to propitiate the housekeeper, cook, or whoever is the presiding genius, in vain is all his struggling to retain the custom. I have known a nobleman give an audience to his milkman, who wished to know why he was going to lose a customer he had served for years, and he shewed to the earl very plainly that he was suffering from the spite of an upper servant; so a continuance of the patronage was promised him. But the nobleman had overrated his power in his own house. Seldom, from that day, did the cream prove rich, or the milk for the nursery good, which the cow-keeper sent in. He exculpated himself over and over again; but at last the head of the department, whoever it was, grew tired of the complaints, and changed the tradesman. The good-natured earl saw the dairyman again, and assured him he was very sorry for the change, but that he really could not help himself.

So the milk-trade of London is revolutionised, and has passed into a totally different phase from that which it wore a generation back. On the whole, the change is for the better, because the quarter whence we now draw our supplies is inexhaustible, while the productive power of the London dairies grew smaller every year. Nevertheless, they had their advantages in some respects over the present plan; be the tradesman ever so honest, he cannot now insure the absolute purity of his milk, nor can a drop of new milk be drawn for the invalid at any time, as before could be done. Other points might be cited; but we may be content with knowing that, on the whole, the change is an improvement.

FROM THE RANK.

'WHAT was the queerest thing as ever happened to me since I ha' been on the rank? Well, there has been a many queer things, and one a most terrible one. We Four-wheelers sees a deal of life; much more than them 'Ansom chaps does, notwithstanding the little hole in the roof through which they looks down upon parties when parties isn't aware. They drives fast and fast folks, and some has an idea that it is only fast life as *is* Life; but you knows better, sir, I daresay.'

I was taking a long street-drive upon the box-seat of a 'growler,' with my family in the interior, bound for a distant railway station, and I had put a certain question to my cabman, in hopes that his answer might make the journey less tedious. He was a young fellow, smartly dressed, and drove a horse so unusually quick-paced that I felt quite a scruple of conscience in not inquiring into his merits. But then I had asked a cabman about his horse before, and the consequences had been most disastrous; as bad as asking a High Church clergyman about his Chancel, or a valetudinarian about his complaints; there had been no end to the subject at all: and now I congratulated myself upon my reticence, for a cabman's long-windedness is in inverse proportion to that of his steed, and since, when my inquiry had only been directed to human affairs, my Jehu shewed such signs of verbosity, what would he not have been (thought I) upon the subject of horse-flesh?

'What was the queerest thing as ever happened to *me* as a kebman? Well, perhaps this un was; or, at all events, I remembers it best, because it happened only last week. O my! yes, it was a rummy go!' And with that, my friend was so tickled with the recollection, that he rolled on his seat till I thought he would have rolled off it, while the reins so shook in his hand, that the speedy horse, who took it for a sign that he was 'called upon,' started off at score, and missed only by an inch or two making himself a passenger in a *Citizen* 'bus that chanced to be before us with its door open. This formed, of course, the introduction to an exchange of repartees between the cad and my impulsive companion, in which the latter had decidedly the better of it; and then, to my great relief (for I had come in for my share of epithets), we shot into a by-street, more suitable to the composition and appreciation of narrative.

'It was down by Cavendish Square that I took her up—a well-looking woman of nine-and-twenty or thereabouts, and a perfec' lady. Not only well dressed, but well mannered and affable, which is what I goes by, more than all the fine feathers as a bird can wear. "Kebman," says she, "drive me to the nearest chemist;" and I druv her accordingly.

'But she did not get what she wanted at that shop, for she says: "Drive me to another chemist." And I druv her. I should think we went to a matter of fifteen chemists, and yet she couldn't get what she was in search of. *That*, I began to think, was a little queer, because chemists mostly has things one wants—spirits, or what does as well, for instance, on a wet Sunday, when the publics is closed—besides, everything as one can possibly *not* want, in them green and blue bottles. So, says I, seeing her look a'most as blue as they: "What is it you *do* want, mem?"

"Want?" said she, in a slow, absent sort of way, which made me somehow get it into my head (and it's there still) that what she did want, poor soul, was P'ison, "well, I want to go into the country."

"Country!" says I, quite cheerful: "you have got into the keb with the right horse for that, mem. He can go a stretcher, *he* can. Where do yer wish to go to?"

"I want," says she, speaking just like one in a dream, "I want to go to Bath."

'Now Bath was rather a long order, even for my nag here, and I told her so.

"Very good," says she. "Drive me to another chemist."

'Then, as it didn't seem of any consequence to herself where she was druv, I took her up Maida

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'Ill way (where my stable is), and tried a chemist or two in those parts; but none of them had got the thing she wanted any more than the others; and she looked more concerned and vexed than ever. She was such a perfec' lady to look at, and so affable, that I felt pity for her; and though it was not to my advantage, I said, says I: "If you really do want to go to Bath, I had better drive you to the Great Western Railway, where you can take the train."

"Ah," says she, with a sort of a shrink, as though somebody had struck at her, "but isn't that Paddington Station?"

"Well, mem," says I, "I will not deceive you, it certainly is."

"You are a good man," says she. "I wish everybody was like you" (which was very kind of her, I'm sure); "but I can't go to Paddington Station, because my husband is there waiting for me."

'Well, for all I know, this might be a very good reason; I know many a good woman—'Ansom kebmen's wives—as avoids Paddington Station on that account, and small blame to them. So, since the chemists couldn't suit her, I offers her an alterative of my own.'

'Alternative,' said I involuntarily.

'Very likely, sir; only *I* always calls it alterative,' replied my Jehu coldly. I had offended him by my foolish particularity, and it cost me a four-penny cigar out of my case to re-establish his good-humour.

'Well,' continued he, puffing slowly, and speaking with greater deliberation than ever, '"If I can't take you to Bath," says I, "I can take you somewheres on the way—say Windsor."

"How much would that be?" says she, taking out her purse.

"We couldn't do it, speaking for horse and man, under two pund, mem, and there's not another horse on our rank as could do it at all."

"Two pund is a large sum," says she.

"Well," says I, "say Ealing. I will take you to Ealing Station, mem, for twelve-and-six, including all these chemists"—and indeed I had got off and on my box, for a matter of forty times, by this; so I don't think it was unreasonable. I would not have been hard upon that 'ere fare, if it was ever so, partly because of the p'ison as I had in my mind, and partly because she was such a perfec' lady.

"You may drive me to Ealing Station, then," says she, in a sort of despairing voice; and I druv her. The train to Bath was not due for an hour or so, and she wanted to try the chemists at Ealing; but that I wouldn't have nothing to do with. A country chemist might have given the poor thing what I am sadly afraid she wanted, and I wasn't going to have anything happen in my keb, if I knowed it—out at Ealing.

"No," says I, "mem, asking your pardon, but no more physic-shops for me. If you would take my advice, you would let me drive you to a public-house, for a drop of somethink better than physic, and of which I am sure you stands in need.'

"As you please," says she, "kebman," in such a soft and miserable voice as went to my heart; just as though she did not care where she was druv to, if it couldn't be out of the world. So I pulled up at a public, and gave her some bread and cheese—good Wiltshire it was, and yet she took no more than a mouse might nibble, and a little sup of porter, which she drank as though it was black dose, sitting all the while in the keb; while I made a goodish meal, I promise you. Then we went back to the station, and she gave me her purse to get her ticket—first-class—to Bath for her, "for," says she, "I can trust you with untold gold" (which was also very kind of her, and I hope the truth). Then I gives her the ticket and her purse. "And will you stay here in the keb," says I, "or wait upon the platform, mem?"

"I will stay in the keb, thank you," says she; and upon my life, sir, I do believe it was because I had been tolerably kind to her, and she did not like to part company with me before she was obliged. She had had "hard lines" in the world, and been very badly treated by some one or another, you may take your davey: poor soul.

'I did not like to trouble her with such a matter, but as the time was getting very short, I says: "Please, mem, you have forgot to give me the twelve-and-six:" for as for the bread and cheese and porter *that* she had paid for on the spot.

"O dear, I am so sorry," says she: "I fancied you would have paid yourself when I gave you the purse."

"No, mem," says I. "I should never have thought of taking any such a liberty."

'Then she paid me, saying with a sad smile: "I am afraid I have been very troublesome," and wished me "good-day." And then the station-bell rang.

'I had the curiosity to peep through the door when the train came in, and watch her. She ran down the platform looking earnestly into every individual carriage, and would have been left behind altogether, but for the guard who opened the door, and popped her in at the very last moment. I was sorry to leave her, for I never took a fare who was a more perfec' lady; but I was somehow glad, too, to get her out of my keb. There was somethink very queer about her, that you may depend: and if she were mad (which, however, I don't think as she was), she must ha' been druv and druv, by some wus-hearted chap than me, until she was druv out of her wits.

'Perhaps he is sorry for what he has done by this time, says I to myself, and this here party will be adver*tised*, and I took great count of her dress and appearance, in case she should. But, curiously enough, nothing came of it all; and yet, even as it stands, it seems to me one of the queerest starts as ever I came across since I ha' been on the rank.'

'It was undoubtedly very queer,' said I. 'But you hinted something, my friend, of a certain terrible adventure that had once happened to you; I should like to hear that too, please.'

'Why, this is what I call reg'lar sucking a cove's brains,' responded my cabman, looking up at me with a cunning leer. 'If I did not see as you was a family man, with luggage and that, I should be a'most inclined to believe as you was some literary carakter. There's a many on 'em about; Maida 'Ill way; only, when they rides at all, they takes a 'Ansom.'

Remembering what Mr Pickwick had suffered at a cabman's hands, from using a notebook, I hastened to clear my character from this imputation, and to assure my companion that I had no other idea in questioning him beyond that of increasing my knowledge of human nature, for observing which

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he must have had so many and exceptional opportunities.

'Well, that's true,' said he, greatly mollified. 'Considering the various parties as uses four-wheels, I knows of nobody (excep' perhaps some as keep a public) who is so likely to know a thing or two as one of us. Deary me; the games as has been a going on in this here very keb!'

'Games?' said I. 'What games can people play in a cab?'

'Why, bless yer, lots of games. I don't mean cards and that—though I *have* known 'em play cards, with my 'ind cushion on their laps for a table—but all sorts of schemes and devices, played by all classes of folks. I have druv marquishes, and I have druv parties as you would not have thought could ever stand a shillin' fare. I have druv the perlice, and I have druv thieves. I don't care who it is, so long as they don't want to be druv to the Fever 'Ospital.'

'Was the horrible case you spoke of a case of infection?' inquired I.

'No: it was a deuced sight worse than that, sir. It was summut as sends a cold chill to my marrer, whenever I thinks about it. And yet it began so cheerful. Just after I first began to be a kebman, I was 'ailed in the Kilburn Road by a couple of fares: two middle-aged comfortable ladies, small tradesmen's widows, as I should set 'em down as, and they asked me how much it was to Blackfriars. "Half-a-crown," says I.

"Werry good, young man," says the fattest of 'em: "then drive away, and just stop at the first public-house, will ye?"

'Well, I pulled up, willing enough, at the first public, and they gave me a shilling, and had some gin and beer, and "Never mind the change, young man," says the fattest; "but drive along sharp, and stop at the next public-house."

'Well, between Kilburn and Blackfriars, I should think they stopped at a matter of four-and-twenty public-houses. The lady with the chemists was nothing to them; moreover, unlike her, they never failed to get what they wanted at each, until they had took a great deal more than was good for them, and I must say as they had made me a little "fresh" myself. And every time it was: "You may keep the change, young man;" so that I had at last more than five-and-twenty shillings of it (mostly in coppers). This is all werry nice, thought I, as long as it lasts; but sooner or later these here parties will be a dozing off, and expec' me to see 'em home, which maybe will be the perlice station, for they had not told me their address yet, but only Blackfriars. They must ha' been very much accustomed to strong liquors, for unless it was sobbin' and cryin' a bit, which the one as was not the fattest did continual, they shewed no signs of bein' overcome. What a middle-aged female of the respectable class *can* take, and yet sit in a keb, is only known to us drivers; but these two, they beat all as ever I see. Well, at Blackfriars, they gave their address at last. It was a queer little street, but very respectable-looking, and I druv 'em up to their house, which I noticed had all the blinds down. They got out without much help; and the one as was not the fattest, she speaks to me for the first time, and says: "Young man," says she, "you have druv us well and safe, and over and above your fare, you shall see my dear daughter."

"Well," thought I, "here is a queer start. This stout party has taken such a fancy to Dick Braddle (which was me), that she wants him to become her son-in-law;" and I larfed aloud.

"Don't larf," said she, quite solemn like, and pointing to the drawn-down blinds; "but come in." Well, I went in. Not into the parlour, as I expected, but up-stairs, the two ladies leading the way. At the first-floor, I stopped. I did not like it—the house was so dark and still; but then, thinks I: "Lor, I'm only a poor kebman, and it's their own money I've got in my pocket after all. Why should they want to rob *me*?" So I went on, into the second-floor front, which was a sittin'-room. Here the old lady as was not the fattest began to moan and cry, and, pointing to the sofy, on which lay somethin' covered with a sheet, she says: "There is my poor daughter."

'And the other one, she turned the sheet back a little, and there was the face of a dead young lady, very white and quiet, but looking to me, as had never seen any one dead before, most awful. Coming, as it did, so sudden and unexpected, and just after I had been larfing down below, it gave me, I do assure you, an uncommon turn.'

'Indeed, I can quite believe it, Mr Braddle,' said I, 'if the thing happened as you state: but did it really happen?'

'As true as I sit here, sir. Why, who would ever have invented such a story?'

'Then, what is your explanation of the two women's conduct?'

'That ain't my business, sir. My business was only to drive 'em; and you may be sure I did not stop a minit more in that 'ere house to ask any questions. It is, however, my opinion that the old lady as was not the fattest was really the poor girl's mother, and that sorrow had made her take to drink for comfort: and as for the other, she was glad enough to sympathise with her friend so far as drinking the liquor went. But, at the time, it seemed to me a most terrible Start, I do assure you. It 's the worst thing as has ever happened to me yet, since I ha' been on the rank; and I wouldn't have it happen again for twice twenty-five shillings.—Here 's the station, sir; and see, you 've got fifteen minits to spare, all along of my good horse, which I hope you will take into account in the fare, according.'

LITTLE MAY.

Oh! empty is her little bed!
And useless stands my darling's chair.
That sunny face, that golden head,
Shall never more rest there!

Oh! silent is the little room
Where once her childish voice was heard;
No sunlight ever breaks the gloom;
The blinds are never stirred.

Her toys with dust are covered o'er;
Her little books unopened lie.
Her merry laugh will sound no more
In joyous melody;

For little May, fair as the light,
Fresh as the flowers that bloom and die,
Is singing with the angels bright,
In lands beyond the sky.

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THE GOLDEN AGE OF LITERATURE.

BEFORE giving facts to shew why this nineteenth century is entitled to the above title, it will be well to inquire the rates of literary remuneration authors received in former times—men 'who daily scribbled for their daily bread.' Tasso was reduced to such poverty that he was obliged to borrow a crown for a week's subsistence; Cervantes, the Spanish genius, wanted food; Corneille died in great poverty; Spenser lived in great want. Letters patent under the Great Seal were graciously granted by James I. to the learned antiquary, Stow, permitting him, as a reward for his labours and travel for forty-five years, 'to gather the benevolence of well-disposed people within this realm of England—to ask, gather, and take the alms of all our loving subjects!' This was to be published by the clergy from their pulpits; and one parish in the City generously sent seven-and-sixpence! The immortal Shakspeare received only L.5 for *Hamlet*, though his commentators have been greatly enriched by their various editions of his plays. (Dr Johnson had L.375 for his first, and L.100 for his second, edition of the great dramatist's works.) Till he was thirty-one, Milton did not earn a penny for himself. *Paradise Lost* was completed by the 27th April 1667, he being then fifty-eight years of age. On that day it was sold to Samuel Simmons the bookseller for L.5 down, with a promise of L.5 more when thirteen hundred copies of the first edition should have been sold; another L.5 more when thirteen hundred copies of the second edition should be sold; and so on for successive editions. It was not, however, till 1674, the year of his death, that the second edition was published; and in December 1680, Milton's widow parted with all her interest in the work for L.8, paid by Simmons. The daughter of Milton had to crave alms from the admirers of her father. Tonson, in 1739, obtained an injunction to restrain another bookseller from printing *Paradise Lost*, Tonson and his family deriving great benefit from its sale. The elder Tonson was, says Mr Disraeli, at first unable to pay L.20 for a play by Dryden, and joined with another bookseller to advance that sum; the play sold, and Tonson was afterwards enabled to purchase the succeeding ones. He and his nephew died worth L.200,000. Dryden sold Tonson ten thousand verses for L.268.

Dr Johnson thought that there existed among authors no other motive but writing for money; however that may be, the price that the great doctor had for his work, the Dictionary, was exhausted long before his work was concluded. Smollett wore himself out for inadequate literary remuneration, and died in poverty, almost broken-hearted, in a foreign land. He is buried in the English cemetery at Leghorn; and had he lived a few more years, he would have been entitled to an estate of L.1000 a year. He wrote: 'Had some of those who were pleased to call themselves my friends been at any pains to deserve that character, and told me ingenuously what I had to expect in *the capacity of an author, when I first professed myself of that venerable fraternity*, I should in all probability have spared myself the *incredible labour and chagrin I have since undergone.*'

Bernard Lintot, the bookseller, has left a curious account-book, entitled *Copies when Purchased*. Mr Disraeli, in his *Quarrels and Calamities of Authors*, gives some particulars from it; but a more extended list will be found in the *Percy Anecdotes*. According to this, Pope received L.215 for each of the six volumes of his translation of Homer, and also a further sum from 654 subscribers—amounting altogether to L.5320. 'No such encouragement to literature had ever before been manifested,' says Mr Carruthers. He secured his life from want by considerable annuities. The estate of the Duke of Buckingham was found to be charged with L.500 a year, payable to Pope. He also bought the lease of his house at Twickenham—that is, L.500 a year and a villa out of L.5000! The king gave L.200 and the Prince L.100 for their copies. For the *Odyssey*, Pope received L.2855, paying L.700 to his assistants, Elijah Fenton and Broome. For some smaller poems contributed to *Miscellaneous Poems and Translations by several Hands*, 1712, he received for *Windsor Forest*, L.32, 5s.; for *Ode on St Cecilia's*

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Day, L.15; and *Temple of Fame*, L.32, 5s. Pope is stated to have satirised the Duchess of Marlborough in the character of Atossa, and received L.1000 from her Grace to suppress the satire; but a writer in the *Athenæum* stated that it was not the Duchess of Marlborough, but the Duchess of Buckingham that Atossa was meant for.

To return to Lintot's book. Gay, for his *Wife of Bath*, received L.25; for his *Trivia*, L.43; and *Three Hours after Marriage*, L.43, 2s. 6d. Dr Sewell, for his *Observations on the Tragedy of Jane Shore*, received only a guinea. Theobald was to have translated for Lintot the twenty-four books of Homer's *Odyssey* into English blank verse; also the four tragedies of Sophocles, called *Œdipus Tyrannus*, *Œdipus at Colonus*, *Trachiniæ*, and *Philoctetes*, into English blank verse, with explanatory notes. He was to receive for every four hundred and fifty Greek verses, with the notes, L.2, 10s.! Rather different to Pope's gains. The facetious Dr King received only L.5 for the *History of Cajamai;* but obtained L.32, 5s. for the *Art of Cookery;* and the same sum for the *Art of Love*. The highest prices paid by Lintot are for plays: Dr Young, for his *Busiris*, had L.84; Smith for *Phædra and Hippolytus*, L.50; Rowe for *Jane Shore*, L.50, 15s., and *Jane Grey*, L.75, 15s.; Cibber obtained L.105 for the copyright of the *Nonjuror*. For a seventh share of *Captain Cook's Voyages*, Lintot gave L.7, 3s. Jacob, for his *Accomplished Conveyancer*, had L.105: Keill, for his *English Astronomy*, L.100.

Sheridan, for translating *Pizarro*, received L.1500; as a contrast to which, we may mention that Goldsmith sold his *Vicar of Wakefield* for L.10. Johnson had three hundred guineas for his *Lives of the Poets;* Dr Darwin L.600 for his *Botanic Garden;* and Gibbon L.600 for his *History*. Disraeli tells us that at the sale of the Robinsons, the copyright of *Vyse's Spelling-book* was sold for L.2200, with an *annuity* of L.52, 10s. to the author!

Charles Lamb, in writing to Bernard Barton, a poet who consulted him about starting as a professional author, said: 'Literature is a very bad crutch, but a very good walking-stick.' In this opinion Mr Froude seems to agree; but it certainly is not applicable at the present time, and though we are far from recommending young men to venture without fitness into such a pursuit, in no occupation is it so easy to earn L.200 or L.300 a year; though it is certainly difficult, even in this golden age of literature, to earn L.700 or L.800. As a modern writer has well expressed it: 'Those who live by writing, must write to live; and they must write too much, too fast, and on too many subjects, to write as well, and think as deeply, as those who can wait five years for the payment of their labours—who will not starve if they be never paid at all. They may write brilliant leading articles, or graceful poems, or delightful stories; but how can they find time to think out a great work of history, politics, or philosophy; how can they spare the mental labour necessary to produce a book which shall influence statesmen, engage the attention of sages, or command the acceptance of a nation? How, in one word, can they have leisure and energy thoroughly to master any subject whatever? The power of brain-work is limited, the hours of the day are numbered, and both are fully occupied with uttering; there is no time to think. Men who live by teaching lack leisure to learn.'

In days now happily gone by, an author had to write a fulsome dedication to his book, hoping to get a good present from his patron; but now authors write for the public, and the publishers take good care to cater to its taste. The sums publishers pay authors now for their works are wonderful—a striking contrast to those paid in former times. Scott, even after the failure of Ballantyne & Co., reduced their debts from L.117,000 to L.54,000, which latter sum was paid by his executors out of the moneys arising from his life insurance, copyright property, and other literary remains. With respect to living writers, we have only the authority of the newspapers for what follows; but even if they magnify in some cases, the exaggeration is significant. It is stated that Lord (then Sir E. B.) Lytton received L.100 for each week's instalment of *A Strange Story;* and that Mr Wilkie Collins received L.5000 for a novel contributed to the *Cornhill*. Messrs Blackwood and Sons are said to have paid Miss Evans L.2500 for *Silas Marner*, L.4000 for *The Mill on the Floss*, and L.7000 for *Romola*. The *Literary Budget* stated that in 1862 Mr Coventry Patmore was paid L.2000 by Messrs Macmillan & Co. for his *Victories of Love*, contributed to *Macmillan's Magazine*—or about a guinea a line. Messrs Strahan & Co., the publishers of *Good Words*, placed L.5000 to the credit of Dr Guthrie, for the purpose of his going to the Holy Land and there writing a Commentary on the Bible, to be published in penny numbers. The same publishers paid L.1000 to Mr Millais for twelve illustrations to *The Parables read in the Light of the Present Day*, by Guthrie. Messrs Lacroix & Co. of Brussels stated that they paid Victor Hugo L.16,000, or 400,000 francs, for *Les Misérables;* but the author was for twenty-three years engaged on the work. According to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the same publishers have just signed a contract with Victor Hugo to purchase, for the sum of L.12,000, the right of publication for a limited term of an historical novel in four volumes entitled *Par Ordre du Roi* (By Order of the King), the scene of which is laid in England, at the close of the seventeenth century; together with a volume of poems entitled *Fin de Satan*, and a volume composed of three dramas not intended for representation, and entitled *Théâtre en Liberté*.

Mr Tennyson is said to have been offered L.4000 a year by his new publishers for the exclusive right to publish his works.

There was certainly never such an opening for young authors or for those who dabble in literature in addition to another calling, as at present. To take in a copy of all the periodicals for one

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year would cost, exclusive of the Transactions of the Learned Societies, L.450; of which about sixty guineas would be laid out in quarterlies, L.160 in monthlies, and L.230 in periodicals published at shorter intervals, principally weeklies. A single copy of each would cost L.30; they number about 750. In addition to this, there are thousands of newspapers which are able and willing to pay well for their articles; and then there is the Reporters' Gallery, from which, as has been well said, a man can rise to anything.

A COUNTY FAMILY.

CHAPTER VIII.—THE SHADOW IN THE SUNSHINE.

The evening passed away without any further reference on Mr Moffat's part to the subject which had so embarrassed his host; but he had already sown the seed of disquiet in the latter's breast. Anthony Blackburn could not but have expected that his confidential man of business must needs, sooner or later, have put to him so pregnant a question—it was clearly necessary that he should convince himself of the existence or demise of his client's only son—and yet he had found himself quite unprepared to answer it. He was conscious that he had hesitated in his reply, and felt that he might very possibly have aroused suspicion; and all the time his grand-daughter was singing, and while his fingers seemed to move in accord with her tunes, he was reproaching himself with his want of readiness, and devising plans for setting the lawyer's doubts at rest. He could never suffer him to leave the house with this idea of something amiss upon his mind, to grow and grow, until perhaps it took some monstrous shape, as bad as the reality itself. Accordingly, when the lawyer rose to take his leave, his host insisted upon his having brandy and water and a cigar, in what was called 'the Squire's Room,' a cosy chamber decorated after the family fashion with portraits of horse and hound, the possession of which had at various periods dignified the Blackburn race. Stuffed fish of portentous size, that had fallen victims to brother Richard's rod and landing-net, adorned the walls; the bell-ropes were fox brushes earned by Ferdinand; and on the mantelpiece was a mighty drinking-horn with silver edge, the contents of which Charles had been wont to empty at a draught before being helped to bed. The window of this apartment was at the back of the house, and opened upon a portion of the stable-yard; and in times not very remote, the diversion of cock-fighting had been carried on outside, while the inmates sat at ease, as in an opera-box, and wagered, pipe in mouth, upon the result of the conflict. Perhaps, upon the whole, it was of all the rooms in the house the one most redolent of the family fragrance; and when the door opened to Anthony's touch, a crowd of memories seemed to come forth to greet him, which, although by *no* means hallowed, had a certain impressiveness; for all these jolly sportsmen, dicers, drinkers that he had known or heard of had been his kith and kin, and were now dead.

'It was in this room, Moffat, that I tasted my first whiff of tobacco,' quoth Anthony, gazing earnestly around. 'My father filled the pipe, and laughed till he cried, when the fumes made me ill. It seems but yesterday! How well I remember that old print yonder of the prize-fight! One of the men is Mendoza; and that old fellow with the lady is Old Q. at ninety years of age with his nurse. Old Q. was Queensberry, you know.'

'Yes, yes,' said the lawyer; 'the Duke, of course. He was quite childish for years before his death.'

'Ah,' said Anthony suddenly, 'that reminds me, Moffat, it is a thing that may happen to either one of us in a year or two, for we are not young men; and I wish to provide at once against it.—Here, mix your liquor for yourself, and take a cigar, and let us have a quiet chat together about business.—I wish to make—to give you instructions about my will.'

'Your will, sir? I hope it may be many years'—— (The Squire motioned with his hand impatiently.) 'But there, as you would say, it is well to provide against the worst, and while we are in health, to do those things, which, being undone, may make sickness an anxious time.'

'My father, as I understood,' said the old Squire thoughtfully, puffing at his cigar, 'placed my name in his will without putting it into the entail at all.'

'Just so, sir. He left, failing your brothers and their heirs, the whole estate to you absolutely and at your own disposal.'

'No thanks to him, sir,' exclaimed Anthony hotly. 'I've no more gratitude for what he did than he felt towards the fox whose brush gave him yonder bell-handle. Why should I?'

'Well, certainly your father little thought that you would ever be the Squire here, when he made that will, sir; and, by-the-bye, his instructions for it were given singularly enough in this very room. My uncle told me all about it, when he came home that day—and vexed enough he was that matters had so turned out, for, like myself, he had always wished you well.'

'Never mind his wishes, Mr Moffat; let me know what he said about the will.'

'Nay, there was not much to tell, sir. I know, of course, how bitter your father was against you, and how resolved to cut you off. But still I thought there might be some remembrance—a legacy or something—and it gave me quite a shock sir, it did, upon my sacred word and honour, when my uncle Robert told me what had happened. Mr Ferdinand, you see, was but a lad at the time; and your other brothers mere children; and it seemed so certain that if one died the others would live—and then their children—why, your chance seemed out of the question altogether. "I wish," said your father, "to make an eldest son of Ferdinand, and to leave the Manor in entail to him and his heirs; and they failing, I would do the same with Charles, and then with Richard." Well, you remember how bad your father was to cross; so my uncle said nothing about you at that moment, but entered into the affair of your younger brother's portions, in case Ferdinand and his heirs succeeded; and then, when that was settled—they were to have the Mosedale property between them, which has

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now, by-the-bye, become more valuable than all the rest—and yet no word was spoken about yourself, my uncle ventured to say: "And what do you wish done about your son Anthony?"'

'Yes; now, what did he reply?' asked the Squire earnestly. 'Tell me the truth, Moffat, though I know it will be a bitter morsel.'

'He said that he wished nothing done, and that he had no son Anthony.'

'He said that, did he?' observed the Squire between his teeth. 'Well, I had no father, then.—Go on.'

'Then my uncle Robert spoke of some money that happened to be lying in the banker's hands—a loose thousand or two; altogether, perhaps fifteen hundred pounds—and mentioned that he had heard of you of late as being very ill off, and since this sum was not appropriated—— But your father burst in with his "No, sir, no;" and there was an end of that.'

'But how, then, came my name to appear in the will at all?'

'It was your mother's doing, sir: she begged and prayed that it should not be left out altogether; and since it looked as though it did not matter a pin's point, your name was put in last, to comfort her. "And if he gets it, wife," said Squire Russell, with a wink at my uncle, "he shall have the Manor for his own, to leave it to whom he pleases;" whereupon she thanked him with tears, thinking, poor soul, that he was really doing you a kindness. And indeed, as it has turned out, he was; for although, in any case, you must have succeeded to the estate, as your late nephew's heir-at-law, you might not have found it solely at your own disposal.'

'Which it now is, of course?'

'Most certainly it is, sir; and a very fine property it has of late become. Your income, thanks to the growth of Mosedale, is at least thrice what your father's was—and, if I may venture to advise, it is out of that portion of the estate that any provision you may please to make for Miss Ellen should come, leaving the Manor lands to descend as a matter of course.'

Anthony held up his finger. 'I wish my granddaughter, Ellen, to inherit Blackburn Manor and all the lands about,' said he with grave distinctness. 'She will be my sole heiress, Mr Moffat.'

'But your son, sir?' ejaculated the lawyer with profound astonishment.

'I shall see that my son, William Blackburn, is provided for according to his deserts, out of the Mosedale lands. Your own suggestion, in fact, is to be adopted, with a change of names; and you will come to-morrow and lay the whole matter clearly before me; but in the meantime I wished you to labour under no misconception, not even for a single day, concerning my intentions for the future. Do you understand them?'

'Perfectly, sir.'

'Well, that is enough for to-night then; we will speak of details at a more seasonable time.—If you will really not take another glass, I will ring for your horse.'

The lawyer had not recovered from his surprise even when he found himself in the open air and on the back of his own sober gray. 'Is there never again to be a Blackburn at the Manor-house?' muttered he. 'Are Squire and son for ever to quarrel? And yet these two cannot have had so serious a breach as I at first imagined, else the old man would not be so well intentioned towards him. But to have this young girl to be his heiress, who has herself so much sweetness and beauty, is to make her the best match in all the county!' And the lawyer, who, although so keen at his trade, was a very old woman for matchmaking and gossip, began to reckon up in his mind all the local magnates who had sons to enter for so desirable a prize, and hugged himself with the possession of the great news that he should be first to spread.

Thus Anthony Blackburn had succeeded to his heart's content in putting to rest his guest's suspicions, and sent him away precisely in the frame of mind in which he would have had him to be. Yet the old man sat long alone after the lawyer had departed, with moody and dissatisfied face, and though he drank glass after glass of the strong liquor, it failed to cheer him. At last, with not an altogether steady step, he sought his bedchamber, and finding his wife seated at an escritoir, inquired of her, in no distinct nor amiable accents, what was keeping her up so late.

'I was writing the letter, Anthony,' said she simply.

It may seem strange that an occupation of so ordinary a kind should have engaged a lady from ten o'clock until after midnight, but the fact was that epistolary composition was not an art in which Mrs Blackburn was a proficient, and the sheet of paper before her had only just been folded, and was being placed in its envelope, when her husband appeared. He staggered across the room, and looked over her shoulder at the address, which, with her head aside, her lips projected, and her eyes in apparent astonishment at the success which crowned her efforts, she was in the act of completing. 'You might have saved yourself this trouble,' said he doggedly: 'that letter must not be sent.'

'Not be sent, Anthony!' ejaculated she with sudden pallor. 'Why, you promised me that so soon as we got here, I might write to tell him! It is what I have looked forward to above all else.'

'I cannot help it, Mary,' answered the Squire, moved by his wife's disappointed tone; 'and I am truly sorry for your sake. But I have been thinking of the whole matter for these last two hours, and it will never do to let him know—that is, not yet. He would be coming down upon us here post-haste, and spoiling all at once.'

'Spoiling all?' repeated Mrs Blackburn.

'You need not mock my words, woman, like an echo,' replied the Squire, endeavouring to lash himself into a passion, which his genuine affection for his wife rendered very difficult: 'there can be no doubt of what I mean. Shall we not find it hard work enough to win our way here among our equals, without being hampered with such a clog as he?'

'A clog, Anthony, your own and only son!'

'Ay, would he were not: he is a taint in my blood, a disgrace to me, who begat him; to you, who bore him. I will not have him here, to frighten folks with his black looks. He cannot keep from mischief, nor in his cups from bragging of it. He will blurt out the whole story of his shame some day, and then what will become of Nelly?'

'She has a pretty face, and will have a fortune that fits in with it,' said Mrs Blackburn coldly: 'no hurt can happen to her.'

'What! do you think, then, that the young

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gentleman—or nobleman, as likely as not—whom she may chance to choose, would hold to his bargain, if this ruffian, her grandfather's son, should once shew himself in his true colours? And would *that* be no hurt to Nelly? If she comes to harm that way, as surely as the moon sits in the sky yonder, William shall never see a penny of mine.'

'You would play the same part then, Anthony, as your father played to you, and earn the hatred of your own flesh and blood, as he did.'

'No, not the same,' said the old man excitedly, now taking vast strides across the room, the passion of his mind having apparently overcome all effects of the liquor he had so lately swallowed. 'I call Heaven to witness, as I have often done, that my father had no honest ground of quarrel with me. *I* had not disgraced him and his for ever; *I* had not committed a mean and hateful'——

'Hush, Anthony, hush!' exclaimed Mrs Blackburn piteously. 'For *my* sake, if not for his, do not proclaim his shame to all the house.'

'There,' answered the Squire triumphantly, 'you yourself fear that it should be known here, and yet you would take no precaution to prevent its disclosure. You wish it to be told, I suppose, by his own sottish tongue, to be corroborated by his own brutal ways and hang-dog looks, as you well know it will be.'

'But, Anthony, what would you have him do?'

'I would have him kept off from here as long as may be—for one clear year at least—for thirteen months—is it not thirteen?' And the Squire stopped in his walk, and cast a terrible glance at his wife, who turned her face from him as he did so.

'It is twelve months and fourteen days,' replied she in low and trembling tones.

'At least, then,' continued the Squire, 'let that much of time elapse before he shews his face here. There is surely reason enough for setting of that limit. When it is passed, you shall take your own way in the affair. Our Nelly will by that time—and I have set the matter in train already, if I am not mistaken—have made her position in the county assured by marriage; only, let not this precious son of ours come here and ruin all, before he is sent for, else, by Heaven, it will be the worse for him. So let the thing be settled, wife, as I have said, and do you tear up that letter.'

But Mrs Blackburn had already locked it safely in her escritoir, and secured the key.

'I will not send it, Anthony, since you forbid me,' returned she quietly; 'but I must keep the letter until the time comes at last for me to send it; for then, as he reads it, he will know how, when fortune began to smile on us, I welcomed it mainly for his sake, and guess at all I feel this wretched hour.'

'He will know nothing—he will feel nothing,' answered the Squire sternly, 'except so far as he is himself concerned. Do not flatter yourself that William Blackburn is in any way changed, or ever will be, from the heartless good-for-nought we have always found him. At least, for my part, whatsoever disappointments may lie in store for me, and they may be many yet, I can experience none from him.'

And the Squire moved slowly into his dressing-room, keeping his eyes fixed to the last upon his wife, as she sat with her face in her hands, and her gray hair falling over them, as the willow droops above a tombstone.

CHAPTER IX.—THE HORSE AND THE MARE.

It is ten months since the events related in our last chapter, and the morning sun of another autumn is lighting up a scene far different from the quiet landscape about Blackburn Manor. It shines upon our great seaside haunt of fashion, fuller even than usual of gay company, because of the race-meeting at neighbouring Goodwood. It is the Cup day, and therefore many of its stately mansions and all its hotels have been astir earlier than usual. Upon this day the tide of brilliant equipages on the west cliff will suffer perceptible decrease, and the broad walks will be traversed without jostling. For the present, however, all is haste and preparation. The *New Unlimited* in particular, before which are in waiting a score of various vehicles, seems alive from its eighth floor to its basement. The porter opens its folding-doors to incomers and outgoers with the regularity of a swift automaton; the clerk in the glass box is questioned ten times per minute respecting the movements of this or that inmate of the gilded hive. The spacious hall is crowded by knots of men, who whisper to one another mysteriously, and jot down the result of their deliberation in little books. The broad staircases are trodden by ethereal creatures ascending and descending in gorgeous attire, but all bound, sooner or later, for the park and the course. In the balconies, too, are here and there to be seen a pair of eager but quiet talkers, very different from the tender couples who have been known to stand there by moonlight, and watch the waves kiss the shore, and sighing, reluctantly withdraw. These present pairs are all of the masculine gender, and their theme is a sordid one enough. If their thoughts are concerned with the other sex at all, it is with females of the equine race. Is the mare 'fit?' Can the mare 'stay?' are the questions that absorb them. Let us play the eavesdropper upon these two gentlemen-sportsmen who are looking forth from the first-floor circle upon the vast expanse of sea and sky, without the least consciousness of the presence of either. Folks do not come to Brighton for sublimity and the beauties of nature, and least of all in the Goodwood race week.

This pale-faced, delicate-featured young fellow, with the well-kept black moustache, we have seen before, and easily recognise, although, in place of the tourist suit in which we saw him last, he is dressed in the highest fashion, with a rose in his button-hole, and an opera-glass slung across his shoulder. It is Mr Herbert Stanhope of Curlew Hall. The other, a stout, good-humoured-looking gentleman, is his junior by a year or two, his elder in point of astuteness in the business in which they are both engaged, by many years; inside the cover of his race-glass is to be read, in great gold letters, his name and address: 'Mr Frank Dawlish, The Albany.' But he is known by all the world—that is, *his* world—as Sporting Dawlish. We do not pay him an extravagant compliment when we say that among 'the gentlemen-sportsmen' who live, and move, and have their being upon British race-courses, there were very many worse than he.

'It is not the perfect certainty that all these fellows think, Stanhope,' said he, jerking his thumb contemptuously towards the open window behind them, through which, in a large finely furnished

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room, two or three men could be seen still seated around the breakfast-table, although the special trains had already begun to run from the station, and all the hired vehicles in the street were tending thither, as though drawn by a magnet.

'There is nothing to beat her,' replied Stanhope, positively, and without removing the cigar that was between his lips: 'that is Dean's honest conviction. I had a long talk with him this very morning.'

'In spite of Dean's honesty, however, if I were you, I should hedge.'

'What bosh you talk, Dawlish,' ejaculated the other impatiently. 'How *can* I hedge, with such short odds against the horse? I just heard Wyndham taking two to one about him.'

'I saw you did,' said the other drily. 'If *Gazeebo* wins, you will be hard hit, I fear, won't you?'

'Hard hit? I shall be ruined, Frank; that's all. But there is no chance of such a thing, I feel sure of that, whatever wins.'

'You don't *look* sure, my dear fellow; and, forgive me, but it is you who are talking bosh now, not I.'

'I betted against that horse,' said Stanhope excitedly, 'when he stood at twenty to one, which was his proper position, as you will own to me to-night, Dawlish; and I will bet against him now, though he rose to evens. I hate the beast.'

'You should never hate a horse, my good fellow,' returned the other coolly; 'it is almost worse than having a particular fancy for one, as you have for this *Vignette*. Horses are like men and women: you should never let your judgment of them be blinded by your partiality or prejudice. You are saying to yourself: "Here's a pretty 'mentor,' who is said to have lost a fortune in one race at Ascot!" Yet, surely an experience which has cost one so dear ought to be worth something, as indeed it is. I tell you this "picking out an animal for one's self from the very first," as some of those wiseacres in yonder room are so fond of talking about, is sheer madness, simple suicide. I believe in the mare myself, but I also believe in *Gazeebo*, or rather I believe in neither of them.—What do you stand to win by, besides the mare?'

'Everything. Nothing but *Gazeebo's* winning can hurt me. I would give a thousand pounds to know the beast was dead.'

'Well, I am not so bloodthirsty,' said Dawlish, laughing; 'a little lameness would satisfy me; then, when he got well, I would back him for the next long race, for I do think he's a good "stayer;" and if it happened to be wet to-day—but there, there is no chance of that. It is the very weather for *Vignette*. Come, let us drink her health in a glass of Hock and Seltzer, and then be off.' Whereupon the two friends stepped inside.

Have any of my readers ever had a large sum depending upon a horse-race? I mean a sum, whether large or not, which is of considerable importance to themselves. If so, they will easily understand that as Mr Herbert Stanhope drives through the pleasant Park of Goodwood side by side with 'sporting Dawlish,' he does not interest himself greatly in the scene nor in the company. A less occupied mind could not fail to mark the incongruity between those shady glades and sylvan solitudes and the noisy throng that hurries through them, in every species of conveyance, from the four-in-hand to the coster's cart, on horseback and on foot. Among these last, a tumultuous array of country folks, and card-sharpers, orange-sellers, and acrobats, there is one class alone, the gipsies, who do not seem out of place, but even they have suspended their usual picturesque avocations, and taken to selling 'lists of the running horses.' Upon the whole, the spectacle suggests some pantomimic rehearsal, in which the beautiful scenery by Grieve or Telbin has been suffered to remain, while that indiscriminate mob who are so much in need of the policeman engross the stage. But for all that he sees, and almost for all that he hears, Mr Herbert Stanhope might be in the Underground Railway. His stake in the coming 'event' itself is so large that the anticipation of it may well monopolise his mind; and yet he does not think of the race at all, but only of its possible consequences. In the case of one result, which is likely enough to happen (Mr Dean says it's 'a positive certainty'), he will *recoup* himself for the losses of years, and be re-established at Curlew Hall in at least as good pecuniary circumstances as those in which he was left at his father's death; and in the case of any other result save that, and *one other*, he will be no worse off than at present, and indeed (only it is not worth his while to think of that) the better by some hundreds. But then it is also possible that this *one other* thing may happen, in which case Herbert Stanhope will be ruined. 'If there is a worse thing than "a fancy" in horse-flesh,' says that experienced sage Mr Dawlish, 'it is a prejudice;' and his friend has entertained a prejudice from the first against *Gazeebo*. It is well to lay odds rather than to take them, but then you must lay them *round*. It is bad to stand to win upon one horse only, but it is much worse to have staked your all against another. Mr Herbert Stanhope has not only 'put the pot' on the black and yellow, which are the colours of *Vignette*, but he is 'full,' and a great deal too 'full,' against the 'scarlet' worn by the rival favourite. Of course, there is nothing in his outward demeanour to shew it: to look at, Mr Stanhope is merely a calm, unexceptionally attired young gentleman, whose mission, like that of the rest of the aristocracy present, is to maintain the poor fellows who form the betting-ring; but his heart throbs under the rose in his button-hole, and an unpleasant shiver pervades him when the strident voices round about him roar out: 'I'll bet against *Vig-net*,' and still worse when he overhears a colloquy (and there are many such) between 'Fly and Spider,' when the latter answers: 'I can only give you six to four, sir, against *Gazeebo*.' He is quite resolved not to hedge a shilling at such a price as that.

What a scene it is!—yonder noble sweep of level turf embosomed in the wooded hills, with the sunlit sky above all, and these discordant human figures, the members of the betting-ring, in the foreground, as jealously railed in as though they were really the wild beasts that faintly typify them. The din, the roar, and, may we be permitted to add, the smell of them, are to be found on a smaller scale in Wombwell's Menagerie; the brazen fraud, the rapacious merciless greed, are wholly without parallel elsewhere. Look at these men; they have mostly some inscription upon the money-bags or pouches which they bear round their necks—*Jones of London*, *Smith of Birmingham*, or what not—whereby those who have dealings with them may recognise them at a glance; but none of them are more legible than the word Rogue, which their

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trade has stamped upon their features. Some of them have planted in the earth gigantic umbrellas (similarly emblazoned with their names and addresses), and under these they carry on what is literally enough a roaring trade. Others stand with their backs against the railings, protesting, and methinks they do protest too much, that there they will be found after each race, prepared to settle with all and sundry who shall in the meantime have favoured them with their patronage—intrusted them with the money which not many of their patrons will see again. These Spiders are all wonderfully alike in visage, though they may differ in form—some being bloated and unwieldy, as though they were almost gorged; others thin and hungry; but the Flies on whom they feed are more diverse. There are several quiet, sober-looking, respectable brown flies (clerks who have borrowed their employers' money perhaps to make a safe investment on this occasion); very many, too, of a hybrid sort, that would astonish a naturalist, being half-fly half-spider, and in a transition state from the former to the latter; and a considerable sprinkling of quite bright and brilliant flies, who are, however, come in search of the same garbage as the rest, just as one marks with wonder what gay and golden insects will circle about the offal in the streets. These last are the noblemen and gentlemen who would not soil their hands with vulgar Trade upon any account, but who think it no shame to adopt as their profession the Turf; and, curiously enough, notwithstanding their gilded wings, it is whispered that even some of these are on the verge of the transition state which has been hinted at above.

Strangest of all, immediately above this crowd, from which arises an indescribable clamour (when the coming-off of some minor race does not subdue it to that sort of insect hum which is so often heard in the summer-time above some mass of material corruption)—strangest of all, we say, in box and balcony of the Grand Stand that immediately overhangs this crowd sit the fairest and proudest of England's daughters, and apparently not at all discomposed by the scene in question. Many a smile and nod greet Mr Herbert Stanhope as he looks upward into that bright array, and time had been when more than one neatly gloved hand would have pointed out a vacant seat for him beside its owner; but the great ladies who patronise Goodwood are very wary, and soon get to know when a *parti* has ceased to be eligible to their sweet Constances and Arabellas, and the losses of the master of Curlew Hall were no secret to any of them. It is probable, however, that in his present mood Stanhope would not have accepted an invitation from any quarter; his mind was too anxious to stoop to frivolities; he found it hard enough to throw into his expressive features the air of delighted recognition they were expected to wear, without being compelled to exchange polished commonplaces and wager gloves with ladies of fashion. True, a horse-race is itself a frivolity in the eyes of many, but the one which was now approaching was to Stanhope at least a matter of the most paramount importance, and monopolised his attention wholly.

The bell was rung for saddling, and his friend and himself went to see the horses, or rather to see the mare and horse (for he had no eyes for the others) stripped and shining like mirrors, each with arching neck and pricking ear, as though conscious of the hopes and fears that they excited in so many human breasts; for verily the Goodwood Cup day is one cut out of the calendar of the Houhynhyms, wherein the Horse is the master of the Man. When this was over, Stanhope and Dawlish made their way to their own places in the Grand Stand, in a box of about the size of a bathing-machine, which they had secured months beforehand at a great price.

The jugglers, the dancers, the Ethiopian singers, the sellers of gingerbread nuts and of effervescing drinks, had been driven from the course by the impartial hands of the police, and even the few gentlemen with Stand tickets in their hats who still remained were condescending to leave it. The broad green road, hitherto concealed by countless thousands, lay bare at last, as though some Red Sea miracle had been wrought for the horses' sake who were about to run between those pent-up waves of men. One by one, they take their preparatory canter down the course; each as they go by evoking his share of applause, mingled perhaps with some would-be knowing criticism from the spectators; but the admiration rises to a sullen roar as, side by side, the horse and mare happen to go by together, stride by stride. They are both bays, but the black and yellow contrasts sufficiently with the scarlet to keep them distinct to all eyes (had there been need) to the very horizon's verge. Gay and haggard, Stanhope raises his glass, and scans them narrowly. His hand is a little tremulous, but his face is perfectly calm as he remarks: 'The horse gallops well.' Sporting Dawlish gives a nod and a look which are quite the perfection of sign-language—'I believe you; he gallops a deal too well, as I always told you'—but he does not reply in words. The vast sea of humanity has ceased to roar; only one wave of speech breaks upon the ear, where a cardseller, who unites with his calling that of sweeping unconsidered trifles from people's carriages while their attention is absorbed, and who has been detected, inveighs against an eaves-dropping police.

The long array of shining steeds, with their still more conspicuous riders, is drawn up in two lines, like a rainbow and its reflex; the red flag falls; an inarticulate thunder of voices announces the fact that 'they are off.' The mare is leading as they pass the Stand, but will she lead when they come round again? From his position, Stanhope is able with the aid of his glasses to command the entire course—to mark every incident of the struggle from first to last. But he makes no comment. Sporting Dawlish is not so reticent. He has no such stake in the event as his friend has, although he has other reasons besides friendship for wishing to see *Vignette* win. He has many strings to his bow, and one of them has snapped. 'There's one out of it already,' says he composedly; 'that *Campfire* has pulled up short. I always thought he would never stay such a course as this, though I did put a tenner on him. They're beginning to scatter, eh? That wretched weed *Julep* seems to have a nice chance, don't he?—last of all. By Jove, how the horse is coming on!'

The horse—that is, *the* horse—was indeed coming on; even at that great distance, and while the goal was yet far off, experienced eyes, such as were now watching so eagerly, could detect certain portentous signs in the equine struggle. *Vignette*,

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who had taken up the running too early, as it was afterwards said (for no race-horse is ever beaten, in the opinion of his backers, but through some extraneous cause), was indeed already 'in difficulties.' Herbert Stanhope was among the first to see this, and with the air of a general who sees the battle has gone against him, he shut up his glass with a laconic 'The mare is beaten,' long before the jubilant crowd began to shout: '*Gazebo* wins!'

THE LIFE OF THE RANK AND FILE.

The order recently issued by the Secretary of State for War to recruiting-parties to enlist no strollers or persons whose antecedents are unknown, and the carrying out of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Military Punishments, cannot fail to give a higher tone to the army, and to attract to it as a profession many of those who are now, in the various callings of clerks, canvassers, &c., struggling to maintain a respectable appearance on a miserable weekly pittance, that barely enables them to keep the wolf from the door. We believe that such persons will have no reason to regret their adoption of the army as a profession. Even at present, and it is every year improving, the life of a soldier is by no means one of such hardship and misery as it is commonly supposed to be: of course, occasional 'roughing it' is inseparable from a military career; but whether on home or foreign service, the soldier has it generally in his own power to live as happy a life as falls to the lot of ordinary mortals. From the day that he enters the service till he leaves it, the supply of all his wants is under the constant supervision of officers, some of whom may indeed be rather perfunctory in the performance of their duties, but who are all really the soldier's friends; yet the notion of a great many people is that a soldier lives a half-starved and in every way wretched life; the writer of this paper has seen an old lady tender a few pence to a soldier waiting at Charing Cross for the Aldershot train, that he might get a glass of beer, she being evidently of opinion that he could not himself afford even that very moderate luxury. And yet, if a soldier is well conducted, he need never be without money in his pocket.

Within twenty-four hours after a man has 'taken the shilling' in the Queen's name from the recruiting-officer, he is taken before a doctor, is stripped, and his physical excellence thoroughly tested. If he is passed by the doctor as a fit subject, he is immediately conducted to a justice of the peace, and having in his presence declared to be true the statements as to his birthplace, age, trade, &c., which he has made on his 'attestation' paper, and having reiterated his willingness to serve, he is duly sworn in to be faithful to his Queen, her heirs and successors for ever. Should he have changed his mind before being sworn in, the enlistment is cancelled on the 'smart-money' (twenty-one shillings) being paid; but after being sworn in, he is to all intents and purposes a soldier, and can obtain his discharge only by the usual expensive mode of 'buying off.' As soon as may be convenient after his attestation, the recruit is despatched to his regiment's headquarters, if the regiment be on home service, or, if it be abroad, to the dépôt: till within a few weeks ago, this was always done under the escort of a non-commissioned officer; but now that the army is recognised as a profession in which bad characters are unworthy to remain, the recruit himself receives the advance of money, and is allowed to find his way without any guard to the station of the corps he has chosen. Arrived at headquarters, the recruit must be examined by the regimental surgeon: if disapproved of by this officer (which rarely happens), he receives his discharge; if approved of, he is conducted before the commanding-officer, who finally passes him—a purely formal ceremony—and 'posts' him to a particular company. If he has a brother in the regiment, he can demand to be placed in the same company with him; and similarly on this ground a soldier can claim to be transferred from one regiment to another.

Feeling very awkward and with many misgivings, 'Johnny Raw' is ushered in, by a soldier-clerk sent from the orderly-room, to one of the mess-rooms of the company to which he has been posted; and he is speedily taken in hand by some old soldiers, 'drouthy' customers, who see the chance of several days' 'wetting' in assisting the recruit to spend his bounty. If the young aspirant for military distinction belongs to the better classes of society, he probably expects to find the barrack-room a dirty overcrowded apartment, redolent of anything but Rimmel's odours from Araby the Blest: if so, he finds himself agreeably disappointed. The barrack-room is generally a lofty well-ventilated long room, its length and breadth being in the proportion of about three to one: and the number of men lodged in it is so regulated as to allow from four hundred to six hundred cubic feet of air to each. Down the middle of the room run the mess-tables, with the forms on either side: there are generally two fireplaces, or one large one. Ranged on each side of the room are the iron cots, about eighteen inches apart, which are drawn out to their full length only after tattoo. During the day the lower half of the cot is 'run in,' to give more space in the room, and to serve for a seat: the straw mattress and pillow are rolled up, and with the sheets and blankets neatly folded and strapped on the top, form the back stuffing, while the rug serves as the cushion for the seat. In the wall, over each cot, is a shelf, with three pegs beneath, for clothes and accoutrements.

It is always very easy to fraternise with the members of the army or navy; so the recruit soon finds himself tolerably at home in his new position. But lucky it is for him if some of the non-commissioned officers or of the well-behaved privates take him in hand (which they generally do in case of a respectable-looking recruit) before he falls completely into the clutches of the 'old soldiers,' who so readily volunteer information, and shew how everything is done, but always with a view to the 'main chance'—that is, an invitation to the canteen; for, though these latter often leave him after his money is spent, yet the damage they do him is not to be measured by loss of his bounty and the money he has acquired by the sale to some old Jew of his civilian suit of clothes: he probably is made drunk, and, thus getting into trouble, is at

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once brought in an unfavourable character under the notice of his officers; or, if this misfortune does not befall him at the outset of his career, he has, at all events, been set on the fair road for forming the habit of daily visiting the canteen, and spending his small allowance there, which we need not say is a sure barrier to promotion.

As soon as practicable, after being posted to his company, the recruit receives his 'kit,' which comprises a knapsack with straps and canteen, a greatcoat, a tunic, a shell-jacket, a pair of cloth trousers (for winter), a pair of serge trousers, two flannel shirts, three pair of socks, two pair of boots, a shako, a forage-cap, two towels, and a complete set of articles for cleaning his clothes and accoutrements. This kit is inspected at stated periods, usually once a week, by the officer of the company, on rare occasions by the commanding-officer, and annually by the general of the district; any articles missing are at once supplied from the stores at the soldier's expense, and the selling or destroying wilfully any part of the kit, and more especially the greatcoat, is severely punished. Every subsequent year each soldier receives a new tunic, two pair of trousers, two pair of boots, and a shako; a new greatcoat is issued once in three years, when the old one is returned to the stores: but all the other articles of the outfit must be kept up and renewed at the soldier's expense. The total value of the free kit supplied to each recruit is about four pounds.

As soon as he is clad in his regimentals, the recruit is attached for drill purposes to the most recently formed body of raw material, the 'awkward squad.' With them he is drilled usually four hours daily: from seven to eight, nine to ten, eleven to twelve, and two to three; and learns the stand-at-ease, extension motions (or 'setting-up' drill, to expand the chest and increase the height), facings, forming twos and fours to the right, left, and deep, marching in quick and slow time, &c. After being about a month or six weeks in this squad, the recruit is placed in the armed squad, and learns the manual (that is, presenting arms, shouldering, &c.) and the platoon (that is, firing) exercises; and after another month the bayonet exercise. When he has been altogether about three or four months at drill, he is dismissed to his duty, but is not considered a full 'duty soldier,' nor can he contend with his company for a marksman's badge till he has been trained for a certain number of days, usually fourteen, but varying according to the weather, under the instructor of musketry, and has, under his inspection, fired ninety rounds of ball-cartridge. After this training, he becomes fully qualified for promotion, provided his education is good enough. When a soldier is relieved from recruits' drill, his work is really very slight, leaving him the greater portion of his time at his own command. Except at special training stations like Aldershot Camp and the Curragh, the regiment is drilled usually not more than ten or eleven hours a week: the only other work besides drill being guards and fatigues, and the duty of orderly-man. The frequency of the recurrence of 'doing guard' depends on the station. In some places, as London or Dublin, the guard 'catches' a man once every three or four days; in other places, where only one or two small guards are furnished, a soldier may have ten days or a fortnight without doing guard. The guard mounts for twenty-four hours; each private does two hours on and four hours off sentry, being thus actually on guard eight hours out of the twenty-four. But all the men must, when off sentry, be ready in the guard-room to turn out at any time during the day or night to pay 'the compliment of the guard' to any passing officer entitled to it, or to be inspected by the officer of the guard, or the captain or subaltern of the day. Besides the guards, each soldier has in turn to take part in the 'fatigues;' that is, doing any work about the barracks or hospital, and going out on picket. Lastly, there is the 'company fatigue,' or duty of orderly-man. Every day two men are in each room told off for attending to the fires, cleaning the room, tables, and mess-dishes, and bringing from the cook-house and distributing the food of the mess. And this leads us to another subject—the soldier's food. The soldier is allowed three meals daily, for which sevenpence-halfpenny is stopped out of his daily pay. At eight he has breakfast, consisting of a pint of coffee and a pound of bread, anything else that he may desire in the way of 'kitchen' being paid for by himself; at one he has dinner, for which twelve ounces of meat are allowed, and potatoes. To give variety to this meal, the meat is cooked the one day as 'a steam,' the next as 'a bake,' and the next as 'a boil;' on this last occasion, a pint of soup each man being allowed. At five, there is a pint of tea, and bread. The food of each mess is cooked separately by itself in the regimental cook-house by a staff of cooks selected, one man from each company; and is conveyed thence, at the bugle-call, by the orderly-men to their several mess-rooms. There is no supper. This fare is a very great improvement on what used to be allotted the army: many a man is still in the service who was enlisted when the soldiers were really half-starved, as they got nothing after midday till breakfast next day, till a petition was presented to the Queen to order a third meal; moreover the pay of the soldier was not what it now is, so that he was unable to buy for himself any extra meal.

When a soldier has served about six months in the regiment, if he is well conducted and has a fair education (and the better his education, the sooner he rises), he generally receives the single stripe of a lance-corporal, or acting-corporal; that is, though still a private, he has all the power and receives the respect (though not the pay) due to a full corporal. In many regiments there is an examination in writing, spelling, and the first three rules of arithmetic before the lance stripe is given. Once a lance-corporal, the soldier is fairly started in his course of promotion to corporal, lance-sergeant, and sergeant, each grade being, as vacancies occur, supplied from among the occupants of the lower grade according to seniority and education: the examination for promotion to each rank is slightly higher than for the rank immediately below. But in promotion to lance or full sergeant, regard is also had to smartness at drill. In each company there are two or three ordinary or 'striped' sergeants, and at their head the colour-sergeant, who is also usually the pay-sergeant: he represents the captain in his absence, and is on all occasions responsible to him for the state of the company. The non-commissioned officers of the regiment (as distinct from the officers of the several companies) are the staff-sergeants, six in number—namely, the schoolmaster, the sergeant-major, the quarter-master's

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sergeant, the orderly-room clerk, the drum-major, and the musketry-instructor's sergeant; these in dress, pay, and rank hold a position intermediate between the officers and the non-commissioned officers. The post of sergeant-major is that from which promotions to commissions usually take place. Cases of rising from the ranks occur far more frequently than is commonly supposed; in fact it may be with truth asserted that in nine cases out of ten, an energetic well-educated man who really devotes himself to his profession, and carefully avoids everything which tends to the formation of those habits that will some day or other lead to his losing his stripes and returning to the ranks as a private, is certain to receive a commission. The real obstacle to promotion from the ranks lies with the men themselves: they *will*, in the majority of cases, yield to vices that entail neglect of duty and lead to a court-martial and consequent reduction. Many sergeant-majors are by their previous training unfitted for, and would themselves decline, a commission; but the gift of a commission is not attended with so many drawbacks as is commonly supposed. Along with the commission a grant of one hundred pounds for outfit is conferred; and the newly gazetted ensign usually receives some lucrative post, as that of quarter-master, in which he can not only obtain a very substantial increase to his ensign's salary, but can also, when the regiment is abroad, make a considerable sum; while, when the regiment is at home, a good many 'pickings,' by no means to be despised, fall to him. Unhappily, indeed, many a sergeant-major who has held the office for any length of time is really a wealthy man, though the mode by which he has become enriched will not often bear official examination. It is a common practice for the pay-sergeants to make advances to men at a very usurious rate—for example, purchasing a man's pay for fifteen days, by giving him in advance his pay for ten days. It is unnecessary to say that this is strictly forbidden by the regulations, as being subversive of discipline, besides on other grounds; but nevertheless the advances are quietly made without risk, for the pay-sergeant holds the man's pay in his own hands, and has a private too much in his power in every way to fear his 'peaching,' and invoking the aid of the captain or commanding-officer in his breach of a voluntary engagement. From small beginnings a sergeant can in this way accumulate a large sum, which can be distributed over a larger area and with even less risk if he ever becomes sergeant-major, for, in a private's opinion, it is as dangerous to incur the hostility of the latter functionary as of the commanding-officer himself. Most money is made in this way on foreign service; as in India, where the men are greatly given to gambling, for want of anything else to do, and often 'discount' their pay, their 'marching-money,' or other grants due them. The present writer was assured on unimpeachable authority that a sergeant-major who had served in India in that capacity during the Mutiny, and for a few years after, retired with upwards of ten thousand pounds, chiefly gained in this way. One more remark we have to make about men who have risen from the ranks; it is, that their subsequent promotion is generally very rapid, after they have had time to 'feather their nests' as quarter-masters.

The daily life of a soldier is rather monotonous. The reveille sounds usually at five in the morning in summer, and half-past six in winter, when all must get up. At seven the men fall in on the parade-ground for drill, which in the winter months chiefly consists of running one thousand yards. At ten there is the commanding-officer's parade, when the troops are drilled for half-an-hour or an hour. On two or three days in the week, there is the adjutant's drill at two o'clock; but on other days at that hour only a roll-call, from which all wearers of badges for good conduct, and marksmen, are excused. In most stations, and except under a very strict lieutenant-colonel, the men rarely have more drill than this. On Saturday there is no drill of any kind, that day being devoted to kit-inspection and to a general scrubbing and cleaning-up of the barrack-rooms, that they may be faultless in every respect when the commanding-officer comes round at the dinner-hour on Sunday to inspect the rooms and receive any complaints. The rooms are, however, always expected to be in good order and scrupulously clean; the captain or subaltern for the day has to visit every mess-room in the barracks when the men are at breakfast, dinner, and tea, to receive and lay before the commanding-officer any complaints of the quantity or quality of the food, and he generally makes a cursory inspection of the room and checks any irregularity. On Sunday there is only the church parade in the forenoon, and the ordinary roll-call at two. The soldier is then free, as on other days, till tattoo, which is usually fixed at ten in summer and nine in winter. So, from motives of public economy, a soldier lies two hours more in bed in winter than in summer. From these arrangements it will be seen that unless when required for guard or picket, a soldier has all the afternoon and evening to himself, and during the rest of the day is anything but hardly worked; and it is no wonder that with so much time on his hands the soldier used to become after a few years a degraded being. But now much is done to elevate our soldiers, by providing a rational occupation for their disengaged hours. There is not only the regimental school, at which, in many regiments, attendance is very properly enforced, until the soldier, if a private, has obtained a third-class certificate from the Council of Education, or a first-class if a non-commissioned officer; and if the Minister for War were to enforce this rule in every regiment, he would confer a great boon on the army. But in addition to the regimental school, there is now at almost every station a good library of interesting and elevating works, and a reading-room supplied with papers and magazines: and most of the men avail themselves of this means of instruction and amusement. Lectures, readings, and concerts are given weekly, fortnightly, or monthly, as may be practicable; in almost every regiment now there is an amateur theatrical corps, composed of non-commissioned officers and men, who possess a fair collection of dresses and scenery, and give monthly entertainments, at a small charge for admission, when the acting is always fully equal, and often superior, to that of the officers at their occasional gratis performances. Cricket and foot-ball clubs are also formed by the men, and athletic sports are annually held, when several valuable prizes are given by the officers.

The condition of married soldiers has been very much improved of late years. They are more

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comfortably housed in quarters by themselves, each couple occupying one or two separate rooms. Not very many years ago, the married women used to live in the barrack-room. They generally earn a fair sum by washing for the men (who pay a half-penny a day for this) and for the officers. In India a special allowance is made to a married soldier for his wife and every child he has. Of course these privileges are restricted to those who have married with the permission of the authorities. Leave is usually given only to men of good character, in possession of two good-conduct badges, and with at least five pounds in the regimental savings-bank. But at best the army life is not well fitted for women; and, hard as such a statement may seem, it would really be in the interest of the soldier if the authorities were to prohibit him from marrying.

In regard to pay, the soldier has nothing to complain of. The full pay of a private is fifteenpence per diem, besides the penny per day for each badge: of this he receives sixpence daily, the remainder being 'stopped' for food, &c.; and at the end of the month, if he has not had anything out of the stores, he usually has a balance of a shilling or so to receive. When in debt for anything, till it is fully paid he is placed under 'stoppages;' that is to say, he receives only the beer-allowance—one penny daily. A corporal receives fourpence per day more than a private. The full pay of a 'striped' sergeant is two shillings and fourpence, exclusive of a penny daily for each badge. Tenpence daily is stopped from *every* sergeant for the mess—that is, for all his food; a small subscription being made among themselves for the papers, &c. A colour-sergeant receives one shilling more than the striped sergeants when he is also, as is generally the case, pay-sergeant; otherwise, only sixpence extra. The staff-sergeants receive about four shillings, but the sergeant-major receives, besides this, one shilling per day as chief drill-instructor. This latter functionary also receives one guinea for every recruit enlisted at headquarters, and seven shillings and sixpence for every recruit enlisted elsewhere for his regiment, provided, of course, that the recruit is approved of; he also receives a sum, usually half-a-guinea, for each recruit when he is dismissed drill. When we consider how many recruits are enlisted for a regiment annually, it is evident that the legitimate income alone of the sergeant-major must amount to a good sum.

There can be no doubt that sergeants, if they remain unmarried, are in a far better position than the great majority of small clerks. If they have joined the army when young, they are at their prime when they leave, after a twenty-one years' service, with a pension of from one shilling and ninepence to half-a-crown per day; and they generally receive a staff appointment, with a good salary attached to it, in the militia or the Volunteers. Any man of fair education, who will give attention to his duties and keep steady, can become a sergeant within three years. We believe that if the real life of the army, with its many and everyday increasing advantages, were more generally known, many would gladly join, and never regret their choice of, a profession which at present, from their ignorance of it, they despise; and we hope the day is not far distant when clever pushing young fellows will in crowds seek the army as a profession, and set a commission before their eyes as the prize of life, when that ogre, the 'purchase-system,' will not long be able to hold even that limited amount of sway which it still wields.

MY VERY ODD UNCLE.

I HAD once an uncle who was allowed to be the greatest oddity in Shropshire, which is saying a good deal. As far as I heard from the elders of my family, he got on like other people in his early days (the most accurate said up to the beginning of his twenty-sixth year), when, after having been duly articled to the most eminent solicitor in our county town—getting through his seven years without mischance, passing his examination respectably and obtaining his certificate—he entered into partnership with Messrs Gammon and Gosling, the heirs and successors of his master in the law, and thought by all Shrewsbury to be a most promising firm. I believe they did business together for about six months; the great will-case of Sharp *versus* Smoothy was the storm that shipwrecked them, and then my uncle's oddity was somehow developed. It proved to be of an uncommon kind: there was nothing peculiar in his dress, manners, or conversation; he had always been of a quiet sensible turn, and so he continued to be; but his heart and mind, and money too, went, from that time, after old and dilapidated houses.

Wherever there was a decayed cottage, a half-ruined barn, a tumbled-down tenement that nobody could be got to take or buy (and there's no scarcity of the like in the county Salop), it was sure to be heard of, hunted up, and leased, rented, or purchased by Richard Ramshorn, Esquire—such being the style and title of my estimable relative. For that branch of business, he gave up the management of people's legal affairs, his time being entirely occupied with his takings and purchases. He spent day after day in solitary surveys of these ruined dwellings, locking or bolting himself in, as if any human being was likely to intrude upon him. He half-repaired some of them; he half-furnished others: he advertised them far and wide, with the usual flourish about convenient and desirable premises, and had sundry fierce quarrels with high-tempered ladies and gentlemen, whom, they said, advertisements had brought miles out of their way for nothing. When no tenant could be got at any rent, and none of the old women in the neighbourhood could be induced to 'mind' them, my uncle consoled himself by paying rounds of visits to his far-scattered possessions. He was to be seen in all weathers, sometimes on foot, sometimes on horseback, but always carrying a leathern bag, which he had provided for the purpose of holding the rusty keys, which he guarded with a care as jealous as though they were the title-deeds of a manor.

As his peculiar taste became known to auctioneers, house-agents, and all who had unsaleable and unlettable buildings on their hands, his transactions increased and his finances diminished. Of course, they were all great bargains—monstrous cheap, and sure to enrich him some day; but his means were dribbled away on those unprofitable estates without the smallest return; for, if he succeeded in getting some misguided man, or more frequently a widow or maiden lady, in a moment of weakness, to become his tenant, the lawsuit which invariably

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arose at the end of the first quarter of occupation more than swallowed up his gains, and he had generally a bonus to pay to the retiring enemy.

My uncle did not fall in love, or take to betting, or go to the bad like other young men; the old houses were sweetheart, entertainment, and sensation for him. It was commonly believed that the more out-of-the-way and out-of-the-world they were, the better he liked them; and the standing grief of his days was that he could not raise money enough to bid for an almost ruined mansion, which nobody had inhabited for more than fifty years, because it stood in a marshy hollow at the foot of a rocky hill, and had a bad repute on account of midnight visitors. He had borrowed from all his friends by this time, till none of them would lend him any more; he was at the end of his means, and his relations were at their wits' end to know what to do with him. We, the Ramshorns, had been always a genteel but not an independent family—that is to say, every one of us had to do something for his living; and when my uncle Richard contrived to get out of business and out of pocket in his affection for ancient walls, his relations had to take him in hand, as prodigals are commonly dealt with. At first they thought his brain was affected; paid him particular attentions at the full of the moon, and brought two physicians in the guise of house-agents to examine him surreptitiously; but the lunar orb had no influence on his old house-hunting, and the medicine-men could detect no crack in his upper story. Then they wanted him to emigrate; but my uncle Richard had too considerable a stake in England, and refused to leave his property. He consented, however, to give up buying and leasing, and returned to business.

With the help of his friends and relatives, he got into another legal partnership, and went on steadily for some time, doing junior partner's work and realising accordingly; but as soon as a little money got into his fingers, another great bargain was heard of, and within less than two years he was in hot pursuit of the old houses again. Of course, they led him to the same goal, and he was brought back from the husks once more; but what need to tell of his relapses and restorations; they were numerous as those brought about by the glass or the gaming-table. He was fished out of low lodging-houses; he was redeemed from the debtors' prison; his requisites were taken out of pawn; his I O Us were paid, according to the custom of families endowed with such straying sheep; he had intervals of respectability, longer or shorter, as good fortune attended him or funds held out; but neither the example nor the preaching of his kith and kin could wean Uncle Richard's heart from the old houses.

A serious acquaintance of ours called him the dark dispensation of the Ramshorns; a troublesome dispensation he undoubtedly was, and served for a use of terror to our rising generation, all of whom grew up remarkably prudent through the dread of his example, inspired by the lectures of judicious friends. Myself being his eldest nephew, took early to saving, and had done wonders at it before I was nineteen, and got my first clerkship with Cheek & Co. Uncle Richard was reckoned an old bachelor by that time, and the only confirmed specimen of the single profession within our borders, except Cousin Grace.

In what degree of cousinship she stood to all or any of us, I never clearly understood; but Miss Grace, as we juniors had to call her, styled herself our cousin-in-general, and insisted on all the rights, privileges, and immunities belonging to that title. She never told her age, and nobody else ever dared tell it, so I am silent on the subject; but Cousin Grace was not very young, and never could have been supposed handsome by any stretch of the imagination. Fortune had been quite as niggardly as nature in her case; her father had left a considerable legacy of debts as well as his only daughter to the care of his kindred; and Cousin Grace said she would live and occupy herself among them for the rest of her days, since a maiden lady of sense and energy was an invaluable addition to any family. Accordingly, she minded their houses and their affairs generally, she governessed their children, she lectured their young people, she gave the old ones her advice whether they wanted it or not, and she made them all understand that Cousin Grace was to be well paid as well as highly esteemed for her services.

There was a fine contrast between the maiden and the bachelor of our family: while Uncle Richard was perpetually spending and losing on his favourite species of real estates, Cousin Grace had powers of saving and getting which were perfectly marvellous, considering her opportunities. As far as we knew, nobody had ever proposed for her heart and hand, and Cousin Grace had a high disdain of all mankind in consequence; yet, strange to say, some of us thought she had a lurking partiality for Uncle Richard. We could all sympathise with her in that; notwithstanding that he was the blot on our escutcheon, the oddity of the family was generally liked, and welcomed wherever he went. Uncle Richard had such an easy, friendly way of meeting his difficulties, that the general opinion was, a capable woman might do worse than marry and settle him. But Uncle Richard had no heart to give away from the old walls; and Cousin Grace inferred, with some justice, that the workhouse was the only jointure his spouse could expect; so the little scheme for making a Benedict and Beatrice of our own appeared to be adjourned *sine die*.

We all thought it a pity, for our uncle had been living in the odour of respectability for some time, as senior clerk to his early partners, Gammon and Gosling, who had hung out their legal banner once more, being men of large connections in Shrewsbury; but signs of an approaching change were beginning to be visible. He had been met late in the evening coming from a roofless cottage, and seen to linger about a ruined barn for the greater part of an afternoon. That was ominous, but worse threatened our peace. The old house in the marshy hollow at the foot of the rocky hill, now become too ruinous to shelter even ghosts, was advertised to be sold for one hundred pounds to any one who might be induced to buy it for the materials. 'There is a bargain!' said Uncle Richard to me, as we sat alone in my father's back-parlour, every soul of the family but myself having gone to the Bounceleys' grand party, to which neither my uncle nor Cousin Grace, who happened to be with us at the time, was magnificent enough to be invited; I had staid at home to keep them company, knowing that my fair enslaver, Lucy Sutton, was not to be there—'a bargain not to be

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got hold of every day, George. If I had that one hundred pounds to lay down, I should make my fortune, ay, and the fortune of my friends too. The property is worth two thousand to any man of judgment. I could drain the ground, and build three houses out of the materials, any one of which would pay my expenses three times over; and I am ready to give anybody twenty per cent. for the loan of the money; to be paid quarterly in advance: that is better interest than you get in the Salop bank, my boy.'

The old fox knew that I had just the sum he wanted, saved from cigars, theatres, and other causes of young men's outlaying, by way of commencing a fund for housekeeping expenses, in case Lucy and Lucy's parents should smile upon my suit. I had been vain enough to exhibit the bank receipt, and Uncle Richard had fixed upon it as his prey to sink in the old house in the marshy hollow; but he did not know that his nephew had affections as strong as his own, though they went in a different direction, and, moreover, had been made wide awake to the results of his old house-hunting from early childhood. Steel and stone he found me to his promises of twenty per cent. and eternal gratitude, to all the castles he built in the air out of the ill-repnted ruin, and to his final lamentations that his own brother's son would not help him to make the fortune of the whole family; when we were both startled by the voice of Cousin Grace behind us saying: 'Richard, I will lend you the money.'

I could scarcely believe my ears and eyes; but there she stood, in her long worn and much mended black dress and crape collar, which she wore to save washing, her face bound up with another piece of black—for she was troubled with the toothache, and her gray hair hidden by a red flannel hood, to ward off the rheumatism.

'You are an angel!' cried Uncle Richard, running towards her with extended arms.

'Recollect propriety, sir,' said Cousin Grace, taking him by the shoulder and setting him down on a chair. 'George,' she continued, 'the Bounceleys have sent over for you: they can never get young men enough at their parties; but it is not right to offend them: you know they are related to Mr Cheek's brother-in-law: go up to your own room and dress this minute.'

I saw the necessity of going, under the circumstances; and what passed in the back-parlour that evening, I never could make out; but Cousin Grace kept her resolution to lend Uncle Richard the hundred pounds, which we all believed to be her entire savings. No persuasion, no pointing out of probable consequences, could move her from it. Uncle Richard had promised to pay her; he would not break his word to an unprotected female; and she thought it her duty as a cousin to give him a chance of retrieving the misfortunes of his life with the money, which she would probably never want, for it was her belief she was not long for this world. Cousin Grace was a lady not easily turned from anything she had set her mind on. When the entire clan of Ramshorn had exhausted their arguments and adjurations—when she had fought wordy battles with each of their wives, and general engagements with the whole family—when she had shaken the dust of most of their houses off her feet and got it on again, the money was lent to Uncle Richard, and with it he bought the old house in the marshy hollow.

The joy or the folly of his life appeared to be crowned by the possession of that coveted tenement. Morning, noon, and night, he was descried moving about its ruined walls, scrambling out of some of its sashless windows, or seated on a rock hard by, contemplating his desirable property. The reputation of the place prevented his being intruded upon by curious neighbours; none of the Ramshorns, except Cousin Grace, would come within a mile of it or him; their indignation, including my own, knew no bounds at this last and most desperate relapse. At the end of the first fortnight of his ownership, Messrs Gammon and Gosling summarily dismissed him for neglect of business, and Cousin Grace announced her intention of marrying him without delay. Of course she was reminded of what sort of jointure was to be expected; but Grace said one couldn't pass over one's lot; and Uncle Richard being agreeable, the marriage came off accordingly. The Ramshorns one and all protested, in the first instance, that they would have nothing to do with the pair, and finally went in a body to their wedding. Grace almost sent the ladies of the family into fits by appearing in a silk dress on the occasion, bought out of the remains of her savings, no doubt, and therefore shewing a clearer prospect of the workhouse.

But Mr and Mrs Richard Ramshorn did not betake themselves to that dignified retirement; on the contrary, they first took quiet chambers in Shrewsbury, where Richard advertised himself, and commenced business as a solicitor; while Grace supervised both him and his clients; then they leased a piece of ground in the neighbourhood, and began to build a house of very decent dimensions out of the materials in the marshy hollow. By-and-by, it was evident to us all that Uncle Richard was an altered man; and that the change was much for the better. The most unmanageable of his domains in the roofless-cottage and ruined-barn line were pulled down, to help the building of his new home, or disposed of for like purposes; the best of them were by degrees repaired, and let to honest tenants: his own house was finished; he and his lady took possession, and furnished it wonderfully well, though with great complaints of the dear times. Uncle Richard's legal business increased, or at least his prosperity did; first, Mrs Richard had one servant, then she had two; a black silk dress replaced the well-mended stuff one; and the rheumatism was kept out of her head by a velvet hood, instead of the red flannel.

Time works wonders in all parts of the world, and so it did in ours, for the disgrace of the Ramshorns became their glory. Within ten years after my refusal to help Uncle Richard in making the fortune of the whole family with that hundred pounds I had in the Salop bank, I found myself quoting his sayings of wisdom, and setting forth his greatness on every opportunity. All the rest of his kindred were doing likewise, except Mrs Richard, *née* Cousin Grace: she had admonished him before marriage, and, excellent woman, she continued to admonish him after it; but their conjugal life was, on the whole, an easy one. They had no family, and they appeared to be getting rich, and we, every one, paid them court accordingly. Uncle Richard's days of oddity were over, but he had the gout sometimes; I suppose people must have something; and on those occasions of being laid up, he was partial to sending for my good father and

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mother, who had been most considerate to him in the old times of relapse and restoration. When he couldn't sleep, they used to sit with him till far into the night; and at one of these sittings, as they told me, he made them an unexpected revelation.

'Robert,' said he, addressing my father, 'don't you remember what a nuisance I used to be to you and Emily, with my buying of old houses?'

'No; not exactly a nuisance,' said my prudent father.

'Oh, but I was. Many a time you wished me at Jericho; and you had good reason. I want to tell you something that will explain that matter; and I know you will keep the secret for all our sakes,' said Uncle Richard. 'When I was partner with Gammon and Gosling in the *Sharp* and *Smoothy* case—it must be thirty years ago now—there were two pedigrees to be made out, and bundles of papers and letters to be looked over for that purpose. The looking-over business fell to me; and among the letters, I found one addressed to Henry Sharp, Esq., dated St Germain, the 30th September 1720, and evidently written by a partisan of the exiled Stuarts, who still lingered there, and deplored, in the old-fashioned spelling of his time, besides the absence of the rightful king, that thirty thousand pounds worth of plate, jewels, and coin, which somebody, whom he called the most loyal K., had hidden in an old house in the County Salop, how it could not be discovered, nor any information about it obtained, since K. was lost at sea, and the secret went with him. On the blank side of the letter there was written in a different hand, which I found to be that of the late gentleman whose will was disputed: "The thirty thousand pounds worth has not been discovered yet, but I have reason to believe that the old house was in the neighbourhood of Shrewsbury." Messrs Gammon and Gosling never heard tell of that letter; but I read and thought over it night and day: it sent me after old houses, it made me what you know I was; and it and Grace helped me to find at last what the loyal K. had hidden in the cellar of that old house in the marshy hollow. Maybe I paid for it, through so many years; so did you, for that matter, Robert; but you and yours will be the better of it when Grace and I are gone.'

Lucy's children and mine were grown up, when my father and mother told me that tale. They believed it firmly, and so do I; for, though Richard and Grace are gone this many a year, I, as well as the rest of the Ramshorns, have excellent reason to remember my very odd uncle.

MAY CUSTOMS.

Among the Romans, this month was held in high estimation; it was by them assigned in honour of the *Majores*, or *Maiores*, the senate; as June was to the *Juniores*, or inferior branch of their legislature. Olaus Magnus says, 'that after their long winter, from the beginning of October to the end of April, the northern nations have a custom to welcome the returning splendour of the sun with dancing, and mutually to feast each other, rejoicing that a better season for fishing and hunting was approached.' It is stated by Ovid, in his *Fasti*, that May is an unlucky month in which to be married; and this idea is still prevalent in Europe. The Roman Floral Games, or Floralia, began on the 28th of April, and lasted for some days into May. The festival among the Celts was called Beltein, in which fires were kindled on the hill-tops at night. An old Romish calendar cited by Mr Brand says that on the 30th of April the boys go out to seek May-trees: 'Maii arbores a pueris exquirunter.' The date of the institution of May-games in England during the middle ages cannot be traced. A poem of the fourteenth century, *The Romance of Kyng Alisaunder*, says:

> Mery time it is in May;
> The foules syngeth her lay;
> The knighttes loveth the tornay;
> Maydens so dauncen and thay play.

In Chaucer's *Court of Love*, we read:

> Thus sange they alle the service of the feste
> And that was done right early, to my dome [*as I judged*];
> And forth goeth al the court, both moste and leste,
> To fetch the floures freshe, and braunche, and blome;
> And namely [*especially*] hawthorn brought both page and grome,
> With fresh garlandes party blew and white;
> And than rejoysen in their grete delight,
> Eek eche at other threw the flowers bright,
> The primerose, the violete, and the gold [*marigold*].

This extract shews that the king and queen mingled with their subjects in these fine old English customs. Henry VIII. and Catharine of Aragon once came from their palace of Greenwich to meet the heads of the corporation of London, who had been into the woods of Kent to gather May. The custom seems to have been for people to go into the woods in the night, gather branches of trees, flowers, &c., and return with them at sunrise to decorate their houses. Shakspeare (*Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act i. sc. 1) says:

> If thou lov'st me then,
> Steal forth thy father's house to-morrow night;
> And in the wood, a league without the town,
> Where I did meet thee once with Helena,
> *To do observance for a morn of May*,
> There will I stay for thee.

Spelman, in his Glossary, remarks that the court of King James I. and the populace long preserved the observance of the day. In a manuscript in the British Museum called *The State of Eton School* (1560), it is stated that on the feast of Saints Philip and James, if the master grants leave, the boys who choose may rise at four o'clock, to gather May-branches.

Stow tells us: 'In the month of May, the citizens of London of all estates, generally in every parish, had their several Mayings, and did fetch their May-poles with divers warlike shows; with good archers, morrice-dancers, and other devices for pastime, all day long; and towards evening they had stage-plays and bonfires in the streets. These great Mayings and May-games were made by the governors and masters of the city, together with the triumphant setting-up of the great shaft or principal May-pole in Cornhill before the parish church of St Andrew'—hence called St Andrew Undershaft. A dangerous riot, in which several foreigners were slain, took place on May-day 1517; and Stow, who died in 1605, complains that the festivities were not conducted with such magnificence as formerly. Stubbs, in his *Anatomie of Abuses* (1585), tells us that the May-pole was brought home with great ceremony: 'They have twentie or fourtie yoake of oxen, every oxe having a sweete nosegaie of flowers tied to the tip of his hornes,

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and these oxen drawe home the May-poale, their stinking idol rather, which they covered all over with flowers and hearbes, bound round with strings from the top to the bottome, and sometimes it was painted with variable colours, having two or three hundred men, women, and children following it with great devotion.' In the *Hours* of Anne of Brittany (1499), in the Bibliothèque Royale at Paris, there is a drawing of a curious May-pole. An engraving of this is given in Chambers's *Book of Days*, i. 575. The earliest representation of an English May-pole is depicted on a window at Betley in Staffordshire, of the time of Henry VIII. This pole is painted black and yellow, and has a St George's red-cross banner and a white pennon affixed to it. One standing in the village of Welford, Gloucestershire, is painted red, white, and blue, and is probably a copy of the ancient one. Machyn, in his *Diary* (1552), tells us of one brought into Fenchurch parish, 'a goodly May-pole as you have seene; it was painted whyte and green.' Owen, in his Welsh Dictionary, says that the pole was always made of birch.

Douce, in his *Illustrations of Shakspeare* (ii. 463), remarks that during the reign of Elizabeth the Puritans made considerable havoc among the May-games by their preaching and invectives. By a warrant of Charles I., dated October 18, 1633, it was enacted that 'for his good people's lawfull recreation, after the end of Divine service, his good people be not disturbed, letted, or discouraged from any lawfull recreation; such as dancing, either men or women; archery for men, leaping, vaulting, or any other such harmless recreations; nor from having of May-games, Whitsun-ales, and morris-dances, and *the setting up* of May-poles, and other sports therewith used; so as the same be had in due and convenient time, without impediment or neglect of Divine service. And that women shall have leave to carry rushes to the church for the decorating of it, according to the old custom.' Eleven years after, the Long Parliament enacted that 'because the prophanation of the Lord's Day hath been heretofore greatly occasioned by May-poles (a heathenish vanity, generally abused to superstition and wickednesse), the Lords and Commons do further order and ordain that all and singular May-pole that are or shall be erected, shall be taken down and removed by the constables, borsholders, tything men, petty constables, and churchwardens of the parishes, when the same shall be; and that no May-pole shall be hereafter set up, erected, or suffered to be within this kingdom of England or dominion of Wales. The said officers to be fined five shillings weekly till the said May-pole be taken downe.'

In Randolph's *Poems* (1646) we find the following about the Puritans:

> These teach that dancing is a Jezabel,
> And Barley-break the ready way to hell;
> The morice idols, Whitsun-ales, can be
> But prophane reliques of a jubilee:
> There is a zeal t' expresse how much they do
> The organs hate, have silenced bagpipes too;
> *And harmless May-poles all are railed upon*
> *As if they were the towers of Babylon.*

In the *Welsh Levite tossed in a Blanket* (1691), cited by Brand, we have a like passage: 'I remember the blessed times when everything in the world that was displeasing and offensive to the brethren went under the name of horrid abominable popish superstition. Organs and May-poles, bishop's courts and the bear-gardens, surplices and long hair, cathedrals and playhouses, set forms and painted glass, fonts and apostle spoons, church musick and bull-baiting, altar-rails and rosemary on brawn, nay, fiddles, Whitsun-ales, pig at Bartholomew Fair, plum-porrige, puppet-shows, carriers' bells, figures in gingerbread, and at last Moses and Aaron, the Decalogue, the Creeds, and the Lord's Prayer. A crown, a cross, an angel, and bishop's head could not be endured so much as in a sign. Our garters, bellows, and warming-pans wore godly mottos, our bandboxes were lined with wholesome instructions, and even our trunks with the Assembly men's sayings. Ribbons were converted into Bible-strings. Nay, in our zeal we visited the gardens and apothecaries' shops. *Unguentum Apostolicum*, *Carduus benedictus*, *Angelica*, *St John's Wort*, and *Our Ladie's Thistle* were summoned before a class, and commanded to take new names. We unsainted the apostles.'

In May-day 1661, the May-poles were again erected all over the country, amid the joyous shouts of the delighted populace.

The most famous pole of that time was erected in the Strand, opposite Somerset House. It is stated to have been one hundred and thirty-four feet high, and sent expressly for the purpose by the Duke of York. Pope thus alludes to it:

> Where the tall May-pole once o'erlooked the Strand.

It was taken down about 1717, and purchased by Sir Isaac Newton, who had it removed to Wanstead in Essex, to use as a support to the great telescope (one hundred and twenty-four feet in length) which had been presented to the Royal Society by the French astronomer, M. Hugon.

We must not forget to mention that a Queen of the May was always elected, probably intended as a living representative of the goddess Flora. The custom still survives in France. In many parts of England at the present day, children come to the houses carrying garlands of flowers and singing carols. Here is an example:

> Remember us, poor Mayers all,
> And thus do we begin
> To lead our lives in righteousness,
> Or else we die in sin.
>
> We have been rambling all this night,
> And almost all this day,
> And now returned back again,
> We have brought you a branch of May.
>
> A branch of May we have brought you,
> And at your door it stands,
> It is but a sprout, but it 's well budded out
> By the work of our Lord's hands.
>
> The hedges and trees they are so green,
> As green as any leek;
> Our heavenly Father he watered them
> With his heavenly dew so sweet.
>
> The heavenly gates are open wide,
> Our paths are beaten plain,
> And if a man be not too far gone,
> He may return again.
>
> The life of man is but a span,
> It flourishes like a flower;
> We are here to-day and gone to-morrow,
> And we are dead in an hour.

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The moon shines bright, and the stars give a light
A little before it is day;
So God bless you all, both great and small,
And send you a joyful May!

At Charlton-on-Otmoor, near Oxford, at this time of the year, there is still kept up a beautiful ceremony, the crowning of the cross in the parish church with flowers on May-day. The parish maidens, all dressed in white, bring the 'May-Cross' to the church in procession, and place it where the old rood-loft stood. The cross is allowed to remain there all the year round. Morris-dancers formerly took a chief part in the May festivities. These were derived from the Moors, hence the name (Morisco, a Moor). They generally consisted of Maid Marian, or Queen of the May, Robin Hood, Friar Tuck, the Fool, Robin Hood's Men (Scarlet, Stokesley, and Little John), Tom the Piper, and the Hobby-horse.

In Coates's *History of Reading* (1802, p. 220), in the churchwarden's accounts of St Lawrence parish is the following entry: '1531.—It. for ffyve ells of canvas for a cote for Made Maryon, at III^{s}. ob. the ell, XV^{d}. ob.'—In Greene's *Quip for an Upstart Courtier* (1620, p. 11), that effeminate-looking young man, we are told, used to act the part of Maid Marian, 'to make the foole as faire, forsooth, as if he were to play Maid Marian in a May-game or a morris-dance.' After a time, Maid Marian was always personated by a clown, and afterwards called Malkin, as:

Put on the shape of order and humanity,
Or you must marry *Malkyn* the May lady.
Beaumont and Fletcher in *Monsieur Thomas.*

Robin Hood was a very popular character among the morris-dancers. Douce thinks 'the introduction of Robin Hood into the celebration of May, probably suggested the addition of a king or lord of May.' In the churchwarden's accounts of St Helen's, Abingdon, 1566, we find eighteenpence charged for setting up Robin Hood's bower. Bishop Latimer, in his sixth sermon before King Edward VI., mentions the following anecdote: 'I came once myself to a place, riding a journey homeward from London, and sent word over-night into the town that I would preach there in the morning, because it was a holy-day; and I took my horse and my company, and went thither. (I thought I should have found a great company in the church); when I came there, the church door was fast locked. I tarried there half an hour and more; at last the key was found, and one of the parish comes to me and says: "This is a busy day with us; we cannot heare you: this is Robin Hoode's daye; the parish is gone abroad to gather for Robin Hoode." I thought my rochet would have been regarded, though I were not; but it would not serve, but was fayne to give place to Robin Hoode's men.'

Friar Tuck was habited as a monk of the Franciscan order, or one of the Gray Friars. Perhaps the name was a sort of generic appellation for any friar, originating from the dress of the order, which was *tucked* or folded at the waist by means of a cord.

The Fool, of course, was in great requisition at the dances. In Tollett's window he appears with all the badges of his office—the bauble in his hand, and a coxcomb hood, with asses' ears, on his head.

Brand quotes an old ballad giving the names of the companions of Robin Hood:

I have heard talk of Robin Hood—
Derry, derry, derry down,
And of brave *Little John*,
Of Friar Tuck and *Will Scarlet*,
Stokesley, and Maid Marian—
Hey down, &c.

Douce says Little John is first mentioned together with Robin Hood by Fordun the Scottish historian, who wrote in the fourteenth century.

Lastly, we have the hobby-horse, made of pasteboard, and ridden by a man who often displayed tricks of legerdemain. A ladle stuck in the horse's mouth received the spectators' donations. The earliest representation of this character is believed to be in the painted window at Betley. In later times, the fool appears to have performed this office. In Nashe's play of *Will Summer's Last Will and Testament*, Will Summers is made to say: 'You, friend, with the hobby-horse, goe not too faste, for fear of wearing out my lord's tyle-stones with your hob-nayles.'

THE SCHOOLMASTER.

Di, majorum umbris tenuem et sine pondere terram,
Spirantes que crocos, et in urna perpetuum ver,
Qui præceptorem sancti voluere parentis
Esse loco.—*Juvenal.*

Our Academe, whose massive towers
Look forth upon the narrow sea,
Must lose its Master. Pleasant hours
Of happy toil remember we,
When came upon the summer gale
Rich memories of the Attic time—
Of joyous Tempe's fragrant clime—
Of sweet Colonos' nightingale.

And though from other lips we hear
Of the island-studded seas that kiss
Those rocky shores, and eddy clear
About immortal Salamis—
Though Plato's lore for us be set
In golden English, even now—
We still shall miss his thoughtful brow;
His teaching never shall forget.

For he who gives to glowing youth
Those glimpses of th' heroic time,
Those never-changing laws of truth
And wisdom, which may make sublime
The deeds of man, holds higher place
Than sceptred ruler of a realm,
Or he whose fiery-crested helm
Bears conquest o'er a trampled race.

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RAILWAY COMMUNICATION ACROSS THE CHANNEL.

THERE is much that is both unscientific and unpractical in our present means of communication with the continent. The steam-vessels employed are, as a rule, small, ill-ventilated, and totally inadequate to properly accommodate the traffic. Between Dover and Calais, for instance, more than a hundred passengers may be frequently seen huddled between decks, without any regard to either cleanliness, comfort, or health; while a number of delicate and refined women are jammed into a cell (termed the ladies' cabin), in which there is literally not room to move. On the other hand, the transport of goods is, in its way, every whit as discreditable. Railway trains run down to the sea-shore on either side of the Channel; the contents are strewed over the quays, laden in ships, unladen on the other side, and again stowed away in wagons, before they can continue their journey; thus enduring more delay, and suffering more wear and tear, with its consequent expense, than they would on hundreds of miles of railway. What makes the continuance of our present barbarous means of communication seem the more extraordinary is that it could be superseded at a comparatively moderate expense by a plan which would tend to develop the traffic to an enormous extent. The plan in question consists in having a large steam-vessel or ferry to convey the trains bodily across the Channel, as proposed by Mr Fowler, the eminent civil engineer, and Mr John Scott Russell, the builder of the *Great Eastern*. For years past, the Americans have had these railway ferries running day and night across the lakes of Canada; and within the last few months a similar arrangement has been adopted on one of the Swiss lakes with the greatest success.

Boden-See, or Lake Constance, is a fresh-water lake, some sixty miles long by some ten or twelve miles wide. It separates Switzerland from Austria, Bavaria, and Würtemberg, and stops direct railway communication between Switzerland and these countries, just as the Channel does in the case of England and France. It was impossible to carry the railway round the lake, as the natural barrier which this forms is prolonged at its extremities by the impassable Alps; consequently, the goods-traffic of Germany with Switzerland and the south of France, which is considerable, was exposed to delay by transhipment, to the great inconvenience of every one interested in it. Under these circumstances, Mr Scott Russell, who had built the first fast steamer employed on the lake, was asked by the Swiss Railway Company whether he would undertake to design a vessel by which railway trains and locomotives could be carried across, with the understanding that no machinery of any kind should be required to put the trains on board, except the ordinary locomotive engine. To this Mr Scott Russell at once acceded. The Swiss railway from Zurich, or the Nord-öst-bahn, as it is called, terminates at Romanshorn, on the shores of the lake, and on the opposite side the Würtemberg Railway stops at Friedrichshafen. Both these harbours are shallow and small, so that six feet was the maximum draught of water that could be allowed to the vessel; and in order to carry the prescribed load of fourteen to sixteen carriages, two lines of railway were necessary on a length of two hundred and twenty feet. The vessel itself standing in its place in the harbour appears to form a railway station, with platforms, offices, and refreshment-rooms on either side. She has two decks, one on which the train stands, and the other above it. Double sides of iron connect the upper with the lower deck, and convert the body of the ship into an iron girder, twenty-five feet deep at the centre; thus giving great strength to the whole. The upper deck does not quite extend to the extremities of the vessel, so that passengers in the end-carriages are able to enjoy the Alpine scenery of the lake without leaving their seats; while in fine weather it forms a promenade for the others. The vessel has a rudder at each end, in order to save the trouble of turning in the narrow harbours. Each paddle-wheel can revolve independently of the other, and has two steam-engines attached to it, so as to be able to work readily and

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quickly; the four engines making up a total of two hundred horse-power. These two rudders, and the paddle-wheels with their independent engines, are an invaluable security against accidents, for if either engine or wheel becomes disabled, the other wheel with its engines is at once ready to continue the voyage. Indeed, it is stated that the vessel has already performed a trip in less than an hour with only one wheel working; it having been found that with the rudder fifteen degrees over, a straight course could be steered. There is another advantage secured, however, by having the paddle-wheels independent of each other. Large vessels, like this ferry, are known to steer wild in shallow water; but by making the paddle-wheels revolve in opposite directions, or in the same direction with varying velocity, perfect steerage-power is obtained. An index on deck keeps the captain informed of what each engine is doing, so that a mistake is no sooner made than it is discovered, and rectified.

The placing of the trains on board the ferry is a very simple operation. They are transferred by means of a bridge, suspended in the air by heavy weights, capable of adjustment to the rise and fall of the water, which, although it is a lake that is in question, has, it seems, a periodical variation of about ten feet. Carriages intended to cross the lake are left at the siding which leads to the ship, the locomotive which does the ordinary work of the station comes and pushes the train on board, and once there, special precautions are adopted to prevent its breaking loose; the whole operation only taking about five minutes. Such, then, are the principal features of the railway ferry across Lake Constance.

Among the places which have been proposed for a similar ferry between England and France, are Newhaven and Dieppe on the one hand, and Dover and Calais on the other. It would no doubt be preferable to make the experiment, in the first instance, at the latter ports, owing to the shorter distance to be traversed, the Channel being here little more than double the width of the lake. Of course, in the lake there is no Atlantic wave, and no ocean ground-swell, and, consequently, never in the worst storm the great motion of our seas; but there is the short, sharp, breaking wave, which is both dangerous and inconvenient, and also the terrific Alpine hurricane, which is not to be despised. The ports on both sides of the Channel have been surveyed, and the necessary plans for harbours, &c. completed; they are designed to be capable of easy entrance in all weathers and at any state of the tide. The boats will run into a covered water-station, so that all transfer either of passengers or goods will be effected in still water, and under shelter from wind and rain. The English harbour will be at Dover, and can be conveniently approached by both the Chatham and Dover and South-eastern Railways. It is proposed to form the French harbour at a spot between Cape Grisnez and Boulogne, where the depth of water and the approaches are highly favourable for such a work. The steam-vessels to be used will be four hundred and fifty feet long, and are to be propelled by engines of fifteen hundred horse-power. They will make the passage from shore to shore in one hour; and, from their great size, motion in any weather is expected to be almost imperceptible. The carrying out of this great work of international communication would result in a saving of time of two hours in the journey between London and Paris. The total expenditure is estimated at less than two millions, and the time required for the full completion of the works is about three years. That the project, if carried out, is likely to be a profitable one, may be inferred from the results of the working of the ferry on Lake Constance. It is now doing its daily work of railway communication, taking over trains of fourteen to sixteen laden wagons at one time. The cost of the goods per ton per mile is from three farthings to five farthings, including interest on capital, depreciations, and repairs. Of course, anything like this rate applied to a ton of passengers is enormously profitable. The advantages of such a system of communication have been well pointed out by Mr Scott Russell, who says: 'The comfort of taking your bed-carriage in London, and not having to leave it till you awake in Paris, need not be enforced; and the economy and expedition which must arise from sending goods right through to their destination without change of carriage or wagon, is thoroughly appreciated by all merchants and shippers. That the trade of Europe with England would enormously increase who can doubt? while the mails of India would reach Brindisi or Marseille in the same carriage in which they would be stowed by the post-office officials of St Martin's-le-Grand.'

A COUNTY FAMILY.

CHAPTER X.—MR DAWLISH'S 'TIP.'

At the moment that the race was won, and almost before the numbers displayed upon the official board quenched the last hopes of the losers, a tumult arose in the ring beneath the Stand. One of the spiders, who happened to have laid too heavily against *Gazeebo*, was detected in attempting to make his escape, and so avoid settling with his creditors. He had his money-bag full of the coin intrusted to him by the backers of the winner, and such a proceeding as he had in contemplation was undoubtedly far worse than pick-pocketing, inasmuch as it was robbery aggravated by breach of confidence. But if it had been murder in its most aggravated form, it could not (or certainly would not) have aroused so furious a storm. It was not only those whom he had plundered who were now setting on him like terriers on some hated vermin, but his own brethren of the pouches, whose honour, forsooth, was the breath of their nostrils, and whose credit—on which all their hopes were built—was imperilled by his felonious intent. 'A welsher! a welsher!' resounded from every side; and in less time than it takes to tell it, he became the centre of a crowd, in whose looks was no shadow of mercy, and whose hands threatened to tear him limb from limb. 'If we cannot get our money,' cried one, 'we will have his skin;' and in one minute the howling mob had so far acted upon this suggestion as to denude the delinquent of his clothes. In half a shirt and some remnants of a pair of trousers, the miserable wretch was tossed, and torn, and worried immediately beneath the eyes of that gracious female aristocracy in whom Mr Thomas Carlyle sees the last hope of England's stability. It was only the unanimity of his assailants, who by their kicks and blows kept him up on all sides, that saved him from death, for if he had once gone

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down, he would have been trampled into a living grave. Naked, and bleeding, and bruised, and with his thievish face distorted by pain and terror, he offered indeed a frightful spectacle, and Stanhope shuddered as he looked down upon it. 'By Heaven! they'll kill the man,' cried he. 'Not they,' answered Sporting Dawlish with his pleasant smile: 'Welshers are never killed. I wish I had got his bag, for it had a pony of mine in it—the scoundrel!—what one may call a Welsh pony. See how the cunning villain is working himself towards the gate.'

And indeed, even while he spoke, the miserable creature, as though by special assistance of his patron the Devil, did manage to get himself hustled towards the turnstile, whence, by the simultaneous impulse of a dozen feet, he was shot out into the course, which absorbed him.

'There's a fine moral lesson,' observed Dawlish. 'Not one of those gentry down yonder but will be careful to settle their debts of honour for the rest of the day. Now is the time to invest a little money, if one had it, upon the next race, with the certainty of getting paid if one won. It's a fine thing is Lynch Law, where there's no other.'

Stanhope did not speak; he was thinking that the difference between his own case and that of the welsher was but small; for, by *Gazebo's* victory, he had lost not only more than he could afford, but even more than he could pay.

'I am afraid you have been hard hit, old fellow,' said his companion kindly; 'but better luck next time.'

'There is no next time for me, man,' returned the other gloomily.

'Pooh, pooh; so thought I at one time, when I dropped twenty thousand "thou" at Ascot; and yet here I am, you see, both merry and wise.'

'Yes, but you had another fortune left you, in place of the one you lost; and there is nobody to leave me a penny. I told you this morning, that, if that cursed horse won, I should be a ruined man, and now it has come to pass, Frank.'

'Well, you can't say I didn't warn you, old fellow. I always had my own opinion about "honest Dean" and his prophecies. But there; that is cold comfort. Now, let me say this, Stanhope'—and he placed his hand upon the other's shoulder: 'I am not so well off as I have been, but I have something yet with which to serve a friend. I will help you to settle this matter, and then in three months' time—or even in six—you can pay me back, you know.'

'Thank you, Dawlish—thank you kindly. You are a better fellow than I took you for. But, on the other hand, I am worse than you imagined: I can't pay my debts.'

'You mean not now; well, that can't be helped. They must wait a bit—that's all; or rather, *I'll* wait, and do you pay the rest.'

'I cannot pay you nor them,' returned Stanhope sullenly; 'neither now or ever.'

'Not pay?' ejaculated Dawlish aghast, and mechanically returning to his pocket the cheque-book in which he had been calculating his balance at his banker's. 'Not pay, Stanhope? But that's all confounded nonsense; you know one must pay;' and his gaze wandered, or seemed to his friend to wander, to a certain spot, where, on the railings of the ring, fluttered, in sign of avenged justice, or as a flag of triumph, three-fourths of the welsher's shirt. 'Why, good heavens!' continued the astonished turfite, this outrage upon his narrow but strong instincts of morality quite elevating his style, 'I can scarcely believe my ears, or at least that they are listening to Herbert Stanhope. Sooner than be a de'——

He hesitated; but the other supplied the half-finished word: 'Sooner than be a defaulter, you were about to say,' observed he quietly, 'you would do what?'

'Well, I would sell my very clothes off my back;' and again that fluttering emblem of peace, and confidence restored, seemed to catch the speaker's eye. 'I would sell my place, Curlew Hall, if I were you, every stick and stone of it, rather than not pay.'

'The Hall *is* sold; or at least mortgaged to nearly its full value,' replied Stanhope hoarsely. 'As sure as the sun shines, I have almost a mind to go down among those devils, and let them tear me to pieces, as they did the—the other fellow. I could bear the pain, if it wasn't for the shame of it.—By-the-bye, I owe *you* a couple of ponies, old fellow; and here they are. I shouldn't like *you* to say, if anything were to happen to me, the same word you said of me just now; because we were at Eton together, and—— O Frank, old fellow, what an infernal fool I've been!'

The babel of the racecourse had once more broken forth. Beneath them, the brazen voices were shouting their offers against this and that in the race to come; the drums of the showmen were beating; the vendors of cards were plying their trade in tones as harsh as the corn-crake's; and the busy throng was all astir again about its business or its pleasure. But, for the moment, Herbert Stanhope's mind was far away in the 'playing-fields' of Eton. The tall elms swayed above him, as he lay on the grassy bank of the loved river, with his friend beside him, both boys without a care. It was not ten years ago; but what a gulf had he dug with his own hands between those days and this! What chances—nay, what certainties—had he flung away, until there was no chance left!

It is not to be imagined that Sporting Dawlish (who, after a short but severe struggle with himself, had pocketed the pair of 'ponies,' otherwise fifty pounds) was overcome by boyish reminiscences to the same extent as his friend; but he was not untouched by Stanhope's involuntary reference to that common portion of their past, and while he leaned over the balcony, and seemed to scan the surging crowd, he was stroking thoughtfully his still smooth and dimpled chin, and thinking within himself what help he could be to his old school-fellow.

'There was Sweden—he had heard men say—where a fellow might get out of the way for any amount of years, and live pretty jollily too, except that there was no Epsom nor Ascot. And if Stanhope went there, and waited, why, in time that Redmoor property, so near to Mosedale, would be worth any money. The lawyer fellow, Moffat, —and a deuced sharp old file too—had told him so himself, when he was staying at his friend's house that very summer;' and then, all of a sudden, another plan, begotten of that reminiscence, sprang, Minerva-like, full grown from Sporting Dawlish's quick brain. He turned.

Stanhope had risen, and was evidently about to

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leave the box. 'Old fellow,' said he, with an attempt at a smile, 'I have made out matters to be rather worse than they really are; I daresay I *shall* pull round after all. I have plenty of money at the banker's to settle next week with all those at least who are likely to make themselves unpleasant. Those who know me—I am not hinting at that fifty pounds, Frank—that was a mere bagatelle, unfortunately, and would do me no good, and you were quite right to take it—those who know me, I say, will wait a little; and you may tell them yonder, if they ask, that they shall hear of me in a day or two.' And Stanhope nodded as though he would be back again shortly, and laid his fingers on the handle of the door.

'I say, Herby, you mustn't do *that*, you know,' said Dawlish, stepping hastily up to him—'you mustn't, indeed.'

'Mustn't do what, my good fellow?'

'Why, fight a duel with yourself, like Hervey did last year, just because he had made a bad book on the Leger. Your brains are far too good to be scattered that way; and besides, though I'm no parson, it ain't right, and it won't stop people's mouths neither; they will "say things" just the same, whether you are dead or alive, you know!'

'I never dreamed of any such folly as you hint at, Dawlish.—Come, let me go.'

'Not yet; I want to say a word or two to you first. I have thought of a way by which you can get out of this hole altogether; not a way that you would have chosen for yourself, perhaps, but, at all events, a far better one than blowing your brains out: one, too, that would seem pleasant to lots of men, let me tell you—very.'

'You make one quite pleased at being ruined, Dawlish,' said Stanhope bitterly. 'This seems so good a plan, that I wonder you have never taken advantage of it yourself.'

'I would if I could,' returned the other naively; 'that is,' he added hastily, 'I only did not try because I saw the thing was out of my reach.—Now, tell me how much money do you stand to lose by this last race?'

'Why, to make a clean breast of it, my dear fellow, I have made a pretty mess of it. I have lost nearly eighteen thousand pounds.'

'The devil you have! you must have "plunged" indeed.—Well, I have hit upon a scheme whereby you may pay your debts, and still put two-and-twenty thousand pounds in your pocket.'

'My handwriting is very peculiar,' said Stanhope gravely, 'and like no other man's that I am acquainted with; for I suppose you are suggesting a forgery.'

'Nay, my good fellow; I am perfectly serious. The advice I give you is, to marry an heiress.'

'Excellent!' said Stanhope grimly. 'I saw Lady Anne Golconda in the Duke's box, just before the race. They say she will have half a million. Her mother was so good as to nod to me just now. I'll step round and arrange the matter.'

'I am not speaking of any impossibility,' continued Dawlish. 'Just sit down, take a cigar, and be reasonable. I know of a girl both younger and prettier than the Golconda filly; a perfect lady (whatever her mamma may have been); and what is more to the point, one who will have forty thousand pounds *down—down*, sir, on the day of her wedding! You must marry Nelly Blackburn of Redcombe Manor.'

Stanhope took from his case an immense cigar, and lit it with great care and deliberation.

'The idea is first-rate, old fellow,' replied he quietly, 'but perfectly impracticable, as nobody should know better than yourself.'

The countenance of Mr Frank Dawlish, always of a fine fresh colour, began to glow like a peony. '*I!* How so? What the deuce do you mean?'

'I thought there had been a trial-race between you, that's all,' said Stanhope laughing; 'and my impression was (to repeat your own metaphor) that you had found the Blackburn filly so unapproachable that to enter for the matrimonial stakes with her was out of the question.'

'Upon my honour, Stanhope, I never proposed to the girl.'

'I know you didn't; but still there was a trial-race: it was on the terrace after dinner, the night we dined there last, and you left me, if you remember, rather suddenly—"particular business" at Tattersall's, you told me—the next day.'

'Well, perhaps there was,' said Dawlish ruefully. 'I confess I was a little spoony for a week or two; but we are talking of your affairs, and not of mine. I could not have been very deeply smitten, or I should not now be offering the young woman to your consideration. There are reasons to my disadvantage, which would not tell against you. I am not a swell like Herbert Stanhope. Nobody knows who my grandfather was, and indeed I don't know myself. My people made their money by a patent medicine; I am quite aware that I am called Pill Dawlish. It is only because I have a few thousands to lose to them, that I am tolerated by these fine gentlemen here. (I don't say by *you*, mind; you are not a born idiot, though you do happen to be well born.) Well, putting myself aside, then, in this matter—though I do not choose to be put aside by others, and there's not one of these insolent scoundrels who have shewn their hands to me so plainly, but shall lose when we come to play together'——

'My dear Frank, you astonish me!' interrupted Stanhope; 'I did not know you were capable of a revengeful feeling, and I do assure you, you have greatly exaggerated'——

'Never mind me, Stanhope,' replied the other imperiously, 'even though passion were to send me into a fit. The Dawlish pill is good for fits. I say this girl, Miss Ellen Blackburn (whom I very much esteem, let me tell you, and entertain no sort of grudge against), will not have the same objection to you as to me. That respectable savage, her male parent, is resolved to marry her to a noble swell—and you were a noble swell until within the last three-quarters of an hour. Up in Derbyshire, folks will not hear of the change in your circumstances for months.'

'What you recommend is not running very straight, eh, Frank? or, at all events, not riding in one's own colours?'

Sporting Dawlish shrugged his ample shoulders, thereby obliterating altogether his inch of neck. 'Not to pay one's debts of honour is not quite playing on the square, Stanhope, if you come to that,' said he coolly. 'If I thought you would ill-treat the girl, I swear I would not recommend her to you. But she will fare better with you than with almost any of these "landed" gentry, as they call themselves, whom you and I know. (Landed, begad, I know they landed me when I was but two and

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twenty!) Yes, I own I should be disgusted to see her fall to one of them; but it is you I am thinking of mainly, old fellow; it is indeed. I know you are as proud as the devil; but you have so placed yourself, that some sort of humiliation must be endured. I daresay it will be disagreeable to you to have such a mother-in-law as Mrs Blackburn (I shall never forget her drinking the water out of her finger-glass after dinner—never), but then you will not have to marry *her*. Now, Miss Ellen'——

'My good fellow, you waste your breath!' exclaimed Stanhope suddenly. 'I agree with all you are about to say of that charming girl; but the fact is that the Blackburn filly has an engagement of her own, which her trainer knows nothing about. Ellen Blackburn is betrothed; for she gave that as the reason for rejecting me, when I proposed to her myself.'

Mr Frank Dawlish whistled long and loud, like a locomotive before entering a tunnel. 'Well, you must cut him out, that's all—I mean the other man, whoever he is.'

'No, Frank; that is impossible. I am not in a position to stick at trifles; but when a girl has once declined to listen to me'——

There was a knock at the door, and a stout middle-aged gentleman of an astute countenance made his way into the small box, which was only intended to accommodate two persons.

'Hollo, Stanhope!' said he sharply, 'you are the very man I wanted; and seeing Dawlish from below, I thought he could tell me where to find you. I wish to speak three words with you about business.'

'You must go out first, Sir Arthur, if you wish to be alone, for I am hanged if I can pass you,' said Dawlish laughing.

'Don't go, Frank,' said Stanhope quietly. 'I have no secrets from my friend here, so you can say whatever you please, Sir Arthur.'

'Well, it's a very simple matter,' said the newcomer, with an affectation of carelessness; 'but the fact is this, I have been rather hard hit to-day. I have won of you, it is true, but I have lost more to others; and some of them don't know me so well as you do, and want their money at once. It's a queer thing to offer, but since it will put a few fivers in your pocket, and because you and I are old friends, I have just come to say this. Instead of your paying me that five hundred pounds on settling-day, if you choose to make it four hundred and seventy-five pounds *at once*, I'll take it.'

'If you are in want of the money, Sir Arthur,' said Stanhope, taking out his well-furnished pocket-book, 'you are very welcome to what is your due, without any usurious discount. I had no idea your credit was so low with the fraternity down yonder to which you belong.' Every word was an icicle, and the air with which they were delivered was cutting as a north-east wind. 'I hope you find the notes correct; perhaps you had better reckon them again.'

'No, no: quite right, quite right,' stammered the recipient, confused, if not abashed. 'I only hope I have not inconvenienced you.'

'Not by taking the money,' said Stanhope, 'at all; but you inconvenience us very much by remaining in the box.'

'Just so, just so; two is company, and three is none, eh? Good-bye, then, and better luck to you next time.' And the two friends were once more left alone.

'This beats everything!' ejaculated Stanhope, his smothered fury at last exploding. 'Why, I myself gave that infernal scoundrel "time" only last Derby. To dun me like this, before even the money was due—why, what, in the devil's name, does it all mean?'

'It means simply this, my dear fellow, that you have already begun to be "blown upon," and that Sir Arthur guesses what has really happened. He believed you would bolt before settling-day, and that so firmly, that he was content to take twenty-five pounds off his little bill, if he could but get it paid at once.'

'No other man in England, who calls himself a gentleman, would have ventured on such a step,' cried Stanhope. 'What a shameless scoundrel!'

'Chut!' answered Dawlish contemptuously: 'we are all alike on the turf, as we are under it. It is only that Sir Arthur wears triple brass upon his forehead, as that fellow we read of at Eton did about his heart, who first went to sea in a cock-boat; and, at all events, Sir Arthur is a magnificent liar. I saw his book upon the Cup, and so far from losing, he stood to win five thousand pounds on *Gazeebo* at least, besides your own little contribution. His manner may be grosser, but his method is only what is to be expected from all of them—even the best of these fellows won't wait for their money for ever. Yours is not a case where one can afford to be squeamish about anybody's feelings. I tell you, you must marry Ellen Blackburn, and cut the other fellow out.'

'You talk of this cutting-out expedition,' observed Stanhope grimly, 'as though it were a cruise round the Isle of Wight.'

'And so it is. Nothing is easier for a man like you, of good birth, of good looks, and I will add, of good brains—except when you take a prejudice against a horse: you have got both the girl's parents on your side.'

'I think they did want me to marry her,' muttered Stanhope thoughtfully.

'Want you!—they were pushing her down your throat, as a conjurer forces a card upon his audience. You should always endeavour to make a young woman obedient to her parents. I daresay she has formed some objectionable attachment. Why, it's your duty, sir.'

'Is it?' said Stanhope absently.

'Of course it is. And then think of her forty thousand pounds *down!* Two-and-twenty thousand to live upon, after having satisfied these cormorants. Then, as for her not having been reared so delicately (although she is as true a gentlewoman as any in his Grace's box there), that is all the better. She will never miss the money; and having been brought up in habits of economy, will make what is left go further. There: I think I have placed the whole matter now in its proper light. Is it possible, my dear fellow, that you fail to see it?'

'I see my necessity,' answered Stanhope sighing; 'but in case I don't win the girl after all?'

'You can't fail to do it,' answered Dawlish energetically; 'I'll bet ten to one on you. In the meantime, pay those you must, and let the others wait for their money. If you are very hard pressed, you may refer them to me. I am not a sentimental beggar, you know, *now;* that Ascot business took the softness out of my heart as well as my head; but for the sake of old times, Herby, you may, if the worst comes to the worst, depend upon me for

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four thousand.—No thanks, old fellow; but if you wish to oblige me, you will be at Curlew Hall by to-morrow night.'

THE RED RIVER AND THE FERTILE BELT.

ANOTHER great commercial sovereignty is about to be brought to an end. Another mighty and gigantic monopoly is to be broken up, and millions of acres of fair land brought into profitable cultivation. What the East India Company has already undergone, the Hudson's Bay Company is about to undergo, in principle if not in detail. The former was deprived of its trading monopoly thirty or forty years ago, and then (as a consequence of the formidable Mutiny) its sovereign or governing powers were taken away in 1858. There is no probability that the Hudson's Bay Company will be reduced to a level with its great predecessor, in being made simply the receiver of guaranteed dividends; it will still be a considerable landowner in North America; but there will be an end put to that pernicious state of things whereby vast regions of the earth's surface have purposely been kept out of cultivation, in order that fur-bearing animals may be plentiful.

What a halo of romance there is around this Hudson's Bay Company! It reminds us of the arctic expeditions of Franklin, Richardson, Back, Rae, and other daring spirits, which the Company (to its great credit be it said) so often assisted with men and stores. It reminds us of the old days of the fur-hunters and the trappers, when the Canadian voyageurs came down the Ottawa to Montreal with the year's accumulation of furs, and when Moore's 'Canadian Boat-song' *might* have been sung, whether it was or not. And it reminds us, too, of glorious old Leatherstocking and other fur-hunting heroes of Fenimore Cooper's novels. Often have the hunters and the beavers, and the Company and their territories, been incidentally noticed in this *Journal;* but it may be useful just to group together a few facts, sufficient to shew how the present improved prospect has come about.

In the time of James I., Hudson the navigator visited the bay which has ever since been known by his name; and that is nearly all that is recorded concerning him. Half a century or so later (about 1670), Prince Rupert equipped an expedition to Hudson's Bay, built Fort Charles on the shores, and asked for a charter of incorporation. This was granted; and never surely was a wilder grant based on so slender a ground. Charles II. had no sovereign rights whatever in that inhospitable part of America; and yet he gave to the adventurers, under the title of the 'Governor and Company of Adventurers trading to Hudson's Bay,' the most extravagant powers. They were to enjoy 'the sole trade and commerce of all those seas, straits, bays, rivers, lakes, creeks, and sounds which are not now actually possessed by any of our subjects, or by the subjects of any other Christian prince or state.' The grant was vicious in legality, because Charles had no rightful power over those regions; and it was indefinite in extent, because no one then knew how large is the area drained by the rivers which flow into Hudson's Bay. The adventurers, doubtful whether the royal charter was strong enough in itself, succeeded in obtaining an act of parliament in 1690, confirming the privileges, but only for a term of years. That act expired in 1697, and has never been renewed. The Company has boldly rested on its royal charter, and has fought several successive generations of lawyers as to its validity.

Until about the middle of the last century, the Company's operations in no place extended more than a hundred miles from the shores of the bay. The furs were brought by hunters and trappers to the forts or factories, where they were (not sold for money, but) bartered in exchange for articles of English manufacture; and it is abundantly evident that the Company made enormous profits out of this bartering. In 1763, when British superseded French sovereignty in Canada, all that had been French was given up to George III.; and it was tacitly assumed that the vast territories around and beyond the great lakes were to be his also. It was deemed quite a legitimate thing that a body of Canadian adventurers, called the North-west Company, should establish a fur-trading system between Lake Superior and the Rocky Mountains; and this they did in 1783. Then it was, however, that the Hudson's Bay Company startled everybody with a bold claim to *all* the territory included between the great lakes, Hudson's Bay, and the Rocky Mountains. In England, the Company baffled the lawyers; in America, it fought its battle in rougher ways. The dividends from 1690 to 1783 had averaged sixty or seventy per cent.; the shareholders did not like so rich a preserve to be poached upon by outsiders; and consequently they declared something like war against the North-west men. This warfare continued nearly forty years. We are told that 'the whole resources of the Company were put forth to compel the North-west traders to abandon their project and retire from the contest. Bloody contests ensued. The country was the theatre of scenes of brutal violence on the part of white men, which matched, if they did not surpass in atrocity and ruthlessness, the horrid scenes of slaughter in which the Indians gloried. The warfare between the rival traders was at its height in 1811. In one pitched battle twenty-two persons were slain. In 1821, exhausted by their barbarous rivalries, the two companies resolved to forget ancient feuds, and form a new association, in which both might prosecute the desired ends for their mutual advantage.'

The 'desired ends.' What were these ends? To keep out emigrants, settlers, colonists of all kinds, in order that all trade with the natives, and all profits from fur-bearing animals, might come to the shareholders of the companies. The two companies were equally bitten with this fault; and it became even stronger after the amalgamation than before.

Most persons have heard of the Red River Settlement. The half century or so of its existence has illustrated in a striking degree the plight of a colony set down in such a land of monopoly. In 1811, the Earl of Selkirk, a very large shareholder in the Hudson's Bay Company, succeeded in obtaining from the Company a grant of sixteen thousand square miles of territory, in a region westward of Lake Superior; this was to enable him to colonise the land with destitute Scotchmen and their families, as a means of bettering their condition. But although he succeeded by his voting power in influencing the one Company, he could not control

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the other. The North-west Company traders were bitterly hostile to the Scotch settlers, who were driven to great shifts in order to preserve life, and were often driven to seek safety in flight. When the two companies coalesced, the settlers believed that happier times were in store for them; there was less barbarity, it is true; but the united Company sought more strenuously than ever to retain sovereign power over the whole of the vast territory north and west of the great lakes. The Earl of Selkirk died in 1836; and the Company gave eighty-four thousand pounds to his heirs, to buy back the Red River Settlement. This was bad for the settlers; seeing that free enterprise is quite inconsistent with the plan on which the fur-hunting Company has been accustomed to act. Throughout the subsequent third of a century, the settlers have been constantly complaining that the Company's servants exercised a despotic authority over them; that the judicial tribunals were partial and incompetent; that the conditions under which the settlement was made have been violated; that freedom of trade did not exist; that they were forced to pay taxes, in the imposition of which they had no voice; that they were not allowed to import goods, except under the control and in the ships of the Company; and that letters were often tampered with under an odious system of espionage.

A new interest has lately been brought into the question. The British North American colonies became one confederation in 1867, by acts of the several legislatures; and it is now a matter of great commercial and national importance that there should be a good line of travel formed from these confederated colonies to British Columbia and Vancouver, across the Rocky Mountains. Unless this is done, our Yankee cousins will obtain almost complete and permanent command of the Pacific coast of North America, with all the advantages of trade to China, Japan, and the Malayan Archipelago. It has now been clearly ascertained that canals or railways, or both, can be formed. There is a tract of very rich soil called the *Fertile Belt*, stretching no less than one thousand miles long by two hundred wide, in the very route between Lake Superior and British Columbia: well fitted for a railway, and bounded on either side by luxurious corn and agricultural land. Red River Settlement is in immediate contiguity to this Fertile Belt, and would share in its prosperity. Those who have read the accounts given by Captain Palliser, Professor Hind, and Viscount Milton of this Fertile Belt, cannot but earnestly wish that such a favoured region were brought under cultivation, and made the home of a numerous and flourishing people.

But this is well-nigh impossible, so long as the region belongs to a fur-hunting Company. The land so well fitted for human beings is improvidently wasted while left to beavers and raccoons, musquash and otter, nutria and chinchilla. The Red River, the Assiniboine, and the Saskatchewan will assuredly become the centre of a mighty civilisation by-and-by. Viscount Milton, and his companion, Dr Cheadle, having no other interest than that of truth to subserve, tell us that 'from Red River to the Rocky Mountains, along the banks of the Assiniboine and the fertile belt of the Saskatchewan, at least sixty millions of acres of the richest soil lie ready for the farmer, when he shall be allowed to enter in and possess it. This glorious country, capable of sustaining an enormous population, lies utterly useless, except for the support of a few Indians, and the enrichment of the shareholders of the Last Great Monopoly.'

It is no part of our present purpose to comment on the financial affairs of the Company. The territory, not the Company, is the point of interest to the public. Fortunately, the crown, a few years ago, refused to renew the fur-trading privileges in Vancouver and British Columbia; and since then, these colonies have prospered greatly. Many of the more experienced of the Hudson's Bay directors and shareholders began to see clearly that colonisation and free trading would inevitably come before long in other portions of the territory. The Company, in 1863, claimed fourteen hundred thousand square miles, or eight hundred and ninety-six million acres of territory, watered by fourteen hundred miles of lakes and navigable rivers; and on the strength of this magnificent claim (more than one hundred and fifty times the area of Great Britain), obtained a large increase of capital from new shareholders—converting the enterprise, in fact, into a kind of Limited Liability Company. Whether the new shareholders paid too dearly for their venture, is a point with which we are not concerned.

The state of the wide-spreading Hudson's Bay Territories, then, within the last two or three years, has been this. In the first place, Vancouver Island and British Columbia have become a flourishing colony, busy with gold-digging, corn-cultivation, and commercial enterprise, and never likely again to be handed over to beaver-trappers and fur-traders. Then the British North-American colonies on the Atlantic coast—Upper and Lower Canada, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, &c.—having formed a confederation for mutual advantage, feel now a stronger incentive than ever to become a firm and flourishing community, constantly recruited with active and hard-handed emigrants from the mother-country. Next comes the fact, that England has long felt that the ten thousand residents at Red River Settlement have had a hard and unjust lot to bear, hemmed in on every side by a commercial body whose interest lay in regarding fur-bearing animals as more important than free colonists. Again, reliable travellers have clearly ascertained that the almost unpeopled region beyond and north-west of the Canadian lakes, now wholly owned (or at anyrate claimed) by the Company, contains the magnificent Fertile Belt, the potential food-granary for millions of people. In the next place, the United States' territories of Illinois and Minnesota, the very heart and centre of corn-growing, are so near to Red River, that the settlers will have a strong temptation to become members of the great Republic, and thus introduce political complications, if they are much longer neglected by the British government. Then comes the consideration, that the British colonies on the Pacific coast have a strong desire to be placed in easy communication with those on the Atlantic coast; this can only be done by means of good roads, canals, or railways; it is known that such channels of travel can be made through the whole breadth of America in land belonging to the British crown; and it is urgently felt that the interests of no private Company ought to be allowed to stand in the way of so magnificent a future. Lastly, the Hudson's Bay property has passed, to

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some degree, into the hands of new owners, naturally desirous of retaining such rights and privileges as can be shewn to be legally possessed, but a good deal shorn of the old-fashioned fur-hunting exclusiveness.

Out of these multiplied considerations a new state of things has arisen. The Company is willing to part with hundreds of millions of acres now uncultivated and almost unpeopled, upon equitable terms. Canada, backed up by the other colonies, is willing to encourage in every possible way settlement and cultivation in the fertile portion of this region. The imperial government is willing to assist, in its own cautious way, in establishing and recognising a free and busy colony there. It will be hard indeed if something good does not come out of all this. A 'Rupert's Land Act' was passed in 1868, empowering the crown to obtain territory from the Hudson's Bay Company, and to add it to the dominion of Canada. Based upon this act, a formal offer has been made by the government to the Company: so many hundred thousand pounds in cash, and so many million acres in undisputed ownership, in return for a surrender of all the other territory now possessed by the Company. The result must be recorded in other pages than these; but that the 'beginning of the end,' in regard to the long-continued neglect of that region, is coming, we may regard as almost certain. Let us remember that it was Sir George Simpson himself, the highest representative of the Company over there, who used these glowing words: 'The soil of the Red River Settlement is a black mould of considerable depth, which, when first tilled, produces extraordinary crops, as much on some occasions as forty returns of wheat; and even after twenty successive years of cultivation, without the relief of manure or of fallow or of green crop, it still yields from fifteen to twenty-five bushels an acre. The wheat produced is plump and heavy. There are also large quantities of grain of all kinds, besides beef, mutton, pork, butter, cheese, and wool in abundance.' All that we know of the Red River and Lake Winnipeg regions seems to point to an analogy with the land noticed in Douglas Jerrold's sparkling words: 'Tickle it with a hoe, and it will laugh with harvest.'

AN OPTICAL DELUSION.

'I TELL you what 'tis, Pen, you've just fallen in luck's way—that's where it is.'

I had spent the evening with him; we had supped. Penuel Crossley, my old schoolfellow, the dunderheadedest boy in the school, without a shilling's-worth of brains, or sixpence-worth of expectations, had, somehow or other, managed to make a good match a year ago, on the strength of which he had just taken the Manor-house in our little village of Copseford, and settled down in dignified ease as a country 'squire,' with a four-wheeler of his own; whilst I, who used to write half his exercises for him, was still working hard for a living, and trudging it on foot. I didn't grudge him his prosperity, but I wanted him at least to admit that it came through no effort of his own—that it was, in fact, nothing but luck.

'Luck!' cried Crossley, a little contemptuously, I thought—'luck! do you say? Look you here, my good fellow; my luck is just this: it is *all my eye*—that's what my luck is.'

'Nonsense,' I retorted. 'Do you mean to tell me that you've worked for the money you spend in paying for this place? Do you mean to say that your gold is the fruit of your brains or your hands? That it is good money, warm from the sweat of your brow, or that'——

'Now, don't,' he interrupted, 'don't I tell you it's all my eye?'

'It's not all my eye,' I continued, 'if you'——

'Hush! I didn't say 'twas all your eye; I said it was all *mine*. Look at me.'

I looked at him. I saw through the wreathing clouds of smoke with which he surrounded himself, a great, tall, handsome, hulking fellow, with close curly hair, like a Roman gladiator, and a pair of very handsome eyes, a little constrained perhaps in their expression, partly, as I judged from school antecedents, because he hadn't much to express, and partly from his being a little far-sighted. I knew he could not see objects close to him without peculiar spectacles.

'You don't see anything wrong about me, then?' he asked, when I had concluded my scrutiny.

No, I didn't. He was toying with a lead-pencil which was in his hand when he asked the question.

'Nor yet now?' and he deliberately took the lead-pencil, and tapped it against his left eye—right on the eyeball—and played a little tattoo upon it. 'Nor yet now?' he said.

'Pen, what *do* you mean?' I cried aghast.

'Just this: I tell you it's all my eye. It's only a glass one, but a capital bit of window-glass it is—as good as most window-glass you'll find in London—too dark to see through, but it keeps the draught out.' And he turned away for a minute, whisked his eye out, wiped it with his handkerchief, and then, covering up his sightless cavity, brought the eye to me to examine. It was so thin one could blow it away with a breath, and it looked like a fragile shell of porcelain.

'This is my luck,' he said, when he had inserted his eye again. 'It is my eye—all my eye—and nothing else. If you want to know how, just light up another Manila, and listen.'

'But which is the artificial eye?' I asked, for I declare I could not tell as I looked at him.

'Left,' said Pen, tapping it affectionately. ''Tisn't bad, eh? There are only three people know it beside yourself—namely, the optician, my father-in-law, and my wife, so I've kept my secret pretty well; and you need not go and tell everybody about Copseford that the new squire has a game eye! Twopenny-worth of gunpowder did it, at school, after you left, so it's no wonder you didn't know. I had loaded a small brass cannon which wouldn't fire; and looking down the muzzle to see why it wouldn't go off, the charge went in, and my eye went out. I left school—blown out of it, as it were; and having recovered from the accident, and had my eye replaced with this very artistic piece of china-ware, I went home to Stepminster, to study medicine under my father. My father, although called Dr Crossley by courtesy, was not a properly qualified doctor of medicine; he was, strictly speaking, a "medical man;" but folks in our town were never very particular about what

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letters a professed surgeon wrote after his name, so long as he could write enough of them. Dr Crossley was Medical Inspector to the Local Board of Health (unkind persons called him Inspector of Nuisances), and had little or no private practice. It was his idea that I should keep the loss of my eye a profound secret, because he wished gradually to work me into his own position, for which his failing health was rapidly incapacitating him. He had some notion the Board might fancy a man could not "inspect" enough for the post with one eye. For my part I should have thought a nose the most needful organ for an inspector of nuisances; and I have found one eye quite enough to see through a Board and all their wooden ways. After a few years, I began to relieve my father of his duties, until, though he still nominally held the position of inspector, the whole of the work was done by me. As it was satisfactorily done, the Board made no difficulty about transferring the appointment to me, on my father's retirement, which only shortly preceded his death. One member of the Board in particular complimented me very highly on my assiduity in the discharge of the duties of the office. "He is only a young man, sir," he said, addressing the chairman; "but he has an eye like a hawk." He was right. I had *an* eye. Such was the energy with which I worked to put down nuisances, that the mere mention of my eye was almost sufficient to get them removed. A person whose neighbour kept pigs in his backyard had simply to say to that neighbour: "Look out; the inspector has his eye upon you," and there was really no need for my interference. Such was the beautiful respect and awe in which the townsfolk held my eye. But not one of them knew the *singular* meaning which attached to being under my eye—not a soul of them knew he was telling the truth by accident.

'Some time before I was appointed inspector, a wealthy old gentleman, by the name of Tredgold, a widower, had settled in Stepminster. Some said he was a retired Liverpool merchant, others that he was a retired London broker. People hardly knew what he was, or where he had come from, or what for. He was not very communicative on these points; but it was agreed that he was rich, and it was indisputable that he had a very pretty only daughter, Laura. He therefore became an object of interest to parents of marriageable young men in Stepminster; whilst Miss Tredgold became a ditto ditto to those young men themselves. The Tredgolds were invited out a good deal. They were not at all proud; they appeared fond of society; they accepted those invitations; and in turn, their hosts became their guests. They were very much liked, I really believe for their own sakes, more than on account of Mr Tredgold's wealth. Mr Tredgold was excellent company; had seen a great deal of the world, could make himself at home in any society, and, what is more, could make every one else feel so too, if not a little too much so at times, for he was somewhat eccentric. As for Laura Tredgold, there could not be two opinions about her: she had the blackest eyes, the prettiest face, and the best fortune of any girl in Stepminster; more, she was known to be good tempered, unassuming, and, in a word, nice.

'Now, although the Tredgolds had been settled for four years in our town, and notwithstanding one after another of the best and most well-to-do of our young gentlemen, young professional men, and young tradesmen had laid continual siege to her heart during that time, Miss Tredgold was still disengaged. She referred all suitors to her father, who professed to be flattered by their attentions, but told each of them, with never-failing affability, "he had other intentions respecting his daughter's future." This was his continual reply to all applications—"he had other intentions respecting his daughter's future;" and he never varied a word, but delivered it with equal good-humour and courtesy in every case.

'Stepminster was puzzled as to what those intentions could be. It was demonstrable that Miss Tredgold was not engaged elsewhere. They never received visitors from a distance; and more than one disappointed suitor ascertained, through his servants, from the Tredgolds' servants, that Miss Tredgold was actually free still.

'I became acquainted with the family through my connection with a private musical society for the practice of vocal and instrumental chamber music. The society had been founded very recently by Mr Tredgold, himself no mean amateur on the double-bass. We met at members' houses alternately, and managed to spend some of the pleasantest evenings I can call to mind in this way. My own part in the performances was chiefly confined to singing tenor. Laura Tredgold played the piano or organ with real nervous feeling, besides which she had a very respectable soprano voice. My great interest in the study and practice of music led Mr Tredgold to invite me to his house rather frequently, to try over some of Mendelssohn's trios with Laura and himself, until I became a constant visitor, always welcomed to their home and table.

'It went on like this for a good bit, and the trios frequently came down to duets between Miss Tredgold and me, whilst her father would add a double-bass *obligato* to her piano accompaniment. At last I grew very miserable. I began to feel that I loved Laura Tredgold, and that my position as a miserable one-eyed inspector of nuisances was an insuperable barrier to telling her so, and much less her affable old father rasping away at his double-bass in happy unconsciousness of my feelings. I tried to stifle these feelings, and to look upon our acquaintance simply in the light of a musical one. I am afraid the very effort I made to hide them must have in some way betrayed them to Laura, for I became impressed with a growing conviction that she knew what I felt, and that her own inclinations were at least not unfavourable towards me. I noticed, or thought I did, that when I entered the room a faint blush would overspread her cheek—that she would look round and single out mine from among the other faces at the meetings of the musical society, and that having found it, her eyes would stay restfully and satisfied on mine for a moment—her deep lustrous dark eyes—before turning with greater unconcern upon the rest. And when she parted from me of an evening, I remember how she would raise those eyes to mine with a gentle expression that made me dizzy to think about as I would run out of the house and reflect on my one-eyed-ness. Laura had speaking eyes, as folks say. They were not bashful eyes, but mild and gentle; and when I looked into their depths, they seemed to flash back already

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a favourable answer to what I longed to, yet dared not, ask. That the longer I reflected on the social inequality between my position and hers, the more resolved I became at least to try my fate, and hear at worst my rejection, will be readily understood by the lad who has read his first love-story. It was not so much this—it was my eye. I dared not tell her, lest, if she rejected me, it should get bruited about Stepminster that the Board had a one-eyed inspector. That would be ruin. It was clear to me I must keep this secret locked up in my own—eyelid. But suppose I should be married with my glass eye, and never tell my wife? I should be found out? There would be an end to all confidence, for I should be a wretched deceiver; and would it not be obtaining a wife and a fortune under false pretences?

'However, candidly, I only expected rejection of my suit, after the experience of so many more eligible young men than myself. And should I, for this, put my eye in any one's power, and lose my place as inspector? No. I would risk keeping the secret, and know my fate first. I could easily tell her afterwards. Excuse my not dwelling on the terms in which I laid bare the state of my feelings to Laura Tredgold. It is neither here nor there to the story.

"I have loved you, Mr Crossley," she said with emotion, "and only you. I have never loved another. Yet I fear I can never be yours. You do not know—not know," she continued, sobbing on my shoulder, "what brought us to Stepminster. No; you don't know. Yet, if you will ask my father, first, for his consent to your suit, and next to tell you what brought us to Stepminster; if his answer to the first is favourable to your desire, and if his answer to the second is satisfactory to your mind, I will be your wife."

'This seemed queer to me. What did I care what brought them to Stepminster? Absolutely nothing.

'Whilst we had been talking—Laura and I—the old gentleman had been up-stairs, to rummage out some new trios for our next practice.

"Lovely things!" said Mr Tredgold, patting them affectionately.

"Could I have a little conversation with you, Mr Tredgold, in private?"

"Oh, nonsense! Not now. I know what you've got to say—or I guess. That's all my eye, sir," he said severely: "we are going to practice now. Oh, they are lovely things!" and he took an enthusiastic rasp at his double-bass. "We will talk, if you like, after supper, when Laura goes to bed. Now, then—one, two, three."

'And off we went into chamber music. It was a very constrained affair, after what I knew, and what Laura knew, and what we both judged, I feel sure, that he seemed to know was coming. For three blessed hours we kept this up; then supper came, which I thought never would end. At last, Laura kissed her father, and wishing me good-night, resting her full dark eyes on mine with a new and happier meaning in them, retired.

"Well, Mr Crossley," the old gentleman began, when he heard Laura's footstep die away up the stairs—"well, sir, I expect I know what you have to say. I may as well be candid, and tell you I am not taken by surprise. I have had a good many young men here, and I have observed their attentions to my daughter have naturally resulted in a little conversation with me. I have also watched you, and had no doubt your attentions would result similarly in a few words in private with me. Now, let us have these few words short and to the purpose. You are come to tell me you love my daughter, Laura?"

'This was a most unpromising beginning, certainly. It is very annoying to get the ground cut from under your feet with this bewildering candour.

"I certainly was about to say, sir, that I love your daughter; that I love her truly and disinterestedly; and that in making this confession, I have not an eye to"——

"You have *not* an eye to?" echoed Mr Tredgold, emphasising the "not" in a very unpleasant manner.

"I mean, sir, I am not in the slightest degree influenced by pecuniary considerations, knowing, though I do, that Miss Tredgold's position is very far above mine, from a pecuniary point of view. In fact, a reflection on this very inequality has for a long time prevented my declaring the state of my feelings to Miss Tredgold herself, notwithstanding I had reason to hope that it would be reciprocated on her part."

"Well, sir, I can only say I have other intentions respecting my daughter's future"——

'Mr Tredgold coughed. The very words. It was all over, I thought.

"Than pecuniary ones," the old gentleman added, after a slight pause. "They are a very one-eyed sort of consideration, sir, after all."

'I acquiesced, but I wished he would not allude to partial blindness even in that metaphorical manner.

"But," Mr Tredgold continued, "having seen a good deal of you for some time past, I am not disposed to think you a man influenced by considerations of that kind. Have you mentioned your sentiments to Miss Tredgold? Yes? And they are returned? Yes? In that case you may consider the matter settled, so far as my consent is concerned. I am simply anxious for her happiness. No doubt, you wonder at my ready assent in your case to a suit which I have refused a number of gentlemen in much better positions than your own? I have my own reasons. I do not want money for my daughter. I can give her as much as I think it good for any young pair to have."

"What a gem of a father-in-law!" I thought.

"The fact is, I am a student, sir," he went on—"a humble one, it is true, of individual character as delineated in the human eye."

'I began to feel very particularly uncomfortable.

"At one time I studied phrenology. What is moral character? says the phrenologist. Moral character, he replies, is bumps. I tried nosology. What is the index of intelligence? asks the nosologist. It is your nose. He knows nothing. They are all wrong together. Where do I look to read the moral and perceptive faculties of the human mind?—whither do I turn to seek for infallible indications that my confidence shall not be misplaced? To the eye, sir. The eye is the window of the soul. That is where a man's character is written. Depend upon it, it is all in your eye."

'Really, this was very disagreeable. I was so perplexed I could not tell what to do. It flashed through my mind that I had better go down on my

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knees, and at once avow myself a wretched one-eyed impostor, regardless of all consequences to the inspectorship. But this is weakness, I thought. Should I give up the secret of so many years' standing, and lose Laura and the inspectorship at one fell swoop? No. With a powerful effort, I controlled my feelings.

"I have read your eyes," said Mr Tredgold, "and I must say they impress me with a favourable opinion of the candour and frankness of your disposition."

'What a guilty being I felt!

"A very favourable opinion, sir. And I will say I have confidence in you. Plainly, I like you; and I would rather have you for a son-in-law than any other young gentleman I know; and I believe you will make Laura a good husband."

'For very shame, I could hardly find words suitably to express my acknowledgments of his good opinion; but I blurted out something, and the old gentleman shook me cordially by the hand, and wished me good-night.

"I don't know if you will think me unduly inquisitive," I said, "but I should like to ask you one question before I go."

"Not at all. You probably mean as to the amount of the settlement"——

"No, no," I interrupted, colouring. "I assure you that was furthest from my thoughts. It is on a very different subject. Your daughter wished me to ask why you came to Stepminster?"

'Mr Tredgold looked at me keenly for a moment, then he replied, with some abruptness: "Change of air.—Good-night."

'The manner in which he said "good-night" did not admit of further conversation.

'Why had Laura insisted on my asking this question? Surely not to elicit such an unsatisfactory piece of information as this. I fancied I heard the old gentleman chuckle to himself as he shut the street-door on me.

'Could there be any reason worth keeping secret connected with Mr Tredgold's coming to Stepminster? Had he done anything wrong? Did he want to avoid anything, or anybody? It did not look like it, for he had taken no pains to live a quiet retiring life in the town. Again, *why* did Laura wish me to know the reason that had brought them here? It mattered nothing to me, that I could see. I loved Laura Tredgold; that was enough for me.

'Then I thought about my eye. Could I tell them, after deceiving them hitherto? The worst of the first step in deception is, it makes the others so easy. I did not see that I could. Besides, surely it was no crime to have a glass eye: it was my misfortune. Why should I go and tell people: "Look here; this is a glass eye," when they liked it better for believing it to be real? It would be cruel—heartless. Besides, Laura did not love me for my eye. No; I would not tell her yet, I determined—I would rather she should find it out. Perhaps I would lead her on gently to the discovery, and so break the blow, and be able to say: "La! bless me—what! didn't you know it?" That would be the preferable course.

'When I next saw Laura, she was very eager to know if her father had told me anything about the reason which brought them to settle in Stepminster. I mentioned his reply, and it caused her a good deal of apparent uneasiness.

"He ought to have told you that, Pen. I don't think I ought to be your wife till you know."

'I protested my utter indifference to the cause that brought them here, whatever it might be.

"But, Pen," she said, plucking at her dress—"O dear, you ought to know it. I wish I could tell you. I am sure you will regard me with an eye of scorn by-and-by, when you find I have kept something from you." The tears were coming up in her beautiful eyes as she looked at me.

'No, I said; nothing would ever make me change my opinion of her, as the dearest darling—— Well, we will leave the epithets. In fact, as I thought of my secret, which I had not disclosed, it was rather a relief to me that she should *not* tell me why they came to Stepminster. It encouraged and excused me, as it were, for my own reserve. But I would much have preferred, though, she should have said "eyes of scorn," instead of *an* eye. Everybody seemed to talk about *an* eye to me in a way which seemed quite personal.

"Are you sure, Pen, you will forgive me, whatever you learn about me in the future?"

"Certain," I said.

'Well, in course of time, we were married. I still maintained my office as inspector. No one ever had such a wife as mine—the best-tempered and most lovable creature, I really believe, in the world. Our congeniality of feeling was something wonderful. Even down to little matters of the most trivial character in likes and dislikes, there was perfect unanimity between us. It may seem a very absurd instance to give of this unanimity, it is so trifling. But I have always had a great antipathy to flies. I very nearly exposed my secret on one occasion before the Board, owing to flies. It was autumn, and a fly had been buzzing about my face, stinging me for a long time whilst reading a Report. Then I missed him; I thought he was gone. Meantime, that fly was intently engaged in my glass eye. It was a wonder the Board never noticed it; if they had, I should have been found out. At home, I have devoted a great deal of my leisure, in the fly-season, to devising traps and poisonous sweetmeats for them, and I have fly-cages in every room. I was almost afraid Laura would think this suspicious; but no, she never did. Her skin is particularly delicate and sensitive. Laura did not like flies; I was glad of that.

'There was one thing, I must say, caused me no little annoyance about Laura. It was only a little thing in itself, and no doubt I ought to have been above feeling hurt at such a trifle. Still, ever so little a thing, when it's in your eye, for instance, as a speck of dust, does cause a great deal of annoyance. With the congeniality of feeling between us, I certainly did feel hurt that Laura should keep her desk constantly and consistently locked from me. I wanted some ink one day. I knew she had some in her desk, and asked for the keys. The way she hustled about to open that desk herself, and the excuses she made to prevent my going to it, were a masterpiece of female diplomacy. It was not that I wanted to go to her desk, so much as that I didn't like being locked away from it. It preyed on my mind when I considered the mutual confidence that should subsist between man and wife. To be sure, I had not told her about my glass eye—that was the only secret I had from Laura—but then she didn't know that, and she at least believed

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I had withheld nothing whatsoever from her, so that there was no excuse for her withholding anything from me. Another thing to do with the desk was this: Laura had received at least two letters since our marriage, not in female handwriting, which she very artfully cajoled and persuaded me out of wanting to see. I knew they were in the desk. And there was a certain neat little parcel, "a present," she said, "from a friend." *That* went into the desk too. But why this mystery? A harmless deception on my part was excusable, but I could not bear deception in other people.

'By-and-by, from this very little seed, there grew up a sort of constraint between us, until Laura, observing it, at last threw me her keys, and calling me a "bad Penny" (a playful title of reproach), bade me examine her desk myself, and not be suspicious about nothing. Then I felt ashamed of myself, and wouldn't do it. Then Laura insisted on turning it out before my eyes, and shewing me its contents. I would not read the letters, but I saw a little box with a brooch in it, which I much doubted being the same she had received in the packet alluded to. It was all very well her calling me a "horrid Bluebeard," but I knew the handwriting on the paper enclosing it was not the same, for I distinctly remembered that writing.

'One day, coming home tired after a fagging morning's work at inspecting, I found my household in great commotion. One of my female domestics was crying, and on my entering the house, she began: "Oh, if you please, sir, missus have fell."

"Fell? fell?" I asked in amazement. "What do you mean, girl?"

"Fell, sir; fell down-stairs and hurt herself."

"Where is she?" I asked, pushing past her to seek my wife.

"I hope you 'll bear up, sir—but missus have gone. Gone, sir—left the house," the servant added, seeing my look of incredulity. "I was up-stairs, cleanin' of myself for dinner," the girl continued, "when I heard somethin' fall on the stairs, and I heard missus scream. I went and helped her up, for she had fell and hurt her forehead. She went to her room cryin' very much, and wouldn't let us do nothin' for her. She put on her things, sir, and went out almost directly afterwards, sayin' she had left a note for you, sir. She was sobbin' very much when she left."

'Seriously agitated about my wife, I ran up-stairs, and found on Laura's dressing-table the following note:

'DEAREST PEN—Forgive my leaving you thus. I have suffered much from deceiving you so long, but never thought it would come to this. Do not follow me; my peace depends upon it. You will soon know all. My father will know of my going. LAURA.

'Cool, upon my word. Was this the woman whom I had loved, and cherished, and adored, and kept no secret from?—that is, nothing worth mentioning—to go and own to a systematic course of deception? And her father a base accomplice too! he knew of her going. Clasping my hands frantically to my forehead, "O woman, woman! look upon the wreck you have made!" I exclaimed. The emotion was too powerful, for my glass eye fell out with the force of the blow, and shivered itself to fragments at my feet. On second thoughts, I was glad she could *not* look upon the wreck she had made.

'Yet, could I believe Laura false? Then the demon of jealousy whispered to me about the letters, and the "present from a friend." I hardly dared to think about the agitation she had invariably betrayed when I had referred to this subject. At least, I would go to her father, Mr Tredgold—go and wring the truth from him, deceitful impostor that he was—and know the worst.

'But stay. It was utterly impossible to go as I was—without my eye. I had been accustomed to keep a spare eye against emergencies in my desk at the inspector's office. I had broken that a month ago, and though I had written for a new one to be addressed to the office, it had not yet arrived. Delay was agonising; but I could certainly do nothing till I had been to London and got my vision repaired.

'Holding my handkerchief to my face, I set off immediately to the railway station, telling all the inquiring friends who stopped me, that something had blown in my eye (this was no fib, for gunpowder had, years before!). Arrived there, I eagerly inquired if my wife had been seen to leave. She had, the station-master told me; she had in fact left by the previous train, with a ticket for London—apparently much distressed in mind—dressed in travelling costume, with a thick black veil on. Evidently for the purpose of avoiding recognition as much as possible, I decided. I was therefore on the very road to overtake her, while, as my train was express, I should be in London within an hour of the time at which she could arrive.

'On reaching London, after a few unsuccessful inquiries at the Waterloo terminus respecting a lady answering the description I gave, I told a cabman to drive me to Mr Bernotti's, the optician's in Regent Street.

"Will you walk into a private room, and wait, sir, for a few minutes? Mr Bernotti is engaged just now."

However, presently, Mr Bernotti appeared. A pleasant little man, with twinkling eyes, a buoyant disposition, and a cork-leg, which always seemed restive, and not properly broken in—it never went well with the other leg; it was too fast for it; and it appeared to impress the natural leg with a hopeless conviction of inferiority.

'After profuse apologies for keeping me waiting, and several conciliatory flourishes which his cork-leg seemed to get up independently of him, and entirely on its own account, Mr Bernotti said: "This is your size, I see by my books—No. 193 Hazel"—taking one from a case of several hundreds—"and a very neat eye it is. Shall I put you up an 'off-eye' for spare use? Thank you, sir.—Am I doing pretty well in eyes? Thank you, yes; nothing to complain of.—You would hardly have thought it? No; probably not—few persons would, in fact. You see that the triumph of art is so perfect, one does not really know who has glass eyes and who has not. Scores of people, in every town, wear them who are never suspected of such a thing, the illusion is so perfect. Yours, I am proud to own, is a very successful case. There are others no less so. Among the list of persons who have obtained

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respectable damages from various railway companies for the loss of an eye, and even pensions from government, I could point to at least a few instances in which the eye so damaged has been one of my make. No one has been the wiser. In fact, only the other day, I was deceived myself. A French gentleman was introduced to me by a friend as requiring an eye. This is his eye, sir—No. 81 Gray. Well, sir, after carefully matching the artificial eye by the real one, I directed his attention to the extreme lightness of our manufacture, and begged him to hold it up to the light and observe its transparency. If you will believe me, sir, that gentleman's other eye, which I took for real, was glass. He was blind as a bat. I never knew it till he told me."

'With renewed apologies, Mr Bernotti followed his leg, which flourished off, down-stairs. Having wished him good-afternoon, I set out to prosecute my search after my wife.

'I need not detail the particular steps by which I sought to carry out this purpose; but I may state that I drove to every metropolitan railway station, and made most careful inquiries. Next day, after fruitless search, I determined to return to the Waterloo terminus, and endeavour to elicit something which might guide me in fresh investigations. I found waiting for me there a telegram: "From Mr Tredgold, Stepminster, to Penuel Crossley, Esq., London.—Come down. It is all right. Laura is here."

'I was so thankful! But what could she have meant by "having deceived me," and "for long?" I thought, referring to her note. And why should she have written me such a note at all, and aroused such cruel suspicions? There was a good deal to be explained, at anyrate.

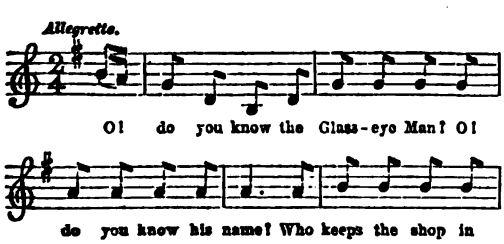
'I returned to Stepminster by next train, and hurried off to Mr Tredgold's. Laura received me at the door in an ecstasy of delight; and I was about putting twenty different questions to her at a time, to know the reason of her singular conduct, when old Mr Tredgold said: "Wait a bit. None of that. Just cast your eye this way, Pen, my boy: here 's a little bit of a round I want you and Laura to try over with me before I allow a word to be said about this little mystery.—No; I insist," he said, seeing me about to remonstrate. "Pleasure first, business afterwards."

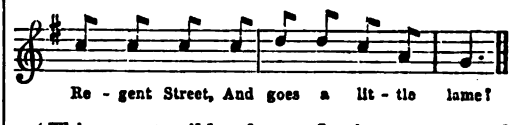
'The cloth was laid for supper, and we sat round the table, a plate in front of each of us, while Mr Tredgold handed Laura and me the notes of the round, keeping a copy for himself.

'When I had glanced at my copy, I felt ready to sink through the floor with mortification. I could not believe my eyes—eye, I mean.

"Now then," cried Mr Tredgold smartly. "Laura begins—one, and two, and"——

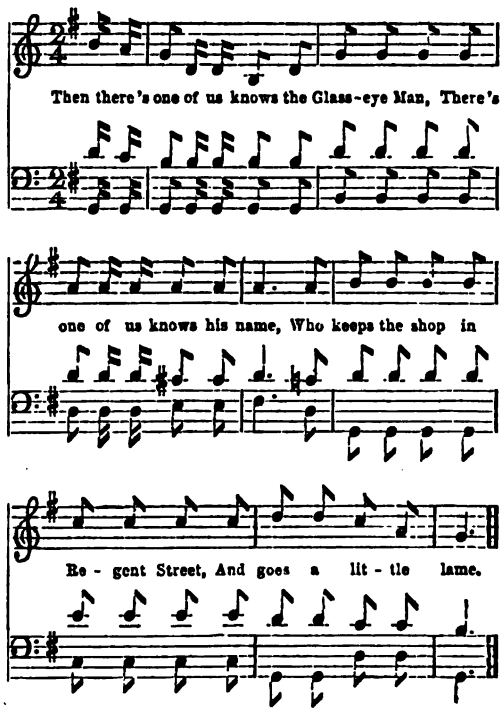
'Laura began, blushing, and in a voice very unlike her natural one, to sing:





'This was terrible; but reflection was out of the question, for Mr Tredgold, with his stentorian bass, immediately began singing, to the same air, by way of reply:

"O yes, I know the Glass-eye Man;
Bernotti is his name;
He keeps the shop in Regent Street,
And goes a little lame."

'But the worst was, the terrible proof Mr Tredgold gave that he really *did* know the Glass-eye Man, for he had no sooner finished the verse, than, with a burst of laughter, he took out his own eye—to my terrible surprise, a glass one—and placed it on the plate before him. I was almost stupefied. But in a moment, the old gentleman recovered himself from his chuckles sufficiently to call out: "*Cho*-rus, if you please!" In which I very lugubriously joined.

Then there's one of us knows the Glass-eye Man, There's
one of us knows his name, Who keeps the shop in
Re - gent Street, And goes a lit - tle lame.

"Now," said my eccentric father-in-law, "it 's my turn." And he addressed the inquiry to me to the same tune.

'I was forced, very reluctantly, to own, in reply, as he had done, that I certainly did know the individual referred to.

"Very well, then," he remarked, when I had finished, "out with it, can't you?"

'Very furtively I obeyed, and placed my eye on the plate before me. My wife gave a scream of laughter, which much disconcerted me. There we were, two of us—Mr Tredgold and I—holding our handkerchiefs up to our faces, and contemplating

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the upturned glance of our eyes from our plates. It was most ludicrously horrible.

"*Cho*-rus, if you please."

'Whereupon we stated harmoniously that there were "two of us" knew the Glass-eye Man.

'I thought we had done.

"No, no," said Mr Tredgold; "pass the harmony round."

'It therefore devolved upon me to put the question to my wife: "Did she know," &c.

'Before I had finished, the truth flashed across me—sure enough she did.

'With a little terrified cry, she deposited *her* eye on the plate, and ran out of the room, leaving us to sing the chorus by ourselves, to wit:

"Then there are three of us know the Glass-eye Man;
Bernotti is his name;
Who keeps the shop in Regent Street,
And goes a little lame."

'In a few minutes, Laura returned with her "off"-eye inserted in place of the one left in the room. "You know now why I went to London, Pen. I fell down going up-stairs with my spare eye in my hand, and the other one falling out, I broke both unfortunately at once. The two letters you were so suspicious about were from Bernotti—so was the box. You might have known he would not have addressed letters to two persons in one house in the same handwriting, on such a private matter, you dear old goose you. But you need not be jealous again, for we will have our eyes down together in future—won't we, dear?"

"Yes," said Mr Tredgold; "we 'll all have our eyes down together, now the mischief is out, and perhaps they 'll come cheaper, like that.—But now, Mister Crossley, I 'll have a word with you. I 'll tell you why we came to Stepminster. Soon after Laura left school, she met with the accident that deprived her of the sight of one eye. When it was replaced with the best imitation we could procure, I began to see there would be plenty of suitors yearning to accept her one eye as a drawback that might be balanced by her money, for everybody knew of her *mis*fortune as well as her fortune. I did not care to have Laura wooed under circumstances so disadvantageous to her real merits, so I removed here, where at least there could be no knowledge of her infirmity to prejudice her future. I had no intention that Laura should marry without her husband's knowing the secret as soon as she was honestly loved for her own sake. If I withheld that secret from you, it was your own fault. I was disposed to you from the first, from discovering that *you* had a glass eye; and I gave you every opportunity to own it, even leading the conversation to the subject. You refused. I therefore considered myself justified in strictly forbidding Laura to tell you her secret till I gave her permission. Thought I, you will both find out the truth by-and-by; but till you do, not a penny of my money shall you touch, Mister Pen, as a penalty for your deception. Now that you understand one another, there is no further reason for your not giving up the one-eyed inspectorship to some man who is better qualified for the office. The next thing is for you and Laura to take a couple of months' holiday, and travel about the country till you cast your *one eyes* upon some comfortable little property where you can make up your minds to settle down in quiet—and you can send me the bill, and then we 'll see what else can be done for you."

'Need I say, we did so—or that, in consequence, here we are.

'There,' said Pen, when he had finished his story; 'I hope I have convinced you that my luck is "all my eye!"'

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

LONDONERS, and all the sight-seers who come up to the big city, have now had a month's enjoyment of the Royal Academy Exhibition, and a month's time to say what they think of the new galleries at Burlington House, in which the exhibition is held. The general impression is favourable, though opinions differ in matters of detail—some thinking the skylights too plain, others the coves too heavy. But all are agreed as to the improvement in the hanging compared with what used to prevail at the galleries in Trafalgar Square. In the new galleries you are not required to stoop to look at pictures on the floor, nor to crick your neck by looking up to the cornice. From this it will be understood that the pictures are hung neither too high nor too low; and though artists whose pictures are not hung may complain that so much wall-space is wasted, visitors will thank the Academicians for arrangements which promote their enjoyment. In themselves, the galleries are well worth a visit. Ample in space and light, and appropriate in colour, they call forth admiration, and heighten the effect of what they have to shew.

Among general topics, we notice that the great Pacific Railway from sea to sea across the United States is reported as complete. From east and west the rails have been laid—'rushed through,' as the Americans say, with marvellous rapidity, and now they have met in the territory of Utah. Soon we shall hear of through-trains from New York to San Francisco. The promoters expect to do all the carrying-trade between Europe and China and Japan. But now that Rupert's Land is to become a part of the Dominion of Canada, they will perhaps find ere long a British railway competing with them, and with a terminus at some port in Oregon.—The Pasha of Egypt is about to send an expedition, combining a military and exploratory character, up the Nile, and to the region of the great Lakes, to put down the slave-trade which is there rampant. Sir Samuel Baker is to have the chief command, and we may anticipate that he will take advantage of the occasion to widen his geographical discoveries.—Anxiety is felt concerning Dr Livingstone. He was expected at Zanzibar. The President of the Geographical Society is of opinion that the enterprising traveller, instead of journeying either north or east from Lake Tanganyika, has turned his face westwards, and that we must now look for his reappearance at the Portuguese settlements on the west coast.—Another African item is that the gold-fields of Natal, which have been so much boasted about, are scarcely more remunerative than the gold-fields of Sutherlandshire.

The survey of the peninsula of Sinai has been

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carried on heartily by all concerned: heights are measured, situations determined, and topographical features laid down with accuracy, while the archæologists of the party copy all the ancient inscriptions they find, and take note of antiquities. What interesting work the examination and translation of these will afford to antiquaries for months to come!—The underground exploration at Jerusalem has brought to light many relics of the time when the city was held by the Romans. Some of these—specimens of pottery, lamps, and curious carvings—were exhibited at a recent conversazione of the Royal Society; and much attention did they excite, under the impression that they had been objects of household use in the Holy City in the days when Pontius Pilate was governor.

Two important questions—the magnetism of iron ships, and the best method of correcting the deviations of the compass, have been much studied of late; and it is encouraging to know that they are better understood than formerly. It now appears that those most conversant with the subject can tell from the evidence given at the Board of Trade inquiry into the occasion of a wreck, whether the compass was in fault or not. A noteworthy example occurs in a paper read a few weeks since at the Royal Society, by Mr Archibald Smith, F.R.S., *On the Causes of the Loss of the Iron-built Sailing-ship Glenorchy*. This vessel sailed from Greenock towards the end of December last, and a few days afterwards was wrecked on the Kish Bank in Dublin Bay. Her compass was so much in error that it pointed south when it ought to have pointed north; but this was rectified. There remained, however, the 'heeling error,' as it is called. This also was allowed for by the captain, one point *west* when the ship was on the starboard tack; but when he put the ship on the port tack he still allowed the same, not knowing that then the deviation was to the *east*. The vessel in consequence got twenty miles out of her proper course, went on the bank, and became a wreck. This loss might have been avoided, and others of the kind might be avoided, if shipmasters would only take the trouble to read the instructions concerning the management of the compasses in iron ships published by the Admiralty.

Mr Gisborne has invented a kind of magnetic trigger for firing torpedoes under water, which remains quiet in the place where it is sunk until a ship comes sailing by. The iron in the ship attracts the trigger, which by its movement 'makes contact,' the spark passes, the torpedo blows up, and blows such a hole in the ship that she immediately sinks.—Mr Wier has devised a system of signal-lights for ships which ought to prevent the collisions that have been too frequent of late. He connects the steering wheel and the signal-mast by a pneumatic apparatus; then as the wheel is turned in one direction a red light is shewn, in the other a green light, and a white light when the rudder is amidships. Thus, every movement of the helm is indicated to any vessels navigating in the same channel; and they can direct their course accordingly.—Dr Hawkesley has brought out a stetho-sphygmoscope, an instrument for indicating at the same time the movements of the heart, of the pulse, and of respiration.

A discovery has been made on the coast of Brazil, about thirty miles from Bahia, of an enormous deposit of clay which yields oil in considerable quantities. This clay—for which the name *turba* is proposed—is so light that it floats in water, takes fire easily, and may be expected to help on the solution of that important question, the burning of liquid fuel in sea-going steamers. Specimens of *turba* and of the various oils and other products extracted from it have been exhibited in London; and the result may be a trade in Brazilian clay which shall rival that in Peruvian guano. It is in favour of the *turba* that it forms the actual shore, so that persons landing from boats would step at once upon it.

Simultaneously with this comes news (with specimens) of cinnabar found in prodigious quantities in Borneo. What will mineralogists say to this? And is the island of the eastern seas about to compete with Almaden in supplying the world with a mineral for which there is a lively demand?

It has often been said that a good deal of trade might be developed in outlying parts of the country if they could be made accessible by cheap tramways. The want is now supplied by the Patent Wire-rope Tramway, which is supported on posts, and is well adapted for a rough country where the level can be maintained by simply varying the length of the posts. There are two rows of posts, and a horizontal wheel at each end of the line, and the endless wire-rope passed round the wheels is supported by pulleys attached to the line of posts. On the turning of the wheels, by steam or any other power, the whole length of rope is set in motion. The carriages (if such a name may be used) are boxes made to hang on the rope by a couple of pulleys, which run easily over all the points of support, conveying their load down one side of the line, and returning empty on the other. That this can be done is demonstrated by a tramway on this construction which has been in operation for six months, carrying granite from a quarry on Barden Hill (Charnwood Forest) to a village three miles distant. And we hear that a similar line is to be erected at the gold-mines a little below Macugnaga, in the Val Anzasca.

For those who want to know everything about that important medicine bark, a book with large coloured plates has just been published by Mr J. E. Howard, entitled *Quinology of the East Indian Plantations*. This book gives microscopical details of the structure of the bark, and discusses the question as to the best time of year for stripping it from the tree. Mr Howard is of opinion that the best time is when the sap is freely flowing, and not, as some think, during the period of repose. He states also that plantations of the bark-tree must not be below the line of four thousand feet above the sea-level, and that some of the plantations in India not only produce bark equal in quality to that of the Andes, the native abode of the cinchona, but that, in some species of the plant, the alkaloid, or medical substance, is 'susceptible of a large increase.'

It was a wise and beneficent undertaking on the part of government to introduce the culture of the cinchona into India and also into Ceylon, and it is gratifying to learn that it is likely to be attended with complete success, if, as Mr Howard remarks, proper attention be paid to the selection of species. Happily the gentlemen appointed to superintend the work have proved themselves equally earnest and intelligent, and some of them now hold rank as quinologists in chief to the government of India.

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ONLY SEVEN YEARS OLD WHEN SHE DIED.

Only seven years old when she died!
Surely the angels must love her dearly!
Bright golden-haired and violet-eyed,
None could e'er look on her face severely!
There are children as many as the flowers,
But never was one more sweet than ours,
The latest bud on an aged tree
Where never blossom again may be.
Once I held up my head with the best,
Crowned with three flowers of promise bright;
Two—two of the fairest—Death tore from my breast,
Five years ago, in the self-same night.
She was the only one left to me,
And I prayed with groans of agony
That burst from my heart, a mingled prayer
Of hope and doubting and black despair,
That He who doth wisely whatever betide,
Would be willing to leave her aye by my side,
Still blessing her richly with increase of days.
It may be He heard me—but ah! His ways
Are not as ours—from the heavenly place
Perhaps she lighteneth our life with grace.

Only seven years old when she died!
Yet the hopes of two lifetimes died with her!
We have not a wish in the world wide
Save that we had gone out on the tide with her!
The tide that has borne them all away,
Sybil and Avis, now little May;
The ebb that never knows turn or flow
However the full moons come or go!
But I would not murmur—no complaint
Breaks from the lips, asleep or awake,
Of the mother who bore them, making a feint
Of being content for my love's sake.
But sometimes her hand clings to her heart,
And at certain hours she sits apart;
And the golden light of sunset skies
Brings a far-off look into her eyes;
And I fear me much that her treasure in heaven
Her heart from its earth-hold has almost riven,
And soon, hearing the voice of her children three,
She, too, will drift out to that unknown sea—
'The sea of glass' for her it should be—
God help me! what then will become of me!

Only seven years old when she died!
How our old hearts took young delight in her,
Our only pleasure, our hope, our pride!
Well! He who made her had the most right in her!
We took her from Him thanksgivingly;
We gave her back—no, not willingly,
But not with repining—God forbid!
Yet I think He pardons that we did
Falter awhile and fail in our praise,
Missing the key to which it was set
For a sweet child-treble in happier days.
The old tune haunts our memory yet,
And we scarce can read, for tears, the page
Of blessings left to our altered age.
Our 'lines,' once 'fallen in pleasant places,'
Blankly stare in our darkened faces,
And our harps on the willows of grief hang low;
But God, omniscient, has known what we know.
Once the harpings of Heaven ceased suddenly,
And His heart was thrilled by a bitter cry—
The cry of His Son's last agony:
He knows what we felt when we saw her die.

Only seven years old when she died!
Passed from the earth ere she learned its history!
Now she stands up with the glorified,
Fully as wise in the heavenly mystery
As they who through great tribulation
Fought their way up from every nation,
Leavened the world with their life-blood warm,
Carried the kingdom of God by storm.
Sometimes still they talk of their story—
How they suffered, and conquered, and died;
Cleft a path on through the cloud to the glory:
She stands listening, wondering-eyed.
Nought *she* knew of toil or endeavour—
Mother's arms were around her ever;
Little of sorrow, doubt, or despair.
Half she questions her right to be there—
She who has nothing either suffered or done;
Till, suddenly smiling, she looks to the Son,
And, folding her pretty hands reverently,
Lisps out her child-creed most confidently—
The same she learned at her mother's knee—
'He said: "Let the little ones come to me."'

Only seven years old when she died!
Seventy long years, yea, and more years still,
We have clambered and clung to the side—
She stands even now at the top of the hill,
Bright in the beams of the morning light!
Ours, at the best, is a starry night.
We toil on through the dust and the heat;
She sitteth calm at the Master's feet
Reading the truth of His lovelit face;
Answering Him back glad smile for smile.
We tremblingly shriek out for grace—'Lord! more grace!'
Dreading to meet His look all the while,
So spotted our souls, and moiled with sin.
She shews stainless without and within—
A snow-white soul in a robe like snow.
Weary, and wayworn, and sad we go,
Sorely doubting if, after our course be run,
Our life-lasting tourney well battled and done,
When the Judge stands up the awards to divide,
We shall be worthy to stand by her side,
Whose sword was ne'er fleshed, whose strength was ne'er tried—
Who was only seven years old when she died!

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THE SUBLIME SOCIETY OF BEEFSTEAKS.

THE sponsors of the famous convivial association, lately dissolved, after a merry existence of a hundred and thirty-four years, had good reasons for choosing a designation sufficiently strange to distinguish it from other societies of a similar character. The outer world, however, from the first ignored the long-winded title, and would call it the Beefsteak Club, thereby causing much unnecessary confusion. Only the other day, we were told by one of our daily instructors that the Sublime Society was the only London club that had ever permitted a woman to share its privileges and pleasures—the said woman being that sometime pet of the public, Margaret Woffington. The truth is, that the club of which the beautiful theatrical queen was enthroned president had nothing to do with London, but was attached to the Dublin Theatre-royal; indeed, it could hardly be called a club, seeing all expenses were defrayed by Manager Sheridan, who likewise invited the guests—generally peers and members of parliament who patronised the dramatic temple of which he was master. Victor says such weekly meetings were common to all theatres, it being a custom for the principal performers to dine together every Saturday, and invite 'authors and other geniuses' to partake of their hospitality.

If any such convivial society was entitled to be called *the* Beefsteak Club, it was certainly that described by Chetwynd as composed of the chief artists and great men of the nation, and alluded to by the *Spectator* when it remarks: 'The Beefsteak and October Clubs are neither of them averse to eating and drinking, if we may form a judgment of them from their respective titles.' Ned Ward declares it was started by some seceders from the Whiggish Kit-cat Club, desirous of proving substantial beef was as prolific a food for an English wit as pies and custards for a Kit-cat beau. Their first meeting-place was 'at the sign of the *Imperial Phiz*, a public-house in the Old Jewry, in repute for its steak-cookery and its two-threads.' The members elected an Irish comedian their providore or president; and to distinguish him from the rest, 'made him a knight of St Lawrence, and hung a silver gridiron about his neck by a green silk ribbon, as a badge of the dignity they had conferred upon him, that when he sang *Pretty Parrot*, he might thrum the bars of his new instrument, and mimic a haughty Spaniard serenading his donna with guitar and madrigal.' Ward owns they could not have chosen a better man, since none could boast a greater variety of qualifications for the promotion of becoming mirth, he being such a master of humour and gesticulation, that he could change his shape and mien, and put on any man's gesture and manner with wonderful exactness. This gift the president turned to the benefit of the club, by making it his practice to represent any absent member, thus insuring a full house, no one caring to be made a laughing-stock for his club companions. This Irish comedian was Richard Estcourt, a man counting among his friends such men as Pope, Steele, Parnell, and the Duke of Marlborough; while the general public esteemed him as one of the ornaments of the stage. Cibber, prompted perhaps by professional jealousy, calls him a languid, unaffecting actor; but owns at the same time that he was so unequalled a mimic that no man or woman could move or speak before him but he could carry their voice, look, mien, and motion instantly into another company. Steele praises him as the first mimic that ever gave the beauties as well as the deformities of his original; and so perfect was he in this way, that he even fell for the time into the way of thinking of the person he imitated. Estcourt died in 1712, having enlarged his acquaintances and shortened his days in his vocation as mine host of *The Bumper*.

Dr King, dedicating his *Art of Cookery* to the Beefsteak Club, writes:

> He that of honour and of mirth partakes,
> May be a fit companion o'er beefsteaks;
> His name may be to future times enrolled
> In Estcourt's book, whose gridiron 's framed with gold.

The book here mentioned was one in which the

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president entered every witty saying uttered at the table whereon the beef of Old England appeared, roasted, fried, broiled, and stewed, according to the various tastes of the diners. The club were not left long undisturbed: the boys of Merchant Taylors' School took it into their mischievous heads to assemble round the tavern doors upon club nights, and shout: 'Huzza, Beefsteak!' a tribute of admiration quite unappreciated by those it was intended to honour, who, 'not affecting popularity, and choosing rather to be deaf to all public flatteries, thought it an act of prudence to adjourn from thence to a place of obscurity, where they might feast knuckle-deep in luscious gravy, and enjoy themselves free from the noisy addresses of the young scholastic rabble; so that now (1745), whether they have healed the breach and are again returned into the Kit-cat community, or whether, like the Calves'-head Club, they remove from place to place to prevent discovery, I shall not presume to determine; but at present, like Oates's Army of Pilgrims in the time of the Plot, though they are much talked on, they are difficult to be found.'

How the Sublime Society of Beefsteaks, which abhorred the idea of being set down as a club, came to be founded is a matter of some little doubt. Edwards says: 'Mr Lambert was for many years principal scene-painter to the theatre at Covent Garden. Being a person of great respectability in character and profession, he was often visited, while at work in the theatre, by persons of the first consideration both in rank and talent. As it frequently happened that he was too much hurried to leave his engagements for his regular dinner, he contented himself with a beefsteak broiled upon the fire in the painting-room. In this hasty meal he was sometimes joined by his visitors, who were pleased to participate in the humble repast of the artist. The savour of the dish, and the conviviality of the accidental meeting, inspired the party with a resolution to establish a club, which was accordingly done, under the title of the Beefsteak Club, and the party assembled in the painting-room. The members were afterwards accommodated with a room in the playhouse, where the meetings were held for many years; but after the theatre was rebuilt, the place of assembly was changed to the *Shakspeare Tavern*, where the portrait of Mr Lambert, painted by Hudson, makes part of the decorations of the room in which the party meet.'

According to another story, the Society claimed for its founders the matchless Lun, the inventor and unrivalled exponent of English pantomime, and the most dashing and daring soldier of his age —Pope's friend and Marlborough's foe, equally at home conquering a province or courting an opera-singer—Mordaunt, Earl of Peterborough, who

> Shone in all climates like a star;
> In senates bold, and fierce in war;
> A land commandant and a tar.

The association was not so very incongruous. The sword of the harlequin warrior had wrought wellnigh as sudden and unexpected changes upon the world's stage as the wooden bat of the harlequin of harlequins effected upon a less mighty one. The tale goes that the earl was in the habit of popping in upon Rich when he was busy constructing his models and pantomimic properties, and 'who shall say,' as Mr Tom Taylor pertinently observes, 'that he did not invent some of Rich's most wonderful tricks and transformations, perhaps old as he then was, devise for harlequin some peculiarly daring leap, or altogether daring animation business?' One Saturday he staid so long that Rich's dinner-hour came round, and the latter duly laid his cloth, and set the gridiron over the fire to cook his modest steak. As his visitor shewed no signs of departing, the actor could but ask him to join him at his meal; and so enjoyable did fare and entertainment prove, that Peterborough promised to dine at the theatre again on the following Saturday, and bring a friend or two with him; and out of this simple piece of hospitality sprang the most successful assembly of good fellows ever formed.

Although it would be pleasanter to think the reverse, the probability is in favour of Edwards's account being the correct one, two circumstances telling heavily upon his side. First, the fact that the meetings of the Steaks were originally held at the theatre in which Lambert painted, instead of that of which Rich was manager; and secondly, the non-occurrence of the Earl of Peterborough's name in the list of the original members—the twenty-four being Lambert, Hogarth, Rich, John Thornhill, Lacy Ryan, Ebenezer Forrest, Robert Scott, Thomas Chapman, Dennis Delane, John Boson, Francis Triveton, Sir W. Saunderson, Richard Mitchell, Henry Smart, John Huggins, William Huggins, Edmund Taffnell, Thomas Salway, Charles Neale, Charles Latrobe, Alexander Gordon, Hugh Watson, Gabriel Hunt, and William Tathall. It must be confessed there are not many names known to fame among the two dozen. However it originated, it is certain their sublimities commenced their merry meetings in 1735, and spite of their professed contempt for it, they did not disdain to imitate the old Beefsteak Club in some matters. They had their record of *bon mots;* their president wore a silver gridiron pendent from an orange ribbon: and when Mr Justice Welsh filled the office he used to don a hat decorated with ribbons, something like that once worn by the so-called 'beef-eaters.' They had their insignia and their uniform too, the latter being a blue coat with red cape and cuffs, bearing buttons with the initials B. S. upon them. The motto of the Society was Steaks and Liberty; its dining hour five o'clock; its season from the first Saturday in November to the last in June; its fare beefsteaks hot from the gridiron, marrow pudding, and toasted cheese, washed down with the primest old port and the best of punch; with the accompaniments of song, jest, and uproarious fun—in short, the Steaks aimed at realising Johnson's definition of a club, and by all accounts succeeded.

The *Connoisseur* lamenting, in 1754, that roast beef is utterly banished from good society, exclaims: 'Our only hopes are in the clergy and in the Beefsteak Club. The former still preserve, and probably will preserve, the rectitude of their appetites, and will do justice to beef wherever they find it. The latter (who are composed of the most ingenious artists in the kingdom) meet every Saturday in a noble room at the top of Covent Garden Theatre, and never suffer any dish except beefsteaks to appear. These, indeed, are most glorious examples; but what, alas! are the weak endeavours of a few to oppose the daily inroads of fricassees and soup-maigres?' Another proof of the reputation the Society had achieved is presented in Walpole sneering at it: 'I scratched my name out

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of the Society of Antiquaries, and what was I the better? Lord Buchan chose me into his congregation of Wiseacres at Edinburgh! Nay, I have been called names; I have been styled in magazines *an ingenious and learned author!* now I am to be a Fellow of an Academy in Germany. I wish I do not live to be a member of a Beefsteak Club.' It is evident, too, that the Steaks are meant when he reports: 'The wicked affirm that very lately at a club with Mr Wilkes, held at the top of the playhouse in Drury Lane, Lord Sandwich talked so plainly that he drove two harlequins out of the room!'

At the top of the playhouse the Society continued until the theatre was burned down in 1808, when they had to bewail the destruction of their table service, fifteen hundred pounds' worth of old port, and, greatest loss of all, their archives; a loss, says a member of the period, 'the lovers of wit and pleasure have much to deplore, inasmuch as not only the names of many of the early members are irretrievably gone, but what is more to be regretted, some of their happiest effusions.' After this untoward accident, the Steaks found a temporary home at the *Bedford* in Covent Garden, until one of themselves, Mr Arnold, was able to welcome them to a permanent lodging at the English Opera-house, better known as the Lyceum Theatre, where they pursued the even tenor of their enjoyment, until another fire, in 1830, compelled them to seek their former place of refuge. When the theatre was rebuilt, the Society took possession of 'a little Escurial in itself, with doors, wainscoting, and roof of good old English oak, ornamented with gridirons as thickly as Henry VII.'s Chapel with the portcullis of its founder;' while Rich's own gridiron, that had defied the assaults of fire, adorned the ceiling of the chamber, looking down upon the busy cooks preparing the feast in sight of the feasters, but parted by a grating surmounted by the lines:

> If 'twere done, when 'tis done, then 'twere well
> It were done quickly.

Many of the Society's belongings were gifts, probably upon election. The Duke of Sussex gave two dozen water-plates and eight dishes; Lord Suffolk, a silver cheese-toaster; Sir John Boyd, six spoons; Barrington Bradshaw, a punch-ladle; Bolland, a cruet-stand: and so on. Everything that could be so distinguished was marked with a gridiron; even the table-cloths bore the homely blazon.

It would be singular if a society admitting statesmen, peers, lawyers, artists, actors, poets, playwrights, wits, and men of fashion, could not boast some celebrities. Unfortunately, no records exist enabling us to do the Steaks justice; but we may mention the notable names of Gay, Tickell, Aaron Hill, Arthur Murphy, Theophilus Cibber (the good-for-nothing husband of the great actress), Bonnel Thornton, Bubb Doddington, 'Leonidas' Glover, Hoadley, Hudson the portrait-painter, Jolly John Beard of Ranelagh renown, Crossdill (the first violoncello-player of his day), the two Colmans, Fox, Sheridan, Sheridan's brother-in-law (William Linley), and his long-suffering treasurer, Dunn. We are in doubt about Tom Moore, not knowing whether it was as member or guest that he engaged to meet Brougham and Morris at the Steaks, but broke his promise through staying too long at a prize-fight, that proved not altogether so horrid as he expected. Royalty figured at the select board in the persons of the Prince of Wales (for whose sake the number was increased by one) and his two brothers, the Dukes of Clarence and Sussex. Garrick was long a delighted and delighting sharer in these weekly jovialties. One evening, he was declaring how much his feelings would be hurt if he could not lay his hands upon a manuscript when the author demanded its return. Murphy exclaimed: 'A fig for your hypocrisy! You know, Davy, you mislaid my tragedy two months ago, and I have no doubt you have lost it. 'Yes,' answered Garrick; 'but you forget, you ungrateful dog, that I offered you more than its value. You might have had two manuscript farces in its stead!' Davy sometimes made himself ill with steaks and arrack-punch to follow, and upon one occasion was so loath to leave their company, that the gods of Drury Lane began to roar for Ranger. When he did obey the repeated summonses of his fellow-patentee, Dr Ford, the latter said: 'I think, David, considering the stake you and I have in this house, you might pay more attention to its business.' 'True, my friend,' responded the impenitent actor; 'but I was thinking of my steak in the other house.'

Wilkes writes to Churchill the poet: 'Your friends at the Beefsteaks inquired after you last Saturday with the greatest zeal, and it gave me no small pleasure that I was the person of whom the inquiry was made.' Wilkes (whose admission caused the retirement of Mr Justice Welsh) shocked the not particularly strait-laced fraternity by the presentation of a copy of his disreputable Essay, and was obliged thenceforth to stay away from their meetings; although when he went abroad, the Society made him an honorary member. His friend Churchill soon afterwards had to avoid expulsion by resignation, when his conduct to his wife became town-talk. The poet laid this to the door of Lord Sandwich—who had moved in parliament that Wilkes should be arrested—and revenged himself by portraying his quondam boon-companion as one who

> Wrought sin with greediness, and courted shame
> With greater zeal than good men seek for fame.

Strangely enough, before the year was out, 'Jemmy Twitcher' himself was expelled the Steaks for blasphemy. The same fate was suffered by John Kemble 'for his mode of conduct.' What his mode of conduct was is more than we know. One of the favourite butts for the wits of the club was Lord Eldon's secretary, Wilson, the lucky steward, solicitor, and residuary legatee of Lord Chedworth. He never heard the last of his visit to Paris, where he declared the *boulevards* were delicious eating, and to having called for a *paysanne* for his dinner. Recorder Richards, never absent except on gout days, was another source of fun. He took upon himself to pass sentence upon any rule-breakers. 'Having put on Garrick's hat, he proceeded to inflict a long wordy harangue upon the culprit, who often endeavoured, most unavailingly, to stop him. Nor was it possible to see when he meant to stop. But the imperturbable gravity with which he performed his office, and the fruitless writhings of the unlucky being on whom the shower of his rhetoric was discharged, constituted the amusement of the scene.'

It was the custom for the president to give the

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signal for raising the curtain before the kitchen exactly as the clock struck five. At nine, he vacated his seat, the new occupant of the chair becoming the mark at which every one aimed the arrows of his tongue. A city alderman was once so badgered, that he exclaimed: 'Would to Heaven I had another vice-president, so that I had a gentleman opposite to me.' 'Why should you wish any such thing?' cried Cobb, John Company's secretary: 'you cannot be more opposite to a gentleman than you are at present!' Sir John Hippisley, who Windham said was very near being a clever man, had a curious fancy for visiting great criminals. When Patch lay awaiting execution for the murder of Mr Bligh, Sir John saw him in Newgate, and tried to extract a confession; but he only got a promise that all he had to be revealed should be revealed on the scaffold. Sir John kept the appointment, and attracted the attention of the crowd by his conference with Patch. An old countrywoman mistook Hippisley for the murderer, and departed before the ceremony was over, her curiosity being quite satisfied. A few days afterwards, she happened to run against Sir John in Cheapside, and screaming out: 'It's Patch, it's Patch! I saw him hanged!' fainted away. This delicious incident found its way to the Steaks; and at their next meeting, a mock-inquest was held, the jury ultimately finding that Sir John *was* Patch. The victim of mistaken identity did not care to face the humour of the Steaks, and resigned rather than do it. One of the best of presidents was the Duke of Norfolk, who liked anything in the way of good living, and plenty of it. He used to discuss a fish-dinner at the Piazza tavern, preparatory to his Saturday repast, at which he would dispose of three or four pounds of steak, and finish off with a salad of beet-root and onions. It was to his liberality, excited by the after-dinner eloquence of Kemble, that Captain Morris, the loving lyrist of the 'sweet shady side of Pall-Mall,' owed the ease of his latter days. The captain was the most constant of Steaks, never allowing anything to keep him from his post as punchmaker. For the Steaks he wrote his best songs, and to the Steaks he sang them, and won the smile of the gay and the nod of the grave. In 1831, he resigned the laureateship of the Society, and bade a graceful adieu to the world, in which few men had found more delight and comfort, singing—

In the close of Life's chapter, ye high favoured few,
Take my Muse's last tribute—this painful adieu!
Take my wish, that your bright social circle on earth
For ever may flourish in concord and mirth;
For the long years of joy I have shared at your board,
Take the thanks of my heart—where they long have been stored;
And remember, when Time tolls my last passing knell,
The old bard dropped a tear, and then bade you farewell!

Four years later, however, he revisited the scenes of his happiest hours, to receive a handsome silver bowl as a token of remembrance; and the ninety-year old lyrist acknowledged the gift with an appropriate stave. He lived, cheery to the last, for three years more, and justified Curran's prophecy: 'Die when you will, Charles, you will die in your youth.'

For some reason or other, the Sublime Beefeaters resolved to commit 'happy dispatch;' and the deed was consummated upon the 7th of April in the present year, when the fatal hammer dispersed far and wide all the goods and chattels of the most successful convivial society ever established. As might be expected, fancy prices were the order of the day. One punch-ladle, dating from the year 1735, brought L.14, 5s.; some of the spoons reached over 13s. an ounce; and a hunting-knife, attributed to Cellini, went for L.84. The port fetched from 93s. to 95s. a dozen; while some of the wine-glasses reached 34s. per pair. George IV.'s chair was sold for L.20, that of the Duke of Sussex for the same; Earl Dalhousie's went for L.14, and Lord Saltoun's for the like sum. Morris's chair fetched L.9, 10s., and his portrait just a sovereign less. The bust of Wilkes, rather the worse for wear, was knocked down for 22 guineas. Garrick's hat went cheap at 15s., considering two pewter quart pots cost the buyer above L.4. The presidential chair fetched L.7, 10s.; the president's badge, L.23, 10s. 6d.; and, to conclude, a well-known firm, to whom the travelling public owe some gratitude, became the owners of the gridiron of gridirons at an outlay of L.5, 15s.

A COUNTY FAMILY.

CHAPTER XI.—INSULA IN INSULÂ.

WITHIN ten hours' sail by steamer from Southampton, lies one of the most charming islands in the world. Though it acknowledges English rule, it is known, except through the geography books, but to few Englishmen; and it is so small, that one can scarcely see it upon the map. So small, and yet so grand. Huge cliffs still form its walls, albeit they are undermined and tunnelled everywhere, for the very entrails of the little isle are devoured by the raging seas. Six days out of seven (or so), it is set in a caldron of boiling waves; no boat can reach it, no boat can leave it. But on the seventh, as on some ocean Sabbath, it reposes calmly on a far-stretching deep, of Mediterranean hue. In summer-time (as it now happens to be), there is sometimes 'a week of Sundays.' But even in summer, and when the sea—which on the most windless day never ceases to hiss and foam immediately about it—is comparatively calm, no stranger may land on this enchanted isle. It has indeed one tiny harbour, but you might sail round and round, and never hit upon it; and when you found it, you would be no better off, were it not for the skill of man, that has worked a passage through the semicircle of solid rock into the heart of the island.

Across the harbour is built a break-water, very small but very strong, which leaves a narrow passage for such small craft as may venture to enter in. Even this snug haven is no shelter from the white malice of the ocean in its winter wrath; for a sailing-packet that had taken refuge there was once carried right over the sea-wall, forty feet in height, and then cast back again in the same perilous fashion, as it were in majestic disdain. It is the isle itself, and not mere ships (of which the sea has a plenty in those parts), that the waves are wild for; and they will have it some day, as they swore to do thousands of years ago. It is said, I know not with what truth, that at one time this dot, this atom of land,

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was the extremity of a promontory from yonder foreign coast a score of miles away, and that the winds and storms have helped these foam-tipped thunderers to all the rest except this fragment, around which they leap and rage, and beneath which they roar and grumble, and above which (and right across it) they spout their sheeted spray.

It is no wonder they covet it; for the aforesaid tunnel from the harbour leads directly into Eden. From a scene of fury and foam, you step at once into quiet fairyland—a region of dell, and pasture, and shrubbery, and where, if the trees are small and scanty, the fuchsias are many, and, in bulk and luxuriance, trees. Nature made a garden here, with the original intention, as it would seem, of admitting not even an Adam and an Eve. But human beings got into it somehow, even before the tunnel era. There have been people on the little isle for many an age. The Romans 'dropped their money' upon it in the same reckless way that distinguished them elsewhere, so I suppose *they* must have got there. It is difficult even for modern folks to spend money in the island in any other way. There are no diseases, and therefore no doctors' bills (or perhaps *vice versâ*). Old age and drowning are the only complaints to which the inhabitants are heirs. There has never been a murder nor suicide in all that 'right little tight little island.' The uplands, bright with flowering shrubs, are swept by life-giving breezes; the wooded dells (for they are too small to be called dales) have no damp save the spray of the sea. Food is cheap, and there is no need for fashionable attire; hence it happens, though the people are poor, they have enough, and are contented—that is, the aboriginal inhabitants—but then there are (sometimes) others whose company might be spared. It is whispered that now and then this Elysium is visited by certain gentry, who are not so much in search of the sublimities of nature, as of a spot which is (in a general way) out of the jurisdiction of the police.

The government of the place is paternal; the seigneur who rules it is literally a feudal lord; and in case of any crime being committed by a vassal, such as over-populating the place, he can 'deport' the offender. It is even asserted that, if there be reason to suspect that such a misdemeanour may ensue, he has power to forbid the bans of a young couple; so that if they are bent on matrimony, they must emigrate elsewhere, where there is 'room and verge enough' to bring up a family. The accommodation is of course limited; and if once the population should outgrow their means of subsistence, what is to become of them all when the winds and waves forbid the arrival of provisions? There is a terrific example before these good folks in the rabbits which throng their little territory. No other crime that ever I heard of has been committed in this marine Eden. There are no rogues. Your portmanteau is left on the beach, without the least fear of its being appropriated as flotsam or jetsam. There is not even a public-house to get drunk in, so that all the vices have, as it were, to be imported; and it is not to be denied that in this great commercial era this has been done. With sherry at a shilling a bottle, and French brandy at two, the temptation is considerable, and especially to those individuals at whose existence I have hinted, who occasionally resort to the place for privacy, to escape the glare of Policeman X.'s bull's-eye. These drink to drown Care; and if they fail, it must be because he can swim, for they certainly take enough to drown him though he were cubits high.

The excellent *curé* of the place has less influence over these *mauvais sujets* than he might (perhaps) otherwise have, from the fact that he only speaks Norman-French (which is the tongue of the isle), and they for the most part only Cockney English. It may be asked by the sentimental: But does not the influence of the Beautiful and the Grand (and a number of other adjectives with capital letters) affect these scoundrels for good? Well-meaning but speckled* Enthusiast—no. The Italian brigand is none the better for the mountains that surround his home, or the flawless firmament that stretches over it; and marine scenery is equally inefficacious in similar cases.

When I said there was no public-house in the island, I should have added that there are, nevertheless, establishments for the accommodation of the stranger who procures from a neighbouring and larger isle his own spirituous liquors, or is content to do without them. Here is one of them; a small white farm-house (only without a farm), of two stories high, and with eight good-sized windows, that open on a natural lawn; there is no ordered garden, but the hedge that hems the little domain is of wild fuchsia; and there is a shrubbery, through which a tinkling stream runs, whose music is suddenly cut off by the sandy cliff, down which it softly falls some sixty feet into an enchanted bay—softly, so as not, in this calmest of August mornings, to disturb Thetis, who is basking on the shore, or, haply, Aphrodite, fresh and pink from the foam of the almost noiseless wave. The long blue coast, so clearly cut against the sky to eastward, is farther than it looks, so that she need not fear human eyes, even though aided by a Dolland's glasses; nor would mortal dare to peep at her over these dangerous overhanging cliffs, rich with grass and lichen, and with the heather on their topmost summits purpling in the sun.

But, alas! this was in the Golden Age, whereto the first sight of this bay transported me, and to which the recollection has carried me again. There are no goddesses now, nor even nymphs; which is quite as well under the circumstances, for there is a gentleman here, of middle age and objectionable appearance, who has evidently been bathing. If cleanliness is next to godliness, there is nevertheless, in some cases, a considerable interval; I am even inclined to believe that the proverb has done some harm, in persuading folks who patronise early 'dips' that they need not also be religious. The subject of our present observation—Mr William Roberts—for instance, has undoubtedly bathed, but I should question his having said his prayers. He is lying half-dressed upon the sand, with a short black pipe in his mouth, and an expression of countenance the reverse of devotional. 'A month more,' he soliloquises, looking spitefully round upon the sapphire sea, and the cliffs beginning to glow in the growing sun-rays—'a month more in this confounded hole.' From this remark, it may be gathered that the speaker was neither a painter nor a poet, which so far narrows the field of inquiry; but it is still difficult

* 'The speckled sort are the most credulous of the species.'—*Buffon.*

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to guess to what calling he belongs. Mere appearance is not always to be trusted in such a matter, but he does not *look* like a clergyman; and, moreover, his attire—so far as it has at present advanced, which includes a red shirt and a pair of blue trousers—is scarcely clerical. Even if a white tie should lie among that heap of clothes which forms his pillow, it would not redeem him to that extent. Viewed from a distance, he really forms a charming bit of colour—quite carries off the landscape, as the artists say; but, as you get nearer, even the landscape, beautiful as it is, fails to carry *him* off. Cruel eyes, which shoot sidelong when he is addressed; a low retreating brow; and thin white lips, foully mar a face, which would otherwise be handsome, and make him, as it were, a blot upon that fair scene. What is he, and what does he there, insulting bountiful Natufe with his ungrateful looks and his foul words? He is not drinking her health—this Trinculo of a fairer isle than Prospero's—I 'll warrant, though again and again he puts yonder brandy-flask to his lips. The fact is, that Mr William Roberts, although a powerfully built fellow enough, feels, notwithstanding his dip, a little shaky of a morning without this stimulus, under which it is satisfactory to note that he revives. He rises, yawns, and stretches himself, and still half-clothed, saunters down to the very margin of the sea. It is at the lowest of a low spring-tide, and much that the sea at most times hides beneath her dainty fringes is now visible: smooth breadths of silver sand, set with many a sparkling shell; and here a splendid star-fish, like a Catherine-wheel without the rim; and there a glittering mass, which is a living jelly. Vast specimens of what may possibly form mermaids' chignons, sea-weeds of all sorts, strew the shore, or hang from the treacherous rocks, which are now left bare. Upon these, our new acquaintance, on his listless stroll, occasionally slips and slides, when his language is such as would shock Mr Gosse, or any other admirer of the Common Objects of the Sea-shore.

Mr Roberts anathematises all these candidates for an aquarium under the generic but unscientific term of 'slime;' and when a shell prettier than its fellows attracts his attention, he manifests his interest in the dainty treasure by scrunching it beneath his heel; or when he comes across a star-fish larger and more radiant than common, he kicks it limb from limb—in default (one would say, to judge by his evil looks) of something human that would feel pain more. It is evident that this gentleman's temper, perhaps not naturally angelic, has of late been sadly 'tried,' and that it has broken down under the ordeal. 'A month more,' he once more soliloquises, 'of kicking one's heels in this confounded island! One might just as well have been born a savage, as live as I have been living during the last year. Nothing to see but salt water, nothing to hear but salt water—and what an infernal row it can make! nothing to eat but what comes out of the salt water, and nothing to drink'—he took out his now empty brandy-flask, and surveyed it with a reproachful air—'yes, nothing to drink but salt water. Then, when the time does come to get away, it will be the windy season, and I may be kept here for weeks by the salt water. I am not going to trust myself in one of those cockle-shells of boats that they use in these parts—no, not if I know it, unless the sea is as smooth as a duck-pond. Why, it was just by that rock yonder that I saw two go down only last March; it was more exciting than a play; six men and a woman, and all drowned. I only wish that brute Richardson had been one of them. The idea of his giving me only half the money I had so richly earned, and refusing to pay the other half until the last day I was to be here, just to make himself certain of my remaining, and not coming home to trouble him, I suppose, the selfish, unfeeling scoundrel! I have a precious good mind to peach upon him yet. It 's all very well for him to say it could do me no good to have him lagged as well as myself; but it would have done me a deal of good. One of the bitterest morsels I have had in my mouth these five years was the thought, that that villain got off scot-free when I was punished, and has been living in clover ever since. But once I get the rest of that little consideration paid up, *I* 'll worry him; I 'll pay him out for keeping me in this cursed place until the last minute. If he couldn't have helped the other thing, he could have helped *that*. Pay him out? aye, it shall go hard if I don't pay out everybody!'

In this misanthropical frame of mind, Mr William Roberts proceeded to complete his toilet, and then to climb the cliff-path that led by the side of the waterfall aforesaid into the garden-ground about the inn.

On the lawn in front of the house stood a woman, middle-aged, but with some traces of beauty about her still; her hazel eyes would have been very handsome were it not for the timidity of their expression; and her features would have been well shaped, but that they were so wan. Though she did not look like a lady, the smile which came into her face as she caught sight of Mr Roberts was very sweet, and her voice sounded gentle and tender as she called out in indifferent English: 'My dear Bill, how late you are! The coffee is getting quite cold.'

'Then take care it gets warm again, that 's all,' was the growling and unreasonable response.

The smile remained, but flickering indecisively, as though half afraid to stay upon her lips, and the voice was troubled and timid as it continued: 'You have been more than an hour, Bill; I almost began to think you were never coming.'

'And devilish sorry you 'd have been, I daresay, if I never had come,' answered the man gruffly. 'Oh, yes, *I* know.' She had come forward to meet him, and tried to put her hand on his shoulder lovingly, but he fenced it off. 'You are like dogs, you women, uncommon affectionate to those you are afraid of.'

'I was not afraid of you when I married you, Bill,' said she reproachfully, but still with a tenderness in her tone.

'Was you not? Then that only shews you must have been a most owdacious young fool. But you ain't a fool *now*, at least in that respect, I reckon. You learned who was to be master *precious soon*;' and Mr Roberts for the first time that morning indulged himself with a burst of merriment.

'I did indeed, Bill,' sighed the woman wearily; and turning from him to hide her tears, she led the way into the house.

CHAPTER XII.—MR ROBERTS AT HOME.

It was a pleasant chamber enough, if somewhat scantily furnished, where Mr and Mrs Roberts sat

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at breakfast; and the table was plentifully supplied not only with well-cooked fish, but various potted meats and preserved delicacies. The room and its accessories, indeed, would have been pronounced by any impartial looker-on as much superior to what are commonly used by those in the same station in life as Mr and Mrs Roberts. Yet one of the pair, at least, seemed greatly dissatisfied with what was provided for him; his language to the fried soles was shocking, and the coffee was consigned to a much warmer place than the kitchen before he sent it out thither to be heated. But after he had eaten and drunk, although his appetite (by reason, perhaps, of his previous devotion to the brandy) was by no means so good as his friends might have wished it to be, Mr Roberts grew somewhat mollified, and by the time he had lit his pipe and smoked a little, could be addressed, as the partner of his fortunes was well aware, without dread of immediate personal violence. As this favourable opportunity never lasted long, nor recurred before the same time on the morrow, it was highly necessary, if his lady had any wish for conversation, to take advantage of it; and she did so upon the present occasion.

'The packet will be here at ten o'clock or so, my dear, our landlady tells me. It has been sighted an hour ago. Perhaps it will bring us some letters.'

'Who *wants* letters? I don't,' was the discouraging rejoinder.

'But it is so very long, Bill, since we have heard anything from—from your folks at home.'

'For my part, I hope it will be longer. Who *wants* to hear? say I again. What is the good of hearing, unless, indeed, it was to say that the old man was dead!'

'O Bill, how can you talk so!'

'Ah, yes, that's mighty fine. You can afford to be shocked, *you* can, because, you lucky slut, you never had a father, leastways as I ever heard on. I say, in your case, there never was an old chap of the age of Methuselah living on and on, as though Death had forgotten him, and standing between his only son and his expectations. Father indeed! A nice father he's been to *me*. Why, he wouldn't even get into the witness-box, and swear me off before the beaks, as he might ha' done, and prevented all what happened afterwards, including my being moped to death on this precious island.'

'And yet, dear, I am sure we have never lived half so well, or been half so comfortable, and free from cares and fears, as we have been here.'

'And who have you got to thank for *that* but me?' was the inconsistent reply. 'Wasn't it my doing? Haven't I paid for it not only with money earned, but with my skin?'

'Indeed, dear Bill, I do think I suffered almost as much as you, while you were being so pun—so ill-used.'

'Do you? Then all I can say is, you are most confoundedly mistaken. Bread and water, and hard work—not to mention being cooped up within stone walls—are a deal worse, let me tell you, than any hurt done to the feelings. I wish they had tried to hurt *my* feelings, instead of what they did do. I wish it had been my father as they put in quod, instead of me; and then you would have seen how patiently I would have put up with it.'

'I know it must have been bad, Bill. My heart bled for you all the time; it did indeed. And I do hope—oh, I do so hope—that you may never again do anything as may bring you into such trouble again!'

'If you go on talking like that,' muttered Mr Roberts with an ugly look, 'I shall bring myself into trouble with a vengeance, and that upon your own account, you white-faced fool. Ain't it bad enough to have this misfortune thrown in my face by other people, or, at least, of running the risk of having it thrown, wherever I am, wherever I go, without *you* doing it?'

'Then why not stay here, Bill?' interrupted the woman, clasping her hands, and speaking very hurriedly. 'No one knows it here, no one ever can know it. We have enough and to spare for a long time to come to keep us as we are living now; and who knows but that before it is all gone, those expectations of which you speak may turn to realities. I will work for you, slave for you. The seigneur's lady told me only yesterday that my lace-work, if I should ever need to sell it, would fetch a great deal among some great folks she knows. Let us stay here, where you are safe, and out of temptation. Oh, never let us go back again to where all is suspicion, and fear, and danger, and one never knows what shame and sorrow the morrow may bring forth. We have never been so well off as we are here. What a pleasant house this is to dwell in; and only think how cheap in this place are the things you value most—more, I sometimes think, even than me—the brandy, and the wine, and the tobacco.'

'There is something in *that*,' observed Mr Roberts moodily, 'although all the rest is twaddle, except about the lace-work. I don't forbid you to sell anything for what it will fetch, only you must say it's for a charity, and not for ourselves. It will never do to let folks here suppose that I am anything else than a gentleman living upon his independent means, as indeed I am.'

As he sat with his feet lodged on the corner of the table, squirting tobacco-juice upon the carpet, and occasionally using a fork instead of a toothpick, the islanders (including the seigneur's lady) must have been insular indeed if they assigned to Mr William Roberts the social rank which he thus arrogated to himself; but it was plain that the speaker entertained no doubt of their credulity.

If Mrs Roberts had had a little more of that wisdom so often attributed to her sex, and which the serpent, perhaps, gave to Eve in not excessive compensation for damages, she would have permitted her husband to chew undisturbed that cud of reflection for which he was now obviously inclined, and left the seed of her suggestion alone to germ and ripen of itself. But she imprudently renewed her solicitations.

'Dear Bill,' she recommenced, 'you cannot think how I wish I could persuade you not to leave this place until some really better fortune smiles upon you. We have nothing to complain of here'——

'What!' broke in the man impatiently, 'nothing to complain of? It is all very well for *you*, who have got me all to yourself, to cozen and make a fool of, but it's not well for *me*. Why, I have not a soul to speak to from morning to night. Even if there is anybody worth speaking to, which I deny,

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they can jabber nothing else but French. Do you think I am one of those idiots who can stare at the sky and sea all day, and want no other society than gulls and kittiwakes, like that painter who was here last month!—*You?* Yes, of course, I have *you*, who, however, are neither so young nor so pretty as you used to be.—There, you need not cry, you ninny; it's no fault of yours, of course, and I don't say but what you are well enough in your way; only a man wants a man to talk to him, and to smoke with him, and to drink with him. You are no *company* to a long-headed fellow like me—how should you be?'

'I am very sorry, Bill,' replied the woman sadly; 'I do my best. There was a time when you said you could be happy with me anywhere, and I am sure this place, of all others that I have seen or read of, seems made to be happy in.' And she turned towards the window, as though to gaze upon the fair prospect it afforded, or perhaps to hide her tears.

'I wonder where, now, did this woman pick up that sort of nonsense?' observed Mr William Roberts, soliloquising. 'Not from her mother, if all tales I have heard of her be true; and not from Jem Dean, the trainer, who brought her up. I wonder whether he *was* her uncle? He ought to have been something nearer, since he gave her a hundred pounds as a wedding dowry; and yet she never could have inherited such notions from him. Well, I suppose I must humour her a bit, so long as we are shut up alone together in this wretched hole.—Look here, Bess; I am not angry with you, you know; why should I be? It's only that I felt a little moped.'

'I am glad it was only that, Bill,' returned she quietly, but still keeping her face averted.

'Of course it was.—Now, don't be in the sulks: remember what my mother told you, that you would always find me a good husband, if only you kept a smiling face. But I do hate *black looks*, and especially in one's wife.'

Mrs Roberts sighed; and turning from the window came towards her husband with the smile required. 'Your mother was always very fond of you, Bill, and I am afraid she spoiled you just a little.'

'My father made up for that,' was the sullen reply, 'for he never had a civil word to say to me; and as for the old woman, she seems to have got over her extreme devotion to her offspring, since she has not written to me for near a twelvemonth.'

'Well, Bill, you must allow you don't give much encouragement to your correspondents, as you never answer their letters.'

'Why should I, when they 've got nothing inside of 'em? I answered Richardson's sharp enough when he sent me half that money instead of the whole of it—curse him! What 's the good of such letters? Why, the very last from the old woman had nothing else in it than the news that Ellen was likely to marry that stuck-up fellow John Denton, as if I wanted to hear anything about her, and much less *that*. I hate her, and I hate the man!'

'Why should you hate poor Ellen, Bill?' returned Mrs Roberts with some faint show of excitement in her tone. 'I 'm sure she has never knowingly done you any harm.'

'Knowingly or not, she *has* done me harm, and it 's my belief she 's a precious cunning minx. Why has my father taken such a fancy to her, instead of to me? It is true that I do not care a snap of the fingers whether he cottons to me or not, since nothing can possibly come of it as matters stand; but in case he ever came into that property about which he is always dreaming, it would be a pretty thing if that slip of a girl should get a great slice of it: you would see the harm of it then, quick enough, I suppose.'

'I am sure, Bill, in such a case, and provided that there was plenty left for you, I should never grudge her what she got, for she has been a real good friend to us, and always did her best to reconcile her grandfather with you. Indeed, but for her, we should never have been married at all.'

'And how do I know—supposing, for the sake of argument, that our marriage has turned out the success you seem to take for granted—that that was not all a scheme of hers, to set my father against me for good and all?'

'A scheme, Bill! Why, Nelly was but a child when she persuaded her grandfather, with her pretty artless ways, to give his consent to our wedding; and if it was a scheme, your mother was also concerned in it, and I don't suppose you would impute any evil motive to her?'

'Well, I don't suppose she *meant* any harm,' returned Mr Roberts with a sneer, 'although she may have *done* harm for all that.'

'In getting you married to me, William?'

'I didn't say so, though you may wear it if the cap fits. You seem most uncommon cantankerous this morning. All that I intended to observe was, that I don't believe Miss Ellen is such an innocent dove as you paint her.'

'She was wonderful kind and good to me—kinder even than your mother—when you were in trouble, Bill, that 's all I 've got to say.'

'You 're wise then, ma'am; for you have already said more than enough. When I observe, "I hate this man, or this woman"—for which, too, I happen to have good reasons—I do not wish to hear their virtues descanted upon. For the future, understand that, if you please.'

There was a long pause. Then, in a tone which was intended to be propitiatory, Mr Roberts observed: 'Didn't you say the packet would be coming in about ten o'clock, Bess? I think I shall take a stroll down to the harbour.'

The change of voice, even though it was but the alteration from downright menace to bare civility, called up the colour in the woman's cheeks as she caught up his straw-hat, with anxious eagerness to please, and placed it upon his head. Mr Roberts nodded in gracious acknowledgment of this service. 'I daresay you 'd like to come with me yourself?' growled he reluctantly.

'Indeed—indeed, I should, Bill,' cried she joyfully. 'We have not been out for a walk together for weeks, and it 's such a beautiful day! I will not keep you two minutes while I put on my bonnet.' And off she ran up-stairs.

'She ought to go on with that lace-work,' muttered Mr William Roberts discontentedly. 'If she really can get money for it, every hour she wastes is a dead loss to me. I am afraid I am spoiling Mrs W. R. with these sort of treats. But, however, it 's only once and away; and I 'll see that she works all the harder.' The sense of this excessive indulgence of Mrs W. R.'s fancy seemed

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presently, however, to affect his temper. 'Come, be quick, can't you! I'm not going to wait here all day,' bellowed he from the foot of the stairs; and with that he lounged out of the house alone, leaving his wife to follow him.

COMETS.

A good many of our readers will be inclined to think that we know already quite enough about comets, and may as well put them aside as thoroughly explored and used up; and without doubt we have extended our acquaintance with them very considerably within the last one or two hundred years. We never think of being frightened at them now, or dream of questioning their having as good right to appear as any of the planets within the limits of our system. We know that they move about the sun, as we do, though with a difference; for as the earth and other planets move in ellipses, hardly distinguishable from circles, with the sun in the focus, almost coincident with the centre, in the cometary orbits, the sun is so far from the centre, that for a large part of their course, it may be for thousands of years, many comets are out of sight and out of mind with all of us; and when they do approach us and the sun, they accomplish their little transactions in our neighbourhood in a few weeks, or even days, and then are off again millions and billions of miles into space. But there is one question connected with comets which is still as far as ever from being answered—that is, how they are constructed, what kind of material they are made of, and especially whence arise those singular appendages called tails, which to the vulgar eye are the most remarkable feature about them. To understand a little of this difficulty, let us briefly call attention to some of the many surprising feats which they have accomplished with these tails of theirs. Take, for instance, the great comet of 1680, which had the advantage of being seen by Newton. This comet astonished everybody by darting out in the space of two days a tail which covered nearly half the visible heavens, or a length of twenty million leagues; at one time, indeed, it occupied forty-one million leagues, or a distance much greater than that of the earth from the sun. The tail of the comet of 1769 extended sixteen million leagues, and that of the comet of 1811 thirty-six million leagues. Newton's comet, it was known, would have to pass so near the sun in getting round him, that apprehensions were felt for its safe return; but it accomplished the whole business in about two hours, bringing its tail safe behind it; that is to say, having whisked this enormous appendage through half a complete circle in this incredibly short time.

It is needless to dwell here upon the numerous varieties and peculiarities in the lengths and positions of the tails of different comets; it will suffice to say, that in a general way the telescopic aspect is that of a quantity of vapour escaping from the nucleus towards the sun, and then carried directly behind the comet, as if by a repulsive force emanating from the sun, sometimes for a distance of myriads of leagues, thus forming the tail. Hence, in whatever direction the comet is moving, the tail is turned away from him, the furthest end being curved backwards, just as a flexible rod or feather would be if whirled rapidly round one extremity. Now, the great difficulty lies in conceiving the possible constitution of a body which can deport itself in the way we have been describing. We should imagine that it must sweep away planets in its wild gyrations. We hardly regard it as ridiculous that Whiston should have gravely maintained that it was by a whisk of one of these tails that the deluge was brought about, and calculated the particular comet which caused that catastrophe. However, everything goes to prove that these comets are huge impostors—head and tail alike—and are the most vapoury, windy bodies conceivable; so much so, that it is no exaggeration to say that the tail, with all its millions and billions of miles, might, if properly packed up and stowed away, travel by a continental passenger-train, and cost nothing in the way of extra luggage. This has been long known; and Sir John Herschel sees no difficulty in conceiving that the tail of a great comet, as, for instance, that of 1680, with its twenty million of leagues, might weigh only a few pounds, or even ounces. This tenuity of constitution is proved in many ways: partly by the disturbances and deviations caused in a comet's motion by the approach to any other body; and partly again, by the fact that stars have been seen to shine with undiminished lustre, alike through their heads and tails—stars which would be utterly obscured by a few feet of ordinary terrestrial mist. But, granting any amount of tenuity, it is hard to conceive such an extended mass whirled half round in two hours, and retaining its continuity. Sir John Herschel, therefore, ventured upon a conception involving the total absence of matter altogether—suggesting the hypothesis of a negative shadow; and an original thinker, speculating upon the last big comet of 1858, announced the discovery in the papers that comets were worlds on fire, most probably suffering the punishment of their wickedness; and that the light proceeding from the conflagration was invisible where the sun's rays penetrated, but was seen in the shadow cast by the head, thus producing the tail—an idea involving, among other absurdities, the necessity of all the planets appearing with black tails behind them.

But this conception of a negative shadow exactly coincides with the recent suggestion of Professor Tyndall, which we wish to lay before our readers. To make the theory intelligible, it is necessary to preface it by some short explanatory matter. We know, by every-day experience, that the solar beams bring to us light and heat; and we have hardly less constant experience, in the thousands of photographs which are hourly produced among us, of the chemical properties possessed by the same

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beams. The sun's rays come to us laden with light, heat, and the chemical power which is called by the learned *actinism*. In a general way, these qualities co-exist, so that every body exposed to the sun's rays is simultaneously lighted, warmed, and actinised (if we may be allowed to coin this last word). But it is easy to separate these rays, and get one of the actions apart from the others. If we make a small hole in the shutter of a darkened room, and through it admit the sun's light, a circular, or, to speak more correctly, an elliptical patch of light will be seen upon the floor, in the straight line produced joining the sun's centre with the aperture. If we place our hand there, it will feel warmed; and on a plate properly prepared, photographic action would be recognised. The rays of light, caloric, and actinism are, in this case, travelling on in friendly company. But interpose before the aperture a piece of yellow glass bounded by parallel planes, and the elliptical patch of light will be found as before, but yellow, instead of white, and light and heat will be found still to co-exist within it, though not to the same extent and in the same proportion; while the actinic influence will have almost entirely disappeared, the rays producing it having been absorbed by the glass. By similar treatment, the hot rays and the light rays might be intercepted respectively. The separation may be effected in a different way by interposing a glass prism before the aperture; when this is done, the elliptical patch of light expands into a coloured line—the red being at one end, and the violet at the other; almost all the heat being found at the red, and the actinism at the violet extremity. By these simple illustrations we may see how the different agencies, light, heat, and actinism, though generally travelling on together in the solar beams, are really distinct and capable of separation. Up to this point we have been dealing with what has long been well known. But very recently, Professor Tyndall has discovered that if a glass tube be charged with certain perfectly transparent vapours—those, for example, of nitrite of amyl or iodide of allyl—and the electric light be thrown upon it, the effect is the immediate condensation of the vapour, and the formation of a cloud. This condensation is produced by the chemical rays, which are themselves absorbed in passing through the vapour, the cloud being of course rendered visible by the light rays, which, as well as the heat rays, are in themselves incapable of producing the effect just now described. Professor Tyndall also discovered that when he had, by certain refinements, with which we need not now trouble our readers, reduced the amount of transparent vapour in the tube to a mass which he has estimated at many million times less than that of the air in which it hung, a visible cloud was still formed as before by the action of the electric light, but of such excessive tenuity as to be incapable of dimming the weakest light when viewed through it—the flame of a candle, for instance, shining through it as clearly as in a vacuum. Hereupon, the thought struck him that he had before him an exact illustration of that spiritual texture of comets spoken of above, and a little more consideration led him to the theory which we are now about to give almost in his own words: That a comet is composed of vapour decomposable by solar light, the visible head and tail being an actinic cloud arising from such decomposition: that while the beams of the sun comprise heat, light, and chemical rays, the last alone form the cloud, while the first tend to bring the mist back again to the condition of transparent vapour: that thus two antagonistic powers are in action, and that the state of things at any instant, and at any point in the mass, is determined by the prevalence of one or other of these two powers: that the head and nucleus absorb all, or nearly all, of the calorific rays, so that in the part of the mass screened by the head, the cloud when formed is not again vaporised, thus accounting for the position and appearance of the tail; and inasmuch as it has been proved experimentally that the decomposition of the vapour may either be made to take place slowly or instantaneously along the whole beam, we thus escape the difficulty arising from the supposition of the projection of matter with the enormous velocity hitherto required to account for the rapid and extensive development of the tail; while the tail being no longer, on this supposition, composed of the same matter, but of a succession of new matter, across which the line from the sun to the head produced successively passes as the comet moves round in its orbit, we avoid the supposition of the stupendous whisking of the tail which has hitherto proved so great a difficulty: again, that the old tail, as it ceases to be screened by the nucleus, is dissipated by the hot rays, whence the bending towards the end of the tail, which arises from the small though finite time taken by the hot rays to travel along the whole length of this tail: and finally, that as a temporary advantage may occasionally be gained by the actinic over the hot rays, even in localities unscreened by the head and nucleus, we may account in this way for those temporary and unusual streamers which sometimes are seen directed towards the sun. Professor Tyndall further expresses his belief that there may be comets composed of vapour undecomposable by the sun's rays, and therefore invisible, through which the earth may have passed without our knowledge; and states his conviction that a few ounces of iodide of allyl vapour would suffice to produce an actinic cloud equal in size and brightness to Donati's comet, which astonished and delighted us all eleven years ago.

If these speculations are sound, and there really is nothing at first sight to suggest the contrary, the history of our knowledge of comets supplies us with one of the most instructive illustrations of the inroads of science upon ignorance and superstition. Not many hundred years ago, comets were regarded with a mixture of awe and wonder, their appearances and disappearances being equally inexplicable. Sometimes they were hailed as the souls of departed great ones, and sometimes deprecated as the messengers of divine wrath. From Newton's time onward these views disappeared. It was found that whatever else they may be, comets were at anyrate ordinary matter, subject to the inflexible laws of gravity and other similar indignities, which no great man's soul ever could put up with. Still, we were anything but easy in their company, and within the memory of many among us, the presence or expectation of a comet set all our nerves tingling, and old ladies used to talk of finding shelter in their water-butts, preferring death by drowning to one by fire. Now, it turns out that all this sensation has been caused by a shadow, or the nearest possible approach to a

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shadow, a mist of such infinite tenuity that all the appliances of human art can scarcely produce its counterpart.

JACK HAVILAND.

I.

Jack Haviland was a fair specimen of public-school training. He had spent six years at Eton, and had been successively 'plucked' in three examinations—for the University, the Army, and the Civil Service of India. To the examiners of Oxford he had declared that Moses was the son of Adam; to those of Chelsea, that Heligoland was an island in Africa; and to those at Burlington House, that the leader of the first crusade was William of Orange. These brilliant answers having failed to convince the authorities, he had made up his mind that the public services had entered into a league against him, which it was vain to resist.

This resolution was the easier to keep as Jack Haviland had no one to goad him to active exertion. His only living relative was a maiden aunt. But this lady having viewed with extreme disfavour the results of his scholastic trials, and Jack having heard from her own lips that the provision intended to be set down for him in her will would probably amount to one shilling sterling, he had wisely reflected that the possession of an aunt of this kind was as good as having none at all; and he had made his arrangements in consequence.

Happily for him, he was not altogether destitute of means. He enjoyed two hundred pounds a year of his own and a cottage by the sea. But this was all he had in the world; and his prospects of ever obtaining more were excessively slender. However, he was of a gay, light-hearted temper; always ready to take the bright view of things; and looking upon life as a sort of game of football, in which it was absurd to mind a few kicks on the shins. Disappointments which would have hopelessly soured less happy minds than his, had left his soul as calm as a summer lake. He really did not know what it was to be put out; and the hardest epithet he ever applied to the numerous ills which checker life was, that this or that was 'rather awkward,' an ejaculation he used indiscriminately on the breaking of a meerschaum pipe, the being stumped out in a county match, or the losing of fifty pounds.

With such a disposition it was but natural that Jack should have many friends. He was a universal favourite with all who had ever known him; and in the snug seaport where his dwelling was there was no man so thoroughly popular. He was always doing a good turn for somebody. His mission on earth seemed to be to oblige people. If any service was to be rendered to man, woman, or child, any commission executed, any important errand run, he was the person to do it. He belonged to every soup and clothing club in the place. Beggars knew him by name, and touched their hats to him in the street. Stray dogs followed him home at nights with the certainty of being housed and fed. He was an out-and-out good fellow, that was the truth of it; and he had as pleasant and cheery a face as it was possible to meet with in any town of England from Land's End Point to Berwick-upon-Tweed. Of course he was young; and this fact, added to his vigour of limb and handsome features, made him the abject slave of womankind. In the morning he was to be seen rushing, breathless and hot, along the Marine Parade with six or eight parcels under his arm: these were worsteds he had been sorting for Mrs Curry-combe, the rector's wife. Two hours later, he might be detected on his way to Mrs Maydew's villa with a heavy cargo of sensation novels in tow. In the afternoon, it was Miss Bohea who wanted to consult him about her parrot. In the evening, Mrs Colonel Bowlemdown expected him to tea. Jack Haviland was anywhere and everywhere when wanted. All the ladies of the town had a joint-stock interest in him; and it was a sort of rivalry among them as to which should lay the most frequent taxes upon his ever cheerful readiness.

Under these circumstances, it was not without a certain emotion that the female population of Shingle-super-mare began to reflect, that for six weeks past and more Mr Jack had been much less frequently seen than formerly. His appearances upon the parade had become unaccountably few and far between. Two projected picnics had been given up from his inability to attend at them; and three dinner-parties had actually taken place without his having been present amongst the guests. The ladies of Shingle began to murmur. This desertion was something quite novel and strange. It could not be put up with at any price; and something must be done to find out the why and the wherefore of such highly censurable conduct. An ambassador—in the person of Thomas, Mrs Maydew's 'buttons'—was despatched to the shirker's abode, to inquire if any mishap had befallen him. But Thomas returned no wiser than he had gone. Mr Haviland, he reported, was not at home. His housekeeper had stated, upon cross-examination, that of late he had taken to leaving the house at ten A. M. and not returning till night; but whence and from what cause such a vagabondising humour, neither Mrs Nuffin (the housekeeper) nor he (Thomas) could explain.

This news caused a mighty commotion when Mrs Maydew gave it out at Mrs M'Hotscone's tea-party. The whole party burst into exclamations. Mrs M'Hotscone declared it 'very strange now;' Mrs Maydew pronounced it 'incomprehensible;' Mrs Curry-combe thought it 'unkind;' Miss Bohea hoped 'that nothing might come of it.' And then all these ladies remained for a moment silent; for the same thought had traversed all their minds—a horrid thought, which caused them of a sudden to bridle up together and, each in secret, to vow vengeance upon the culprit. If Mr Jack Haviland was nowhere to be found, it must surely be that he had been enthralled. But none save woman could have done this deed; and so—logical but bitter conclusion!—Mr Jack Haviland was no doubt in love!

II.

Alas, poor Jack! Not even upon him had the elfin god had pity. Right in the centre of his good stout heart had the barbed arrow struck; and it was of no use trying to pull it out. There it was, and there it must stay through sorrow and joy, through day and night, till gray old years and Father Time deemed well to close the wound.

He had fallen in love! Yes, one day on the beach, whilst picking up pebbles with the little M'Hotscones. The weather was cloudy, and the sea was running high. The wind, like an ill-bred

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urchin, was romping about over land and water, covering people with spray, and casting up seaweed in gigantic handfuls, to throw at the passers-by. The little M'Hotscones were merry and soused. Jack Haviland had seen his hat disappear in the gust, and sail in triumph up the British Channel. Everything was going on well, when, of a sudden, br-r-r-r-oum! crash! and a monstrous wave, as big as a house, burst foaming, raging, and splashing on the beach. Away, with howls of terror, rushed the little M'Hotscones, abandoning a whole fortress of pebbles to the fury of the elements. Away also rushed a whole bevy of nurserymaids, children, and startled young ladies, like leaves in autumn before a south-west wind. Screams and laughter mingled with the noise, and—br-r-r-oum! crash! down came a second wave. This time the last remaining stragglers took to flight, but not quite fast enough to prevent two pretty maidens, who had been wandering too near the shore, from being overtaken by the treacherous tide, and bathed up to their waists in water. In ten seconds, Jack, who had been on the look-out, was bearing them both up in his arms. There was a great deal of pretty crying, a great deal of alarm in the tearful blue eyes, a great deal of sudden paleness on the little pink cheeks; but, on the whole, there was more fright than hurt. Before the third big wave had burst its bounds, both were standing high and dry, and not very much the worse for their wetting. As was natural, however, Jack protested strenuously against their going home in their wet clothes. His own cottage was a hundred yards off. They must come there and dry themselves, whilst he sent up to their house to get them other dresses. There was no refusing. A silver flask had already been produced from Jack's breast-pocket, and the contents soon brought a warm glow back to the pallid faces. The two young ladies began to stammer their thanks to their rescuer; next they began to laugh at their own wretched plight; and by the time the cottage was reached, the accident had become a joke, and they were little geese to have ever felt so frightened at it.

This was the beginning of Jack's misfortune. The two young ladies were cousins, and both of about the same age — eighteen. One was Miss Lucy Chatfield; the other, Miss Annie Heywood. It was Miss Lucy who spoke to Jack, and told him this. Her father, Mr Chatfield, was a rich city merchant, who lived in London all the week, and only came down to Shingle from Saturday till Monday. Miss Lucy had no mother, and Annie Heywood was staying with her on a visit. Miss Lucy hoped that Mr Haviland (whose card she put into her muff) would come and call on them; papa would be delighted to see him; and 'Annie and I'—this was said with a blush—should be very glad to thank him again. The address was Beauchamp Villa, on the road to the cliff.

When Miss Lucy Chatfield and Miss Annie Heywood had come out of Jack's room, where they had put on the warm dresses brought down to them by their maid—when they had shaken hands with him, and gone away smiling in the most prosaic of four-wheeled flies, our hero felt as though two rays of sunshine had left his dwelling. The cottage seemed dark, and Jack felt miserable. He picked up a tiny wet glove which he knew to be Miss Lucy's, and kissed it. After that, he ran to the almanac to see what day it was, and almost swooned with joy to find it was Friday, and that consequently, as Mr Chatfield would be at home on the morrow, he might call with perfect propriety at Beauchamp Villa. That evening he absented himself from a party where his presence was indispensable for the getting-up of charades, and wandered about on the beach till twelve o'clock, just near the spot where he had saved Miss Lucy. In a word, he behaved most irrationally, and took no breakfast next morning from sheer excitement of mind.

Mr Chatfield received him very well, and invited him to dinner on Sunday. Jack feared he should go mad when he found himself seated at table next Miss Lucy, and helping her to wine. In the drawing-room, she presided at the urn, and he thought he had never tasted anything so delicious as the tea she had brewed with her own hands. He took three cups of it. Mr Chatfield, finding him a pleasant guest, asked him to call again, which he promised to do with every intention of keeping his word. On his way home, he indulged in a delirious hornpipe by the sad sea-waves, to the mute stupefaction of a local policeman.

Love never does things by halves with such gentlemen as Mr Jack Haviland. By the end of a week, Jack found he could think and dream of nothing else but Lucy Chatfield. He was like a man who has stared too hard at the sun, and sees a luminous spot continually dancing before his eyes. He passed his days in alternations of giddy bliss and pitiable wretchedness, according as his suit seemed to prosper or fail. He was 'gone, gone all over,' as he himself expressed it; and as flame, when it rages so hotly as this, is contagious, Miss Lucy herself began soon to wonder how it was that her heart fluttered so fast whenever she met Mr Jack. At first, the meetings were confined to chance encounters on parade, once or so every other day. Gradually, the meetings grew more frequent and prolonged, until at last 'chance' became so complaisant, that the lovers met twice a day.

And then it was that the habit of long walks set in—long walks on the cliff, in country roads, on the desert parts of the beach; anywhere where they could be alone. Lucy, no longer timid, as at first, leaned innocently on Jack's strong arm, accepting the plea that it was prudent to do so, lest another big wave should come and sweep her down. Annie Heywood, who was the constant companion of these walks, had a true feminine tact for straying a few yards before or a few yards behind, that those adorable nothings, so sweet to exchange when there are only two to hear them, might not remain unspoken from the presence of a third. Jack was happy, and Lucy was happy too. No thought of to-morrow came to mar the *naïve* illusions of their dream; they lived only in the present, loving each other more and more every day. And once, when Jack had allowed his lips to whisper the first trembling confession of his heart, he drew his arm round Lucy's waist, and kissed her; and she, happy at what he had said, and not afraid to shew her happiness, did as he bade her, and returned his kiss.

III.

Two months had passed since the day when they had first met, and Jack Haviland's protracted absence from all the festivities of Shingle had

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begun to sow bitterness and wailing in the female camp. The most terrible suppositions had already been set afloat by the joint ingenuity of Mrs M'Hotscone and Miss Bohea. The local journal had solemnly announced the arrival at Shingle of Mademoiselle Gredinette of the *corps de ballet* of the Paris Opera; and putting this fact together with the other fact of Jack's desertion, Miss Bohea inquired whether it were not possible to deduct therefrom a most scandalous conclusion. But it is fair to say that Miss Bohea remained alone of her opinion. The other ladies could not bring upon themselves to suspect Jack Haviland of so much blackness. Besides, Mademoiselle Gredinette had not remained in Shingle for more than two days, and she had been escorted both on arrival and departure by the Right Honourable the Earl of Wheezylung, a peer of the realm. Whilst queries and wonders, suggestions and exclamations, were still running riot, Mrs Maydew appeared one Sunday morning at St Marigold's Church with a look of triumph on her countenance. During the whole time of service, she cast looks of intelligence at Mrs M'Hotscone, Mrs Curry-combe, and Miss Bohea; and as soon as the service was ended, she hastened out, so as to meet her friends, and tell them all about it.

'Oh! would you believe it, my dear Mrs M'Hotscone, after all our kindness to him, to abandon us all for a girl like that?'

'Who can it be?' inquired Mrs M'Hotscone.

'Who is it?' asked Mrs Curry-combe.

'Who?' gasped Miss Bohea.

'Why, none other than that little Miss Chatfield, the child with auburn hair, who lives at Beauchamp Lodge, and has a father too proud to call upon any one.'

'Mr Chatfield the banker?'

'No; he's a timber-merchant, or a drysalter, or something of the kind. He's immensely rich, and I can't make out how he can accept such a man as Jack Haviland for his son-in-law. Mr Haviland hasn't a single sixpence.'

'Not a penny,' muttered Miss Bohea.

'But is it all settled then?' asked Mrs M'Hotscone.

'I don't know, I'm sure; but I suspect it must be. Mr Haviland no longer comes to St Marigold's on Sundays. He doesn't like to lose sight of his little waxy-flaxy miss for a single minute. I met him on Parade this morning, going with a smiling face to Mr Jumper's tabernacle.'

'A dissenting chapel!' exclaimed Mrs Curry-combe in horror.

'That young man has no regard for his soul,' cried Miss Bohea.

'I shouldn't have believed it of him,' said Mrs M'Hotscone; and the four ladies, mortally shocked at what they had heard, wended their way all chattering together.

'We must agree to cut him,' began Miss Bohea, who, from being the tenderest of Jack's admirers, had become of late the bitterest of his foes. 'We must scratch him off our visiting-lists.' The word *scratch* was pronounced with singular vehemence; so much so, that the other three ladies gave a start, then looked at each other, and finally smiled.

'After all,' said Mrs M'Hotscone, who had a warm Scotch heart, 'Jack's a gude laddie, and he couldn't always remain a bachelor. He'll make a canny bridegroom, and we'd best think of wishing him a bonny wife and a fair armful of bairns.'

Miss Bohea felt it binding upon her to blush.

'If he'd only not chosen a dissenter!' observed Mrs Curry-combe, relenting.

'Yes,' sighed Mrs Maydew; 'but we'll get him to convert his wife: you and Mr Curry-combe will manage that, dear.—What a delightful sermon that was the rector gave us this morning!'

Mrs Curry-combe's brow cleared up entirely. 'I'm glad you liked the sermon, dear; William and I worked at it together.—But, dear me, here he is in person!' exclaimed the rector's wife, glancing down the street.

'Who? William?'

'No, no; Jack Haviland.'

And so it was. Mr Jack, making fearful gestures with his arms, and walking at a break-neck pace, was looming in the distance. He seemed to be unconscious of surrounding objects, and was frightfully pale.

'Why, what can have happened?' cried Mrs Maydew; 'he looked so happy this morning.'

'He's not himself at all now,' said Mrs M'Hotscone, terrified.

'I think he's in a state of inebriation,' observed Miss Bohea.

'Mr Haviland! Mr Haviland! Why, don't you intend to speak to us?' cried out Mrs Curry-combe, as Jack, with his eyes cast down, seemed about to rush by without stopping.

Jack looked up startled, raised his hat mechanically, and stared vacantly at the group. 'Good-morning, ladies,' he stammered in an altered voice. 'I beg your pardon; I had not seen you.'

He spoke absently, scarcely knowing what he said. Mrs M'Hotscone took pity on him. 'The puir fellow's ailing,' she whispered; and the ladies—with the exception of Miss Bohea—nodded kindly, to give Jack an excuse for going his way. He made a second bow, and continued his course without looking to right or left. Something was clearly the matter with him.

'I wonder what it can be?' exclaimed the four ladies together, and they parted with every variety of conjecture and surmise.

'It's not very difficult to guess,' said Miss Bohea with an intonation of triumph; 'that little Miss Chatfield must have jilted him.'

At all events, not of her own accord, poor girl; for if Miss Bohea's suspicion was right in the letter, it was quite incorrect in the spirit. Jack had not been jilted; he had only been told that his dream of happiness was at an end—that was all; but was it not enough, and had he not reason to clasp his fists as he went, to vow that he was the most miserable being alive, and to plan throwing himself into the sea that very night as soon as ever the moon should have risen?

This is what had happened: Jack, that morning, had got up as usual without a cloud to dull his heart. He had breakfasted confidingly off two poached eggs, and had set out for Mr Jumper's place of worship, righteously purposed to attend to that reverend man's exhortations, and to make himself a cheerful soul by looking as frequently as he could during service at Miss Lucy Chatfield in the pew opposite him. He had arrayed himself in his best, had stuck a bright moss-rose bud within his button-hole, and had drawn on the choicest pair of dogskin gloves, quoted four shillings and sixpence in the market. His chin new reaped, his hair well brushed, and his whiskers trimly

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combed, had all created the most favourable impression upon the congregation at the tabernacle. Mr Jumper, who had detected in him a proselyte, eyed him approvingly, on ascending the pulpit; and Mrs Jumper, who had had him shewn into her pew, presented him with her hymn-book. Albeit, as the service progressed, Jack's brow began to lower. At a quarter past eleven, neither Lucy, nor Annie Heywood, nor Mr Chatfield had yet appeared. Twenty minutes, twenty-five, half an hour elapsed, and yet no sign of the party. Jack's brow became overcast. The sermon commenced, and Mr Jumper with fervid eloquence began prophesying unpleasantries to the 'miserable sinniers' around him. It became evident that Lucy would not appear that day. Jack felt himself oppressed with all the terrors that the human mind, when suffering from the pains of love, can forge. He felt himself stifling in the close-packed chapel. His fears grew apace, and, to the speechless scandal of the congregation, he rose in the very midst of the sermon—at the pathetic point where Mr Jumper, with a view to his special conversion, was describing the joy of the black sheep who has been washed—and bolted out.

When once outside, however, he had a moment's hope. Susan, one of the housemaids at Beauchamp Villa, was standing on the chapel steps, and as soon as he appeared, drew a letter mysteriously from her pocket, handed it him, and without saying a word disappeared. It was not in Lucy's handwriting this letter, and Jack heard his heart throb again with all its fears as he tore open the envelope. This is what he read:

My dear Mr Haviland—All has been discovered. Mr Chatfield came home last night in dreadful anger, having been told by somebody, we do not know whom, that you were in the habit of going out walking with us every day. He scolded poor Lucy all the evening yesterday, and again this morning. He is the more furious as she has held out bravely that she loves you, and will marry no one but you. I believe Mr Chatfield will call upon you to-day, but I am afraid he will be very harsh, for he speaks most bitterly, and talks of sending off Lucy to France, and putting her in a convent, if she will not promise never to speak to you again. We are both very unhappy. Lucy has cried all the morning. I send this by Susan; and am, my dear Mr Haviland, very faithfully yours, Annie Heywood.

Jack grew cold as he finished this letter, and we know the state in which he ran home. Fortunately, it was Sunday, and the chemists' shops were closed, or else there is no telling to what lengths he might have run, had any one been found to sell him, upon his own recognisances, a dose of prussic acid. He ran so fast, and was so entirely absorbed in his own reflections, that he did not notice the frowning features of Mr Chatfield, who was mounting guard outside his cottage, and who, as soon as he had rushed in with his head downcast, strode menacingly after him, and banged for ten good seconds at the door with a furious double-knock. Jack had not yet had time to take off his gloves. He opened his sitting-room door, and heard a vibrating voice inquire of his housekeeper if he were at home.

'He's just come in, sir,' answered the terrified Mrs Nuffin, who had never heard anything like that knock before.

Mr Chatfield, without waiting to be announced, walked straight into the room where Jack Haviland was, and, confronting him with an angry stare, began abruptly: 'Do you consider yourself a gentleman, Mr Haviland?'

'I hope so,' stammered poor Jack, growing very red, and feeling very guilty.

'Ah, you hope so. Well, I am glad there seems to be some doubt of the fact in your mind, for I should like to know, sir, whether you consider it becoming a gentleman to make love to a young girl during her father's absence—to profit by the circumstance of my being in London six days of the week, to sing your maudlin love-songs in a mere child's ear—and to encourage that child to open defiance and disobedience of me? I ask you, sir, do you consider that conduct becoming a gentleman?'

'I love Miss Chatfield,' faltered Jack, not finding anything else to say.

'You love Miss Chatfield!' repeated the merchant, waxing more indignant as he continued to speak. 'And may I ask, sir, who you are, who pretend to love Miss Chatfield? What are your means of existence? How do you live? What are your claims to the hand of a young lady in my daughter's position? Are you a peer of England?'

Jack shook his head despondingly.

'A millionaire?'

Jack gave a sigh.

'A man of talent? A great author? A painter? A rising barrister?'

'I am nothing,' murmured Jack.

'Are you even an honest man, sir?' exclaimed Mr Chatfield, raising his voice till it shook the room, and crossing his arms contemptuously.

'Ah! there, yes,' cried Jack Haviland, with a red-hot glow on his face; 'I may have been thoughtless, Mr Chatfield, but I am an honest man.'

'That's very easily said, sir,' rejoined the merchant coldly. 'How much have you a year?'

'I've only two hundred pounds and this cottage,' answered Jack Haviland humbly. 'But you do not intend to judge of my honesty by the extent of my fortune, I hope?'

'But indeed I do, Mr John Haviland,' answered Mr Chatfield with a sneer, 'for if you had been the honest man you pretend yourself, you would assuredly have known, sir, that a man lays himself open to very ugly suspicions, when, having but twelve shillings a day to live upon, he makes love to the daughter of a man who has a hundred thousand pounds at his banker's.'

'I swear I never thought of your fortune,' cried Jack impulsively. 'Had you been poorer than I, it would have been just the same. You cannot think, Mr Chatfield, that there was ever a single mercenary wish in my love for Miss Lucy?'

'Prove it,' said the merchant sternly.

'How?' faltered Jack, feeling his heart droop within him.

'That is a strange question, sir!' exclaimed Mr Chatfield, pronouncing each of his words with terrible conciseness. 'You tell me that you ignored the extent of my fortune. Well, I reveal it you now: my daughter will at my death have ten thousand pounds a year. If your views have been so disinterested as you now affirm, you cannot but be struck with the immense disproportion that exists between Miss Chatfield's position and yours. And if you wish me to hold you guiltless of any

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unworthy motives, of any fault, indeed, save that of thoughtlessness, you know very well how you must act.'

Jack became deadly pale, and drew his hand across his brow. 'Yes,' he said in a broken voice, 'you want me to promise that I will not speak again to Miss Chatfield.'

'I wish you to swear upon your word of honour as a gentleman that you will break off all further connection of any sort with my daughter. Do you promise?'

Jack hesitated a moment, and cast an imploring look at the merchant, whose features remained impassible.

'Very well,' he said sadly; 'I give you my word. But I think it will be better if I go away. I will leave England to-morrow, and not return until—until—yes, until Miss Chatfield be married.'

The merchant nodded; but he looked more attentively at Jack after the latter had spoken these words. There was even something like a trace of emotion on his face, and it was in a much softer voice that he said, holding out his hand: 'I accept your word, Mr Haviland, and confess that my estimate of you was a wrong one. But you must not bear me a grudge for the way I am acting. If you were in my place, you would understand that I have the welfare and happiness of my child to look to, and that I am bound to follow the promptings of my reason and my judgment.'

'If I were a father, I should no doubt act as you are doing,' said Jack mournfully. 'I am sorry I did not think of this before; but I will go away to-morrow, and you must tell Miss—Lu—Miss Chatfield to forget me.'

The merchant did not feel so satisfied with himself as he had done a moment or two before. He ought to have taken his leave, and yet he staid. 'It will be a great inconvenience to you to go away so suddenly,' he said with hesitation: 'you have probably many matters to settle; debts to pay perhaps. Will you allow me to take these off your hands?'

'No,' said Jack quietly; 'I have no debts whatever. I have nothing to settle either. I shall give this cottage to my housekeeper, who used to be my nurse; and I can start the first thing to-morrow morning.'

'Are you in need of money?'

'No; thank you. I had laid by a little store for a rainy day; and the rainy day has come.'

He opened his desk and shewed the merchant a little heap of five-pound notes. Mr Chatfield had become thoughtful. 'You have no debts,' he said pensively, 'and with two hundred pounds a year only you can manage to lay by. That speaks well for your training.'

'I was very idle at school,' said Jack reddening, 'and I know next to nothing; but whilst my father yet lived, that is, whilst I was still a child, he taught me two maxims, which he said contained the measure of all earthly wisdom: "Don't tell lies; and don't get into debt."'

'And you have observed these maxims?'

Jack's eyes beamed truthfully at the merchant. 'Yes,' he said simply.

IV.

Mr Chatfield left Jack's cottage with a host of new reflections in his mind. For the first time in his life he began to suspect that there was something on earth as honourable as birth, great wealth, or famous talent, and that was plain, unboasting honesty. He had never been a hard man; on the contrary, he passed for generous and feeling; but in common with most men in this mercenary age, he shared the idea that human merit was always to be measured by the standard of gold, and that where gold was wanting to prop it, virtue could never be very strong or very steadfast. He had always felt a certain contempt for poor men, and he grounded this feeling on the incontrovertible fact, that those who are obliged to battle continually against want must become narrow-minded at last, from the perpetual struggle and contact with petty miseries. It had never yet occurred to him that wealth was only a relative condition, and that some men could be richer with hundreds than others with millions. But, above all, it had never yet struck his mind that a man who brings to his wedding contract a spotless name, a rigid inflexibility of principle, and a cheerful heart, happy with little, and free from greed, has more to offer than any wealth that can be expressed in figures.

After wandering about some time and nearing his house, he turned suddenly back, and went again towards the town. He knew several people amongst the leading families, and he called upon them all, one after another, to gather information about Jack Haviland. Everywhere he heard the same thing. If ever Nature had made a good, honest, and amiable character, it was certainly Mr Haviland's. No man was so ready to do good; no one was so kind and even-tempered; no one so thoroughly unselfish, and so completely indulgent for the failings, vices, or caprices of others. The world is not altogether so ungrateful as it is painted. People do not always delight to repay kindness and service by slander. The astonished merchant saw more than one eye glisten with genuine tears of emotion whilst Jack's honest virtues were being descanted on. It began to be remembered, that on no one occasion had Jack ever been heard to say an unkind thing of any one; whilst, on the other hand, it was everywhere confirmed that he was invariably first to take the defence of those who were accused or maligned. Again, many acts of rare and touching delicacy were quoted of him; quarrels had been appeased by his means, reconciliations effected, and deeds of large and generous charity were attributed to him, the more surely as he had always denied them.

Mr Chatfield returned home towards evening in a silent, thoughtful mood. He found Lucy with her eyes very red, and her pretty face quite sad from weeping. He kissed her, and told her not to cry; but during dinner he scarcely said a word, and as soon as he rose from table, he shut himself up in his study, and remained there walking up and down for nearly two hours. When he came out, his face bore an unusually serious though mild expression. He held a letter in his hand, and rang the drawing-room bell. 'Take that to Mr John Haviland, at the Cliff Cottage,' he said; and when the servant had gone out, and when he had heard the house-door close on him, he heaved a sigh of relief, like a man who has done a good action, and has reason to be pleased with it.

'Come here, Lucy,' he said in a gentle voice; and when the poor child had begun to weep again at hearing him speak so kindly, his lips quivered, and it was almost in a whisper that he spoke his

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next words: 'Do you think, my darling pet, that I would ever willingly cause you a moment's pain? Do you not know that you are my only treasure on earth, and that there can be no joy or pleasure for me in life unless you have your share of it? Do you think that anything could compensate me for shedding one of your precious tears? And do you not feel that for a single one of your smiles, I would do all that is humanly possible? Then trust to me, dear child, and never fear but that your happiness will be the sole guide to my actions, the only end to which I shall look.'

Lucy went to bed a little comforted, but with her heart still very heavy. Mr Chatfield waited till the footman had returned from the cottage; inquired if the note had been delivered safely, and then retired too. For the first time for many years, he retired to rest without reading the money articles in the weekly reviews, a task he always reserved for Sunday night. The fact was, his mind was very far from scrip and share that evening.

Jack was silently and sorrowfully packing up his boxes when Mrs Nuffin, who had been apprised of his departure, and thrown into a state of trembling wonder by it, brought up the merchant's note. Jack broke the seal without much excitement. The letter contained only these words:

MY DEAR MR HAVILAND—I should be very glad if you could call at Beauchamp Villa to-morrow towards eleven, for I have something to say to you.—Yours sincerely,

ROBERT CHATFIELD.

Jack put the letter in his pocket, and continued to pack. He did not go to bed at all that night—sleep would have been impossible; so he passed his time in looking over all his domestic treasures, laying by a number of things which he intended to send as 'keepsakes' to the numerous children by whom he was known and loved. He wrote also a few letters to different friends, ascribing his departure to a desire to travel—which indeed was strictly true, for he could no longer have borne to remain at Shingle. When all this was done, he slipped out of the house towards midnight, and went down to the beach, to the most deserted part of it, where he had taken his last walk with Lucy. He remained there listening to the monotonous but soothing roll of the waves till daybreak; and no one who had met him, as he returned home peaceful and composed on the morrow, could have guessed how deep and real was the sorrow that lay under his placid features.

One of his most trying moments was the parting with Mrs Nuffin, who was not at all to be comforted with the gift of Jack's cottage and furniture. The good woman invoked all the principles of common law and equity against the abandonment of an old nurse. It was contrary to the justice of the land, she affirmed; and as she was an old woman, and had but little more time to live, Jack might very well have waited until she died before beginning his ramblings abroad. Jack, who could not trust himself to remain calm a single moment where others were crying, was obliged to snatch himself away without listening. 'Drive to Beauchamp Villa,' he said to the driver on whose fly his boxes were piled; 'and after that, you'll have to take me to the station.'

On reaching the villa, Jack Haviland's heart began to beat so fast that he had scarcely strength to knock. He was shewn into an empty parlour, but a minute after the footman returned, and requested him to walk up to the drawing-room. Jack followed, hanging his head despondingly, and wishing he had been spared the last trial of coming to that house, into which he never more would enter. The servant announced him in a formal tone, and withdrew. Jack raised his eyes doubtingly, and then turned ashy pale; he was in the presence not only of Mr Chatfield, but of Lucy. His first impulse was to rush forward; but he remembered his promise, and remained motionless; only, he was obliged to lean against a chair for support—he had not been prepared for this emotion.

Lucy looked at him wistfully, but at a gesture of her father's, she walked slowly towards him, and held out her hand: 'Papa says I may shake hands with you, Mr Haviland,' she said faltering.

He looked up at her, and a look of pain flitted across his face. 'Good-bye—Miss Chatfield,' he sobbed, with a desperate effort to control his voice.

Mr Chatfield appeared moved. 'Mr Haviland,' he said quickly, 'I have sent for you to propose that instead of leaving England, and so abandoning the chance of ever bettering your fortunes in this land, you should come with me to London and enter my office. We can find plenty for you to do there, and you could begin on a salary of three hundred pounds. By-and-by, there is no knowing, you might become my partner. I have heard a great deal about your uprightness and steadiness of conduct, and you are just the sort of man I should be pleased and proud to work with. Do you accept?'

Jack looked inquiringly, first at the merchant, then at Lucy, who seemed as much astonished as he.

'Ah! by the way, though, there's a condition I forgot to mention,' added Mr Chatfield; 'but it's a condition about which I hope you'll make no difficulty.'

'What is that, sir?' asked Jack in amazement.

'That you agree to marry my daughter.'

'RESURGAM.'

Sweetheart, though 'tis years since we parted,
Are the voices of mem'ry asleep?
Though life's river rolls broadly between us,
And the ford with each day grows more deep.

When the spires of the chestnut are whitening,
And the air filled with sweet hawthorn breath,
And the words of the birds call the cowslips
To wake up from the long winter death:

When the gray nights of winter are short'ning,
And the day opens blue-eyed and clear,
And the dawn with a faint streak of saffron,
Brings the sun of the May of the year:

When the lily looks up from the river,
And the reed from its long-frozen bed,
Are there never faint spectres arising
Of our love and our youth, from the dead?

In the song of the thrush and the black-bird,
Whose voice melts us almost to tears,
Does your heart never throw in remembrance
A bridge o'er the river of years?

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JINNY'S THREE BALLS.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.—JINNY'S FIRST BALL.

'How kind you are.'

'LOOK at that girl, Fitz. I'll bet you anything you like she hasn't been trotted out once to-night. Poor thing!'

'She's not bad-looking; at least, not very, but awfully raw,' said Captain Fitzpatrick, leaning against the doorway, and surveying the lady in question critically, while she dropped her shy eyes, and blushed over ears and forehead.

'I wish I wasn't engaged all the way down,' continued his good-natured friend (who was called Dick Jones, and therefore surnamed by his brother officers, after the manner of their kind, 'De Courcy'), 'or that Sydney wasn't such a lazy wretch.'

'Look here! *I'll* ask her,' interrupted Fitzpatrick, starting from his languid attitude, 'else the unlucky little monkey will do something rash. Here goes. Put a bold face on it, and introduce me; there's a good fellow.'

'My friend Captain Fitzpatrick, of the 190th—Miss Lake.'

'May I have this dance?' asked the captain, sitting down good-humouredly on the so-long vacant bench, and shewing his big white teeth in a pleasant patronising smile.

'Yes. Oh, thank you very much.'

'May I put my name on your card? Perhaps you haven't got one?—Let me pick up your handkerchief. Stay; there goes the fan too. How cruel to give me so much trouble, isn't it?'

Then, at last, his shy neighbour looked up, and burst out vehemently: 'I am so—so stupid and awkward.—No, I've no card; I haven't danced once this evening. Pray, forgive me.'

'Forgive you! I should think so. What a shame!—This promises to be amusing.' The last five words were spoken to himself, as he turned and contemplated his partner.

She was not much to look at, he thought; a tall slim girl, with abrupt, awkward movements, a blunt nose, a wide mouth, and big, limpid, brown-gray eyes, with long level brows, and thick straight lashes. She was badly dressed in a tumbled tarletane, white, with blue flowers, ill made, ill fitting, displaying a sufficiently snowy, but lamentably thin neck and arms; and she wore an unfashionably tall wreath of forget-me-nots on her waveless, thick brown hair, and a black ribbon round her long throat. She was not pretty—she never would be; but she might one day have a good figure; and her eyes were fine, and her hair and teeth not bad. And then, she had a sort of innocent, babyish air, thought Captain Fitzpatrick, that made her look quite jolly sometimes, in spite of her 'missishness.' Poor little Jinny Lake of sixteen! It was a dangerous gift to her, that silly, happy, sweet smile, which lit eyes as well as lips; that low, cooing voice, which said such rash and simple things with that unconscious pathos of tender trust. At least, any one who loved Jinny unselfishly would have thought so, and trembled for her; but as no one did, it was no great matter. She might wear her heart outside, for daws to peck at, and no one would care; not, certainly, the aunt and sole guardian whose guardianship and affection were so careless and so torpid, they might almost as well never have existed. Before the music of the next dance struck up, Captain Fitzpatrick had learned almost as much of Jinny's life and prospects as could be told. The knowledge awoke in him such immense wonder and pity, that he determined to ameliorate her sad fate as much as lay in his power, and at the same time to form her character. Yet he had not the appearance of a safe mentor, as he bent towards her, his bright blue eyes dancing in amusement at her *naïveté*; his curved, delicate lips laughing beneath the silky curls of his golden-brown moustache; his glossy, close-cut head almost touching the ugly blue wreath. He looked kind, and good-tempered, and cheery, as he was; but a great deal too handsome and graceful, and agreeably conscious of those facts, for a safe instructor of susceptible youth.

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'Well, you shall enjoy yourself for what's left of the evening,' he said. 'I'll tell you: I'll introduce two of our fellows to you, and'——

'There are only two dances more,' answered Jinny with alarmingly open appeal; 'and I thought perhaps *you*'——

'Thought what, Miss Lake?'

'Nothing; at least—no, I mean *you* are *so* kind, that'——

'You'll just as soon dance, then, with your humble servant? Was that it, eh?'

'O yes; indeed it was!' she cried with shy, vehement relief.

'All right: I shall be only too flattered, I'm sure,' the captain observed, unable to resist a rather conceited drawl, and a complacent caress of his moustache by a slender silver-gray hand, no larger than Jinny's own, and far defter than her long young fingers. Then they whirled away—Jinny in a seventh heaven of delight, doubting her own identity, and exciting the wonder of the sleepy old doctor who had consented to chaperon her to this, her first ball, but had not made the slightest effort to help her to either refreshment or dancing from the moment of their entrance until now.

When the last dance was over, and Miss Lake had made no movement to rejoin her chaperon, Fitzpatrick saw the matter was in his own hands. Partly through native docility, partly through her vast admiration of himself, she would have been content to sit all night with him in the empty ballroom. So he said, feeling quite benevolently prudent: 'By Jove! I'm sorry it's over. I suppose I must give you up to that old fogy now?'

He did it accordingly; and then Jinny, holding out a fervent hand, said: 'Good-bye' in a depressed and gloomy manner.

'Oh, it's not "Good-bye,"' he answered laughing: 'of course, I must see you to your carriage; and then'——

'But I'm going to walk,' avowed literal Jinny; 'a fly's too dear.'

'All the jollier. I'll come with you, if I may?' There was nothing very tender in the pleading of his bright blue eyes, but Jinny found it irresistible.

'Oh, I *should* like it!' she whispered, and soon came forth from the cloaking-room with a thin old shawl huddled round her; her dress caught up, regardless of grace, in a great bundle in front, and such an eager, shining, fluttered face as made Fitzpatrick feel at the same time thrills of affection and contempt for her. Poor Jinny! She was lamentably ignorant of these little details of the art of pleasing, to be so imprudently ready to be pleased.

Old Dr Irving (in deference to some vague notions of 'leaving young people alone') plodded on behind the two, who hardly noticed his forbearance, and never thought of a comic, sad, little romance, over years ago, of which a raw young Sawbones and a retired grocer's daughter were hero and heroine. It was a longish walk, and Fitzpatrick became a little tired, and thought with angry sadness of a big cushioned carriage which had brought him and somebody else back from many balls; but Jinny was radiant, and he could not spoil the pleasure ringing so sweetly in the foolish, soft accents, nor mar the perfection of *her* happiness, because she could not make his own.

The same motive, he believed, made him say when he left her that he would 'do himself the pleasure of calling.'

'Do, please, do!' cried she, squeezing his hand. 'Oh, how *kind* you are!' And she stood and watched him when he had bid a cheery, respectful good-night to the old doctor, making his way lightsomely down the muddy road with the sort of dancing walk, funny enough in its way, which characterises many cavalry men, but which seemed to her inexperience only another individual charm.

He would almost have laughed could he have guessed the passionate gratitude and trembling reverence with which Jinny regarded him; the latter feeling, indeed, I think little Captain Fitzpatrick had never, in the course of his five-and-twenty years, inspired before. She went up-stairs slowly, and sat down on the bed in her little room, without once looking in the glass, as most girls would, under the new and agreeable circumstances, have done; but she was thinking of him—not of herself. She was so bewildered, she could not have uttered one of her thoughts distinctly; and after sitting quite still, with a dreamy smile on her lips, for a long time, her head drooped on her shoulder, and she fell asleep.

As to Fitzpatrick, he was on the whole happier than he had allowed himself to be for a long while. This poor child's awkward admiration soothed the self-esteem which had recently received a sad shock; and its character was novel—people were wont to pet, and chaff, and be warm friends with him; but no one had ever seemed to look up to him until now. He resolved inwardly to be very kind and patronising, and shew the world in general, and *one* lady in particular—whose ears it *might* reach—that he could be worshipped as well as worship. And then, he really pitied this poor little Miss Lake, wondering that girls did not die, or 'go cracked,' who led such weary lives as hers.

He came to see her next day, sending in his card by a stolid maid, to whom he had first to explain this piece of courteous propriety. He found her alone, in a dingy, slovenly room, with a faded 'Kidderminster' on the floor, fluffy green rep curtains, and stunted furniture of a mysterious red wood, which *might* have been mahogany, or deal, red ochre, and varnish. There were some gaudy cheap china vases, containing bouquets of paper flowers, on the mantelpiece, reflected in a little greenish chimney-glass; two portraits of Jinny's parents (a pale ugly clergyman, and a pale pretty governess), flanked with some smudgy prints, decorated the walls; while the signs of occupation, which sometimes redeem an otherwise dreary apartment, were here only added uglinesses—some checked dusters in process of *hemming*; the *Slap Bang Polka* dog's-eared, open on a rickety, old-fashioned piano; and the ball-dress of last night thrown forlornly on the sofa, to be cobbled

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up for next time: all this made Fitzpatrick shudder as he came in.

Jinny jumped down from the window-seat, where she had been undisguisedly watching for him, and ran to meet him very gladly, unconscious of the bad policy of her eagerness, which made her visitor cooler in his greeting than he might otherwise have been.

When he was seated, he looked at her critically, and came to the conclusion that she was better looking in the day than at night, and her awkwardness rather less apparent in the high woollen dress that veiled her thin, sloping shoulders, and fell in straight heavy folds—pleasanter to look at than that stiff crumple of tarletane—to her feet. Besides, her hair arranged without attempt at effect, and roughened by the window-curtain against which it had been impatiently rubbed, suited her better; and the creased pink ribbon, twisted inartistically through it, did not 'go' badly with her flushed cheeks and soft colourless eyes. But for all that—for all her happy look and almost fond smile—Fitzpatrick was not going to let her off that offence against propriety, the making this visit *look* like a rendezvous, by her eager cry: 'Here you are at last,' and her non-mention of her aunt. It was his duty to teach her such things, so he began in a society tone, tinctured with a certain rebuking courtesy: 'I hope I shall have the pleasure of seeing Mrs Lake?'

'I told you she was an invalid, and never came down,' returned the *mal-à-propos* Jinny.

'Did you? Ah! I 'd forgotten,' said the captain, fibbing, with a view to avenge himself for her persistent want of tact. But she was not hurt by his forgetfulness; she had never thought his gracious ears *could* remember her silly words—for silly even the everyday folks round her said she was—and what must *he* think! So she only answered: 'I 'm glad; no, I don't mean that; only, now, you have no one to talk to but me, have you?' and Fitzpatrick could not but be disarmed by her persistent humility.

He paid her a long visit, and promised to come again. He ascertained where she took her walks, and said inwardly he would sometimes look her up in them; although, when his minute inquiries had led her to cry delightedly: 'Are you going there too?' he had replied coldly that he more often rode than walked. He went away much raised in his own estimation, and consequently pleased with Jinny; leaving her in a self-depreciatory state, possibly quite as happy in its way.

She saw him again very often, although he was quartered at the next town, and had to ride or drive over each time. He was always kind to her, and more complimentary than any one else; and he would sometimes hint at a secret trouble in his life, in a way which gave him additional interest in her eyes. Jinny had never known *any* young men, had scarcely *seen* any so handsome, or, at all events, so refined, and in a manner fascinating, as Francis Fitzpatrick; no one took any interest in her, cared whether she was pleased or sorry, looked well or ill, laughed or cried, except him. He used to give her hints about etiquette, gravely consider and advise her toilet, lend her novels and poetry, and sometimes send her music—not songs, for she excruciated him by her faulty pronunciation and 'veiled' voice, but easy pieces, or perhaps the last value.

Then, at times, he would praise her, and make love to her a little carelessly—half laughing at his own sentimental speeches, half doubting whether, after all, this humble, adoring little soul would not make a better wife than another he had once courted in vain. And, meanwhile, he ran up to town, paid visits and went to balls in the neighbourhood, flirted in a harmless way with every pretty girl he came across, rode in local races, played in local cricket matches, and was more popular than any other man in his regiment, and deservedly so. Every one liked him: alas! it is a fatal thing to love with entireness somebody whom every one likes. I can hardly tell what were Fitzpatrick's real feelings for Jinny; perhaps he did not know himself; certainly, he would not inquire about them too closely, lest they should not warrant his words and actions with regard to her. He pitied her very heartily, enjoyed extremely her deep trust and open adulation; but beyond this, mystery reigned—a mystery his friend Jones's clumsy, though conscientious, efforts to clear up had only increased. Jones had first chaffed him about 'the native,' and his jokes not being taken as he, Jones, conceived a man in love should take them, he remonstrated, and made Fitzpatrick very angry; his anger with his friend being perhaps due partly to anger with himself. But, unluckily, neither had any effect on his conduct towards Jinny.

And Jinny? Three words tell her silly story plainly enough—she loved him. She had not paused to weigh his love for her, nor think whether he treated her with proper deference, nor whether their positions coincided, nor anything. Her heart had gone from her before she knew she had a heart, almost; and, whatever happened, she could never, never take it back. This awkward girl, with her half-grown ways; with the cooing tender voice, that said so many foolish, frank words; with silly soft eyes, like those of some gentle, half-tame animal; with her piteous utter ignorance of how to win a lover, and retain him: this country simpleton, who had not even begun to care about dressing becomingly yet, loved with the woful strength, the rash self-abnegation, the dreadful faith that has made of women noblest martyrs and basest criminals in all ages; which bid fair to make of *her*, with her commonplace surroundings, only one more, it might be, hard old maid, it might be, happy wife and mother—happy, despite her unlikeness to her husband's people.

For alas! when Jinny tried to put her love into words, none seemed so fit to express it as the answer to that question in the Catechism which she had learned before she was confirmed: 'What is thy duty towards *God*? To believe in Him, to fear Him, to love Him; with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, with all my strength; to worship Him, to give Him thanks, to put my whole trust in Him, all the days of my life.'

An unutterably piteous profanity, almost to be pardoned when you think of the certain promise of failure and despair in the application of such awful words to a mere human being, especially a human being like Captain Francis Fitzpatrick.

But Jinny, rejoicing in the sunshine, recked no more of a better Light than she did of the coming darkness, and considered him missionary rather than tempter. Did he not tell her what was proper, and did he not say propriety was

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goodness polished, and in a society setting? She never told herself he could not change, because that would have been, to her single mind, to acknowledge a possibility of his not loving her, and his looks and tones declared—oh, a great deal more surely than words, that he did! And to care for a stupid ugly thing like her must be great love indeed, all his virtue, and none of hers.

So Jinny reasoned, and grew more familiar with her gay captain, and now came and sat near him, and stared devotedly in his face, or took his hand in her long thin fingers, admiring its delicacy, or the perfection of his dress, from the brown velvet morning coat to the Indian gold coins that fastened his wristbands, and the marvel of a boot that defined that high-bred, slender foot. And Jinny's open and lavish tribute began to shock him a little; that *other*, had she loved him ever so, would never have let him see it so slavishly; Jinny's fond flatteries began to pall: there had been stinging sweets of old, far racier in flavour. Besides, the wound Jinny had soothed was healing, and invalid diet became proportionately mawkish. 'But it would be so awfully awkward to cut the thing suddenly, and really she was a dear little child, and too good for a heedless fellow like him—in *some* ways—not good enough in others; not fair, nor stately, nor clever enough to present to the regiment and society as Mrs Fitzpatrick. No doubt, the affair would in some way die a natural death, and if not—if not—why, hang it all! the girl shouldn't have made love to him in that way!' To which girl, next moment, he would make such a speech as: 'No, you mayn't be *pretty*, exactly, but I'd rather sit here with you than with all the pretty girls under the sun.'

And Jinny would give a tender half-shake of her head, and stare at him with her big wistful eyes in silent adoring gratitude.

After these impulses of treachery, Fitzpatrick was subject to revulsions of kindness, in one of which he committed a rash act. He asked Jinny, and old Dr Irving, as her chaperon, to a dance his regiment were about to give prior to their departure.

The unfortunate child danced about the room when he revealed the former fact to her (carefully concealing the latter); her joy was not quite so graceful in act as in feeling, and Fitzpatrick, with rather a cross laugh, told her she would tire herself before the party if she did not stop.

So she crept up to him, instantly subdued, and asked with an absurd air of tragic anxiety: 'Can I wear my tarletane frock *again?*'

'No, by Jove! I don't think you can,' he answered. 'You must manage something else—coax it out of the aunt, or spend your pocket-money; there's a good child. *I* want you to look nice.'

A sweet warm feeling made Jinny thrill at the 'owning' sound of his last words: to be a credit to *him*, for *him* to be proud of her! If Jinny had been offered marriage by the Prince of Wales, and an act of parliament made on purpose, it would not have flattered her half so much. She grew confident, and said with a new little air of dignity: 'Oh, I'll manage somehow.'

And the impressionable little officer thought he might rely on the feminine art he had been the first to awaken. Jinny's aunt, who always heard of his visits, and always said, in answer to her niece's rapture: 'He must be very agreeable—give me my drops, dear;' and then always shut her eyes and slept—gave her consent; the doctor said he would take her; so there was no obstacle in her way, and she was perfectly happy.

THE DIARY OF AN ELIZABETHAN BARRISTER.

Among the students of the Middle Temple in the last years of the reign of Queen Elizabeth was one who diligently noted down the events of the day, the talk of the town, the gossip of his friends, the substance of the sermons he heard, and anecdotes of the leading public men. His diary thus sparkles with references to Shakspeare, Sir Walter Raleigh, the Earl of Essex, and Coke, who prosecuted those two last celebrities; the Cecils, Bacon, Ben Jonson, Stowe the antiquary, Sir Thomas Bodley, the wizard Earl of Northumberland, Sir Thomas More, Fleetwood, the Cromwell family, and others concerning whom our sympathies never flag; his sovereign lady, 'sweet Sister Temperance,' as her brother called her, is frequently mentioned, and her last days are described with much minuteness. This tattling, racy, Tudor journal is one of the Harleian Manuscripts preserved in the British Museum. It has before now been looked through more than once by *littérateurs*, chiefly for the sake of the allusions to Shakspeare; and one of these treasure-seekers, the late Mr J. Hunter, was so fascinated with its contents, that he took a great deal of pains to ascertain who the diarist was. With the assistance of the internal evidence of the diary, keen-scented genealogical inquiries, industrious search through visitations, registers, and wills, he came to the conclusion that the writer was John Manningham, who was entered on the books of the Middle Temple in 1597—1598, and subsequently called to the degree of barrister. Furthermore, that he eventually married the sister of his 'chamber-fellow,' and of Dr Curle, Dean of Lichfield, and enjoyed the estate of Bradborne, near Malling, Kent, which at the date of the diary was the property of a cousin, Richard Manningham, who made him his heir. Now identified, then, as the diary of John Manningham, barrister of the Middle Temple, and of Bradborne, Kent, for the year 1602, and part of 1603, the manuscript has been printed for the Camden Society, as a present to the members from their president, Mr Tite, M.P.

As we turn over the leaves, we step into Tudor London, over which 'Mr Lee' was lord mayor for the time being. The tall gabled timber-houses; the narrow streets; the broad, bright, swift Thames, with wherries darting and barges gliding about upon it; Tudor crowds, with scolds, 'prentices, and 'maisterless men' in them, congregating and dispersing, stand out from the pages as though they were alto-relievos on them. Though much of the diary relates to London life, we observe the young Templar made frequent journeys into Kent, where he had a large circle of cousins, the chief of whom was the owner of Bradborne. This Richard Manningham, who had been a successful London merchant, although twice married, was childless; and he seems to have selected the diarist out of his wide connections to be his 'son-in-love.' John Manningham speaks of him as his 'father-in-love,' and records with admiration his classical attainments, and many of his opinions upon current subjects discussed as they sat chatting

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together, or walked about that pleasant manor in the core of the hop-country which one had it in his heart to leave to the other. From Bradborne, he visited other relatives in neighbouring towns, sometimes in company with his cousin's wife. Once as they were jogging along the road to Maidstone, she entertained him with an anecdote of her early life, which he noted down too. She told him when she was newly married to her first husband, and riding behind him, she slipped off, and he rode on without stopping to help her up, or to ascertain whether she was hurt, and went on so far, that she began to make up her mind to leave him, and get her own living in some service, so as never to see him again; but he ultimately stopped, and she forgave him. The talk generally, however, was the news of the country-side, of estates changing hands, marriages, births, and deaths. At this visit to Maidstone, they dined with Dr Gellibrand, another cousin. He shewed them in his study a skull, and placing his finger on one of the seams, ungallantly said it was that which the midwives closed in female children to prevent the wit getting in, which made them such fools ever after. Another time he visited a 'Cosen Watts' at Sandwich, and rode with him to dine with a 'Cosen Cranmer' at Canterbury. In the course of conversation at this dinner, Cranmer referred to a new mode of bowing practised by those who had visited foreign countries, which he had noticed at the bishop's house. He said when the bishop's guests came bowing to him 'with their new-fashioned salutacions below the knee,' he budged not, but declared uncompromisingly, 'he had not learned to dissemble soe deeply.'

The diarist made another journey into Huntingdonshire, when he entered the orbit of the Cromwell family. There were races going on at Sapley, and Mr Oliver Cromwell, the uncle of the future Protector, had 'all the glory of the day,' for his horse won the 'sylver bell.' The communion was ministered at Sir Henry Cromwell's on Easter Sunday, but without booke. And a 'house-full' of Cromwells was living at Hinchingbrooke 'like a kennell.' A still more interesting jaunt was a shorter one to Richmond, when the queen lay dying. Manningham was acquainted with Dr Parry, one of the chaplains then in attendance upon her majesty; and when there were contradictory rumours of her life and death flying from lip to lip in London, he went to Richmond to ascertain the truth. He dined with Dr Parry, the Bishop of Chichester, the Dean of Canterbury, and Dean of Windsor, in the Privy Chamber, and heard from them the condition of their royal mistress. She was still living, they said, and might have lived for years but for her own obstinacy, for her constitution was an excellent one; but her long refusal to take food, physic, or rest, had brought her now to a hopeless stage. She was dying, lying 'verry pensive and silent;' only able to shake her head when the archbishop spoke of earthly matters, and 'hug his hand' when he touched upon heavenly joys. Before daybreak the next morning she had gone to her rest. Manningham wrote: '*24th March* 1602—This morning about three at clocke hir majestie departed this lyfe, mildly like a lambe, easily like a ripe apple from a tree. Dr Parry told me he was present, and sent his prayers before hir soule; and I doubt not but she is amongst the royall saints in heaven in eternal joys.' He seems to have returned to town immediately, in time to hear King James proclaimed by the Council, at ten o'clock the same morning, at Whitehall gates and Cheapside. He notes the general grief at the queen's death in the quiet in which this ceremonial took place. There was scarcely any shouting; but at night bonfires were lighted and bells rung; and at the evening service at 'Paules,' the king was publicly prayed for instead of the queen.

The diary tells of the news being conveyed to King James, and of the messages he sent, and ordinances he issued on its reception. Although all was externally quiet, the country was in expectation of 'risings' in all directions; no fewer than fourteen claimants to the crown could be counted, none of whom came forward, however, owing to the prompt measures of King James's supporters. There is a false alarm of a rival in the field, which is afterwards explained as having been local rejoicings. A new interest in everything Scottish is shewn, and an allusion made to the northern accent as a 'fumbling lisping language.' Scottish anecdotes come into circulation, and are duly recorded. One runs to the effect that when the Scots in the French court wished to distinguish between a Frenchman and a Scot, they gave the word 'bread and cheese,' which the French could only repeat as 'bret and sheese.' Nevertheless, the great dead queen occupied a place in our diarist's mind for some time. In one place he writes, she died worth twelve million pounds, in money, plate, and jewels, of which sum four hundred thousand pounds was in gold. In another, he says: 'It is certaine the queene was not embowelled, but wrapt up in cere cloth, and that very il to, through the covetousness of them that defrauded hir of the allowance of cloth that was given them for that purpose.' There are various calls and visits in London mentioned. One was made to John Stowe, the author of the *Survey of London*, then nearly fourscore years of age. When the young Templar asked him why so few new monuments were mentioned in the *Survey*, he replied that those who put them up had displaced others of antiquity to make room for them, and as they had deprived these of record, he had purposely left them out, that they should not enjoy the memory of which they had deprived others. With pride in the dignity of the chief citizens of London, he told his guest they were formerly called barons, and addressed as such by the early kings, and that the ancient seal of the corporation was inscribed *Sigellum Baronum Londoniarum*.

If the diarist had been studying divinity instead of law, he could scarcely have heard more sermons, or taken more ample notes of them. Thus we get the pith of scores of sermons—pungent, entreating, vehement, extolling, denouncing, doctrinal, abstruse, and otherwise. Mr John Bruce, who has edited the little book, which is not more than six inches square, reminds us it was a sermon-loving age, to account for the industry with which these notes were made. Sometimes the diarist attended service at 'Paules Crosse,' sometimes at 'Paules,' again at Westminster, hearing some of the most celebrated divines of the day. He notes, too, a sermon preached by the popular Mr Egerton, in a little church or chapel up-stairs at Blackfriars; and another by a second popular favourite, Mr Clapham of Paul's Wharf. The last sermon

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recorded, before the diary was filled up and laid aside, was a bitter invective against women, by Mr Hemmings of Trinity College, Cambridge. Standing at 'Paules Crosse,' he said: 'Yf a man would marrie, it were 1000 to one but that he should light upon a bad one, there were so many naught; and yf he should chaunce to find a good one, yet he were not suer to hold her soe: for women are like a coule full of snakes amongst which there is one eele, a thousand to one yf a man happen upon the eele, and yet if he gett it in his hand, all that he hath gotten is but a wet eele by the tayle.'

Interspersed among these notes of visits and sermons occur the references to Shakspeare that first drew attention to the manuscript; here a string of posies for jet rings set with silver; there an anagram, epitaph, or 'rime.' Scattered among the pages, as though the diarist wrote wherever the book first opened, are anecdotes of the celebrities we have mentioned, and of others with whose names we are not all so familiar; and reports—now that Sir Walter Raleigh is out of his captainship of the guard, and that Sir Amias Preston had sent him a challenge, or that the Earl of Northumberland was living apart from his lady again with his infant son at Sion House, or similar social whispers. His 'chamber-fellow,' Curle, tells him, for instance, that Sir Thomas Bodley, the founder of the Bodleian Library, courted and won his rich wife in her garden, whilst a rival suitor waited in her house and 'held his cardes' for him, and he makes a note of the information; and his laundress is impertinent, telling him: 'I was brought up as my frends were able, when manners were in the hall I was in the stable;' and this piece of homely information is jotted down as well. One observation informs us that the game of shuttlecock was the favourite amusement at court, and that the making of shuttlecocks had become almost a trade in London. Further on we read: 'This afternoon, a serving-man, one of the Earl of Northumberland, fought with swaggering Eps, and ran him through the eare.' On one leaf are notes of two marriages—the first being that of the Countess of Essex to the Earl of Clanricarde, 'a goodly personable gentleman, something resembling the late Earl of Essex;' the second, that of the son of the Lord Keeper to the 'Countes of Darbys daughter.'

We must content ourselves with this indication of the character of the contents of this curious diary of the young student.

A COUNTY FAMILY.

CHAPTER XIII.—THE MIST OF BLOOD.

PERHAPS one of the secrets of the happiness of this happy isle (which let us call Formosa) was, that there was no regular post; no pestiferous missives waiting on the breakfast-table to introduce us at once to a world of cares. Letters came, of course, but at no stated times, and only as convenience offered—that is to say, when a sailing-packet, or even a pleasure-boat, happened to come over from the neighbouring and larger island, between which and England intercourse was direct and constant enough. If the winds were violent, or contrary, correspondence was intermitted for whole weeks together; while, as for public matters—things such as the newspapers chronicle—the inhabitants of this blessed spot knew nothing whatever of them until they became matters of history, and cared nothing for them even then. The Norman Conquest was the last event of general interest that had any particular bearing on Formosa and its affairs.

The arrival of this occasional sailing-packet, of which the mistress of the inn had spoken, was quite an event in the island. It generally brought over a crowd of excursionists; such of whom as sea-sickness had not too much prostrated, dispersed themselves all over the place, to the admiration of the natives. It was hard to say which was most astonished by the aspect of the other—the visitors (mostly imported from London into the larger island by a steamer, for which the little harbour of Formosa offered no accommodation) or the aborigines. The former of necessity brought their own provisions, and picnicked on the shore, or in sheltered hollows of the downs; the latter (or at least the juvenile part of them) stood round at a respectful distance, listening with rapture to the popping of the pale-ale corks, and hoping that a goodly store of empty bottles would presently reward their patience, as it commonly did: if not the rose, they had been near the rose, and smelt very strong of it; and the water that the native urchins poured into the same, was held to be almost beer, and drunk with due approval.

On the present occasion, the news of the coming packet had spread through the three miles and a half which constitutes the length of Formosa, and the mile and half to *six feet* that forms its breadth. From many a sheltered farm or cottage, nestling in its few yards of Devon-like lane, trooped forth the island folk towards the harbour; and Mr William Roberts and his wife went with them. Calm as was the day, it was pleasant to see the little vessel, as it neared the land and met the recoiling waves, bury its prow beneath them, and rise and dip again, till its wet decks shone in the sun, and to hear the predictions, uttered in the Formosa tongue, concerning the condition of the expected voyagers. Youth at the stern, and Pleasure at the prow—or *vice versâ*—or amid-ships, have never yet reached that island shore without a preparatory tossing; and to-day formed no exception. But, to the great disappointment of the natives, there was no excursion-party this particular morning on board at all; the packet was only laden with stores—some to stock the seigneur's house—which is quite a mansion for these parts—and some for the landlady of the inn. 'And, by-the-bye,' said the skipper, as he made over her property to the latter lady, 'the postmaster asked me to bring this 'ere for some gentleman who is staying at your house, I believe;' and with that, he handed her a letter, directed to '*William Roberts, Esq., Formosa, Channel Islands.*'

'Didn't I say, Bill, that I thought you would get a letter this morning?' exclaimed Mrs Roberts, as her husband took the epistle, and stood with it in his hand, regarding the superscription with much dissatisfaction.

'Well, and what if you did? It's no great treasure now it has come. It is not from Richardson with the rest of the dibs, as I half hoped it might be; it's only from the old woman;' and he roughly disengaged his arm from his wife's fingers, and tore open the envelope with contempt.

'But what does she say, Bill?—Good heavens,

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how strange you look! Are they all well at the cottage? Nothing is wrong with Nelly, I do trust?'

She peeped over his shoulder—her fear of her husband lost for the moment in her anxiety to learn the news—but he pushed her back with his elbow before she could read a line, and thrust the missive into his pocket.

'You mind your own business, will you? The letter is mine, not yours; and just because you are so prying, you sha'n't see it.—No, there's nobody ill—*there*, I 'll tell you that much; and there 's no news at all, at least that you have anything to do with.—Now, go home. You make all these idiots as curious as yourself. Go home, I say; I wish to be alone.' And with that he turned upon his heel, and walked hastily towards the little tunnel that led into the interior of the island.

The violence of his language and demeanour had attracted quite a little crowd of wondering folk about them, and among them the kind-hearted woman of the inn.

'I am afraid, ma'am,' said she simply, and in imperfect English, 'that that was bad news I gave your husband, since it has put him out so.'

'Yes, that was it,' replied Mrs Roberts eagerly. 'It took him so by surprise, that he was scarcely master of himself, poor fellow.'

'He need not have been angry with *you*, however, since you didn't write it. But that 's the way of the men. When the nets break, or the fish don't come, it 's always us wives who suffer for it.'

This remark seemed to be so philosophic and noteworthy, that the speaker translated it into the local tongue for the benefit of her fellow-countrywomen who stood round, from whom there at once broke forth unanimous demonstrations of assent.

'Yet my good man is a better one than he, thank God!' said one with a glance at Mr William Roberts' retreating figure.

'You are right, Annette,' said the landlady, 'for if ever there was a pig and a coward it is that one, and this poor unhappy creature has to bear with him.'

Mrs Roberts was fortunately wholly ignorant of the Formosa dialect, so that for all she knew the sympathy expressed in the faces around her extended to her husband as well as herself; without the least idea of undutifulness, therefore, she nodded and smiled gratefully, by way of reply, and then made her way, like an obedient wife as she was, to the house she had so lately quitted.

In the meantime, the rapid strides of her late companion had carried him far away into the solitude he desired. The six feet of soil to which, as I have said, the breadth of Formosa did at one spot dwindle, was, in fact, the summit of a lofty ridge, which connected, as by an isthmus, one portion of the island with the other, the smaller, which was hence called Little Formosa, as though it were an independent territory. This narrow pathway, which might have been defended by half-a-dozen men against a host unprovided with firearms, formed, in fact, a sort of natural bridge, and was one of the most remarkable of human highways. It was nearly five hundred feet long, and totally unprotected on either side from precipices that sank sheer into the sea at least an equal distance. Across this Roberts made his way, not without tremors, and sat down beneath the shadow of a huge rock on the further side. Wrapped as he was in his own selfish thoughts, the solitude and grandeur of the scene around him had yet some effect even upon his sordid mind. The distant and unknown continent to eastward, the illimitable sea on north and south, and the perilous track he had just traversed, and which seemed to cut him off from his fellow-men, struck him with that sort of awe which perhaps the devils feel who believe and tremble. His mind, like theirs, was full of evil; and yet the news of what was certainly a great piece of good fortune had just arrived to him. With one more look around, to make sure that he was alone, he set himself to read the letter, whose tidings he had gathered but from a single glance. These were couched in affectionate terms indeed, though the form of expression touched him not at all.

'My dearest Willy—At last our dreams have come true, and we are rich folks for ever! I write this letter from Redcombe Manor, the home of your fathers, and the place, dear boy, which you will one day inherit. That thought, Willy, is the one that has been uppermost in my mind ever since this glad news came. Henceforward, I feel sure you will be no cause of sorrow to your parents. You will have no temptation to do wrong, and you will be grateful to God, who has thus henceforth placed you above temptation. My heart is very full, Willy. I write this under the roof where, fifty years ago, I was but a servant, and now I am the mistress of it all. But my own altered position is nothing compared with the change that is awaiting you. It is this, above all things, for which I thank Heaven on my bended knees. Your father has forgiven you, and all will be now well—I feel, I am sure it will. You will give your enemies—those who must now needs be jealous of you, I mean—no opportunity of evil-speaking for the future. You will be a new man. Come home, then, darling, to wealth and happiness, and your loving mother's arms. Let us be a united family. Bess will be welcome too. It is not for me, of all people, to make objections to her upon the ground of her low birth, although, of course, under the circumstances, it seems a pity now that your marriage took place, since any girl in the country would be proud and happy to wed you. But be sure you give Bess my love, and Ellen's. It has been decided that Ellen's match is to be broken off with John Denton. She is to be the bride, your father says, of some great man, perhaps a lord. I am all in a whirl, and scarcely know what I write; but I know this, that until I see my boy here, I shall take no pleasure in the splendour and plenty that surround me. Come then, come home, my darling, to your loving mother,

Mary Blackburn.

'Of course, I direct this letter, as usual, but you will henceforth bear your own name, and, I am sure, will never again'—the 'again' was carefully crossed out, but William Roberts deciphered it, and it made his brow grow very dark—'will never disgrace it. We give out that you have been abroad—for your health.'

Of all the contents of this epistle, next to the news itself which it conveyed, one sentence affected the reader most, and indeed seemed to stand out from the rest, as though it had been written in some different colour; and yet it had probably been set down by the writer with less

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thought than she had given to any other part of the composition, since it was in truth a mere incontrovertible statement of fact: '*Although, of course, under the circumstances, it seems a pity now that your marriage took place.*'

'A pity!' muttered William Blackburn, as we may now call him: 'it is a Curse which will cling to me for ever. That woman will be a millstone round my neck. To think that such a withered, white-faced jade should stand for ever between me and this good luck!—"*Any girl in the country would be proud and happy to wed you.*"—Of course she would; but what's the use of that when I'm married already? Miss Ellen foresaw this when she coaxed father over to give his consent to it. She's a cunning fox, if ever there was one; but I will be even with her yet. She thinks to make some splendid match, quite different from mine, does she, and to look down upon her uncle chained to this log, this drudge!' His passion was frightful to witness. He clenched his fist, and shook it at the broad bright sun in impotent malice. He scowled at the smiling sea, that lay so far beneath him that he could scarcely hear it lap upon the crags; and as he did so, a darker scheme than any that had ever yet crossed his brain came over it. It made his cheeks pale and his frame tremble, as though with sudden cold; and from mere dread of dwelling on it, he took up the letter again, and read it half through, stopping at that same paragraph which seemed to him now to be inscribed in letters of blood. 'A pity to have thus thrown himself away! Yes, it was indeed a woful misfortune to have tied himself to this faded fool; but was it necessarily an irremediable one? Suppose she were to die!'

A cloud came between earth and sun; and William Blackburn started up in terror, for, for the moment, he thought the shadow of some spectator was upon him reading what he read, and somehow cognizant of the thought he thought. But he was quite alone. No eye of man was on him; no sound nor trace of man was to be heard nor seen. About a solitary pinnacle of rock that stood in the sea, like the steeple of some church submerged, a cloud of sea-fowl clanged and clung afar off; but there was no other sign of life; not a sail flecked the sea, nor pennon of smoke above a steamer's track marred the clear sky.

'Suppose she were to die!' She was thin and pale enough to be near death; while he, on the other hand, was robust and strong. She had always been ailing ever since he had known her, and that was of itself a trouble and a nuisance, and very hard upon any husband, surely. But creaking doors hang long, and how many years might she not last? Years? Nay, if once he took her back with him to Redcombe, would not mischief be done enough to last for many a year. What young girl of family and fortune, such as this letter spoke of, would care to be the second to such a first?—the natural daughter of some turfite, and whose mother (for all he knew) might be alive even yet, and turn up some day to cloud his prospects still more darkly. Once let it be known that he had become rich, and his wife was likely to find relatives enough and to spare. Uncle Dean was not a nice sort of connection to begin with, and knew a great deal more about his nephew by marriage than was convenient. Richardson himself had known the girl years ago. She would prove a link with the very set with which, above all things, it was necessary for him to break off. Then there came into his mind, unbidden, a certain story of a man and wife, who, being poor and miserable, had agreed to die together, the one being in earnest, and the other not. The woman, who dearly loved her husband, was anxious to escape with him into some other world which might be less cruel; but the man desired to remain in this one, only to be quit of his wife. It was decided that they should take some instantaneous poison, sitting back to back, so (as the man suggested) they might not watch each other's dying agonies; and the wife died accordingly; but her cunning mate did but pretend to take his portion, and lived on, a free and unencumbered man.

This tale had struck him when he first heard of it, and he had often recalled its details; but now he seemed to see the crime enacted as in a picture, and he recognised the features of the woman well—for it was Bess.

Once more, as if to escape from his own thoughts, he applied himself to the letter. Thousand devils! what was this? He could scarcely read a line. Was his sight failing? A thick red mist, almost as red as blood, seemed to pervade all things. His very hands were damp with it, and he held them close to his eyes to convince himself that it was not really blood upon them. The ocean had disappeared from beneath him; the sea-fowl had ceased to scream. Something, he knew not what, such as he had somewhere read of, must have happened to his brain, and he was going to be very ill. He would go back to Bess at once, who knew something of doctoring, and was, at all events, an excellent nurse. He rose and groped his way towards home. How dear it seemed to him now, that place where kindly hands and loving tenderness was awaiting him, if only he could but get there! His alarm about the state of his health was so absorbing, that for a few minutes he forgot the perilous nature of the path he was pursuing, when suddenly a light breeze touched his face, and the red mist, which was only a sudden sea-fog of intense thickness, which the sun-rays coloured luridly, but strove to penetrate in vain, was lifted for a moment like the corner of a curtain, and shewed him where he was. Upon either side a sheer precipice, and before and behind him that unprotected track he had even shuddered to tread in the broad daylight. He saw the white foam gleaming, and the cruel jagged rocks pointing up at him hundreds of feet below, and then the curtain dropped again. To go on, to go back, in that palpable darkness, was equally to die. Even to stand where he was, with his brain turning round—for this time the blood was really rushing to his brain—and his knees knocking together, as they did, in the extremity of his terror, was almost as perilous. But he slowly sank down on his knees, and stretching himself out at full length upon the narrow way, clutched its rocky edges with both hands. 'I never meant to kill her; I swear I never did,' murmured the wretched creature in his agony; for it seemed to him, indeed, as though Hell was gaping wide for him. 'She has been a good wife to me, better than I deserve; and why should I wish her dead!'

Had it not been for the deep humiliation of the moral spectacle which he thus afforded, anything

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more ludicrous than the position of Mr William Roberts it would be impossible to conceive. He resembled, more than anything human, one of those vermin which we see stretched out and nailed to the barn-doors by some inartistic gamekeeper. Nay, in contrast with the sublime grandeurs that lay around him—in the awful presence which Nature shewed—he looked more loathsome and grovelling than any such mere creeping thing. And there he lay, for nearly an hour, until the veil was lifted from the face of the sun, and earth and sky and sea once more rejoiced in the summer noontide. Then he rose, though trembling still, and made his way to safety and what was by comparison the mainland, where he relieved his feelings by a long string of execrations.

Again he sat down, and conned the letter, the contents of which one would have imagined he had by this time learned by heart; but so far was this from being the case, that he suddenly struck it with his hand, and leaped up with a curse, as though some adder had lain hidden in its folds, and bitten him. 'What's this?' cried he aloud, and pointing to the date at the top of the sheet, which had hitherto escaped his notice. '"September," she writes here, and this is August! Why, I ought to have received this news a year ago.'

CHAPTER XIV.—IT IS AN ILL WIND THAT BLOWS NOBODY GOOD.

Of course, folks do occasionally receive letters a little late, if one may believe the correspondents of the *Times*, who write with such indignation to complain of no less than three-quarters of an hour's delay in their suburban delivery; the nature of things compels, also, some to come to hand considerably after date, as when a missive arrives from the Underworld (as it often does), the writer of which may have done with either hemisphere four months before we get it, and learn the poor soul's intention to 'come home' for good by the next mail; but the delay of eleven months in the transmission of a missive from England to the Channel Islands was certainly quite unaccountable, notwithstanding the irregular postal arrangements of Formosa. What might not have happened at Redcombe Manor between the time of that letter's dispatch and of its arrival! was the thought that now drove its recipient almost frantic. And why, when she received no answer, did not his mother write again? Perhaps the old woman was dead, and his father and niece had been left to carry on their schemes against him without any opposition! Ellen might have married by this time, and secured an ample settlement at his own expense; or the old man might have died, and left her his sole heiress!

One thing only presented itself to his mind in the shape of comfort, if such a word as comfort can be applied to such a mind. If he had been so long kept in ignorance of matters at Redcombe, they also—the folks at home—were equally in the dark with respect to *his* affairs, nor were they curious, as he was, to learn what during the intervening period might have happened. He had not the character of a good correspondent; indeed, his mother and Ellen both knew him far too well to expect to hear from him about anything, while his father appeared to entertain no interest in him whatsoever. It would, therefore, not astonish the family that he should have delayed to communicate to them the intelligence of any occurrence, no matter of what importance. And, perhaps, in reply to this same letter, and before he appeared at the Manor-house in person, he might have certain news to send them of some moment.

Should this news be true or false? was the question which, his first burst of passion having subsided, Mr William Blackburn was now meditating as he strolled slowly homeward. It lay within his own power to make it either true or false, and the reflection that in the one case he would be telling a lie did not, we may be sure, affect the balance by a feather's weight. He had chosen purposely an indirect and unfrequented route across the fields, and his devious footsteps presently brought him to a very singular spot, which would, anywhere else but in Formosa, have been held in great esteem as a local lion. A huge circular hole, descending into what was shore at low tide, and sea at high, lay immediately before him. It was set in a green field, and the edges of the dreadful place were gay with wild-flowers—but it looked all the more terrible for these peaceful accessories. The noise of the waves, when the tide was up, as now, could be heard even on so calm a day at a great distance off, like muffled thunder; and in storm, the roaring of the imprisoned sea there pervaded the whole isle; but not in the wildest tempest had its foam been seen above the chasm. It boiled and raged as in some mighty caldron, but it could not boil over, by reason of the depth of the place, which was many hundred feet. To this abyss the approach was wholly unprotected, since it had generally a warning voice of its own, that no one could fail to hear. Attracted by the sound, although he had heard it many a time before, Mr William Blackburn once more assumed that abject attitude which became his character so well, and crawled on hands and knees to the very brink. He had been told a legend of some small spaniel, which had been caught by the tide in this awful spot, making its way to the surface and escaping; but it required faith indeed in whomsoever had once looked down 'the well-hole' to believe such a tale. The feat could never have been accomplished by any wingless creature. Whatever living thing on four feet, or on two, might have been so imprudent as to venture in there while the rising tide was near the mouth, must, without doubt, have perished; while, if a man fell over from above, he would either be dashed to pieces on the rock-strewn floor, or drowned, and presently carried out to sea, never to be beheld again. And 'how easily,' thought Mr William Blackburn, 'if he were curious, and not careful, a man *might* fall over this unprotected rim—or a woman!'

This line of thought, which, when he commenced it a few hours ago, had given him some disturbance, and later, even remorse, was now pursued by him without scruple. It was no longer startling, since it was not new; and as for that brief access of regret at having entertained it, he considered himself to have been taken unfair advantage of in the matter—to have been actuated by bodily fear, under which influence the law absolves us from all promises, and much more therefore from mere mental resolutions. There are many men of this same description, and whose ideas perhaps only require the same circumstances to flow in the same

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hideous channel. Mere Egotists—though, fortunately, the sufficiently momentous occasion does not often tempt them—are always prepared to carry out their principles to the end. They regard the supreme Providence as another Ego, with whose will their own is sometimes unhappily at variance; but they hope to have their own way, on any really serious point, nevertheless. Moreover, Mr William Blackburn was not altogether singular in his secret belief, that there was not such a very great inequality between these two egos; not, indeed, in importance (albeit the sense of his own importance was overwhelming, and outweighed that of all the rest of the human family), but in power. That is to say, although when sick, or at sea (or lying on his stomach, with a precipice on each side of him), he was ready enough to acknowledge his inferiority, when in rude health, and standing on *terra firma*, it seemed to him (notwithstanding he would have been slow to acknowledge it) that himself and the Supreme Government of the Universe were upon pretty equal terms. Whatever may be false in the philosophy of persons of this description, they are all eminently practical. The absence of the gentler emotions and all soft influences from external nature, as well as (in the present case at least) the moral deafness to all charms of literature and art, leave their mind free, and clear, as it were, its decks for *action*. Thus, many a more powerful intellect, in the contemplation of such a deed as that with which Mr William Blackburn's brain was busy, would have embarrassed itself with *pros* and *cons* of a more or less sentimental sort, even after the question was virtually decided. But it was not so with him; having once settled the matter, he could give all his attention to details. He took out his watch, and calculated how much time he had to *complete his arrangements* before leaving the island, as he had resolved to do by the same packet that had brought him the letter. He did not like trusting himself, even in that calm weather, in a fishing-boat, since storms arose so suddenly in those treacherous seas. There was, he had noticed, a good deal of unlading to be done, and he knew the skipper had relatives in Formosa whom he would probably visit, so that it was almost certain the vessel would remain until late in the afternoon. He had, therefore, three or four good hours to spare.

There were two considerations, however, which troubled him a good deal. The tide would soon be going out, and leave the well-hole bare and open to observation both from above and below; so that if an accident, such as he anticipated, were to happen to anybody before evening, there would be some chance, however small, of its being discovered. This was certainly unlucky. Secondly, he bitterly regretted having acted so roughly towards his wife in the presence of so many people on the beach that morning. This might be construed by them as a serious domestic quarrel, instead of the very usual incident that it really was, and, in case of her immediate disappearance, might excite suspicion against him. These two circumstances gave him considerable uneasiness, and even caused him to waver in the resolution he had formed. Yet he could not put off the matter in hand for a more seasonable opportunity; his impatience to reach Redcombe Manor was too feverish and absorbing; and there was no knowing within a week or two when the packet might come again. Moreover, although so entirely free from sentimental feelings, there was something unpleasant to him in the idea of sharing the same bed and board with one whom he had thus predestinated to disappear; and if, after his plan had been effected, no matter how satisfactorily, he should be fated to be left for several days and nights alone at Formosa—within hearing of this well-hole music too—that he foresaw would be very unpleasant also. If Mr William Blackburn occasionally shewed himself careless of the interests and feelings of others, it must be confessed that, in his own affairs, he was provident and considerate in a very high degree.

He had not dismissed this idea of procrastinating the matter in a hurry; his flesh had crept a little, but his judicial mind had given the proposition fair play. He had thought of sending a letter by the packet, to tell his mother that Bess had been dead these three months, before putting in an appearance at the Manor himself. But, notwithstanding the extraordinary seclusion of the island, and the mutual ignorance of its inhabitants and those of the world without respecting one another, he had felt this was a too dangerous game to play. Having therefore decided on his own immediate departure, there was no time to be lost in the arrangements. Would it be better—would it excite suspicion, or lull it, to secure his passage by the packet at once or later? He was already calculating the consequences of the act which he had resolved to perpetrate; and perhaps he turned his thoughts thither the more readily, since otherwise they would have busied themselves with the act itself, which was not an agreeable topic, and from which, to say truth, he shrank. It must be understood that the idea of disembarrassing himself from his life-companion was by no means a new one to Mr William Blackburn, although, until that morning, it had never taken any practical shape, and far less that terrible one which he was thus so averse to contemplate in detail. He had been married for many years, and had long regretted the circumstance. He had got tired of his wife with the most fashionable speed, and even before he had spent that dowry of a hundred pounds which had been one of her chief attractions to him. She was by no means a lady whose character might have formed the back-bone of a moral tract, but she was a great deal too good for Mr Blackburn, and he resented it. She annoyed him, as we have seen, by defending certain members of his family from his reproaches, and thereby indirectly accusing him of ingratitude. She had not sympathised with his transgressions of the law, had always warned him of what came of them, and, worse than all, she had proved herself a prophet.

True, she had that mysterious fondness for him that women so often entertain for absolutely worthless scoundrels, but that, he reasoned, was but his due. Moreover, it had its disadvantage, for it made her jealous. She was no longer pretty nor young; and although she must needs have been aware of her deficiencies in that respect, she had by no means evinced a dutiful resignation upon one or two occasions, when she had reason to suspect him of transferring his affections elsewhere. In short, she had been a clog upon him at all times, and one, which so far from his getting accustomed to, had increased in weight and inconvenience yearly; and now that a new life had suddenly unfolded itself before him,

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which, but for her, must needs be all prosperous enjoyment, he had determined to free himself of her once for all. The opportunities which Formosa afforded for this purpose were such as he would certainly never meet with again; and it seemed such a pity not to take advantage of them. The time would never again be so opportune, nor the risk—and he hated risk—so small. This beautiful island had never been shocked by the spectacle of a coroner's inquest—which was greatly in his favour, to begin with—and he had every reason to hope that it would be spared that calamity upon his account. In the worst possible case, what was more probable than that a devoted wife, deprived for the first time of her husband, should commit suicide; or that a lady, partial to wild-flowers, should venture too near the brink of the well-hole! In the best and most likely event, the sea would keep his secret safe for evermore. Thus much, in apology, or prudent reflection, crossed and recrossed Mr William Blackburn's mind, as he once more turned his steps towards the harbour, where the little packet was still lying, as he expected, without any sign of immediate departure. The skipper and crew had gone ashore, leaving but one man on board, whose face was unknown to him.

'What time do you sail?' inquired the intending voyager with an indifferent air.

The man looked up at the sky before he answered, but this the other did not observe, for his eyes were cast down upon the pebbles, with which his feet were busy, though his ears were on the stretch for the reply. 'At four o'clock, at latest,' answered the sailor. 'Are you going with us, sir?'

'Yes. Send up to the inn in an hour's time or so for my luggage.'

'Very good, sir. You and your good lady will have the ship all to yourselves to-day, for there is no other passenger.'

'My good lady, as you call her, is not coming,' answered Mr Blackburn: 'I shall be alone;' and he turned angrily upon his heel. How should this meddling idiot know that he had a wife, or think it necessary to allude to her? It was just a specimen of the way in which he and she were tied together, and it was high time he got quit of her indeed!

He hastily climbed the hill, and crossed the little strip of purple moorland that lay between him and home. From the verge of it he could see her sitting on the lawn, with something in her hand, which was probably some foolish story-book, such as she was fond of, full of murders and the like that never really happen. Her back was towards him, and she could not hear his footsteps on the grassy lane; he drew quite near on the other side of the tall fuchsia-hedge, and plucked at the blossoms nervously. He could now see that she was not reading, but that her fingers were busy with her lace-work, and this vexed him. He had, somehow, rather that his wife had been idling away her time, as usual, than be working for him; at the same time, he did not wish to appear displeased. He had a nod and a smile for her when she looked round at last and caught sight of him. She rose and came towards him hastily, and with a bright face: it was so very seldom that he regarded her so favourably, that she forgot in an instant his angry parting on the beach, and cried out with triumph, holding out the lace: 'See, Bill, how hard I 've worked! We shall be quite rich people soon at this rate!'

He tried to keep his smile, but his lips twitched uncomfortably, and his eyes shifted beneath her gaze.

'What is the matter, Bill?' asked she with hesitation, and a touch of fear, for her heart misgave her.

'Nothing, nothing, wench,' answered he shortly; 'some news has come from home; that 's all.'

'What! good news, Bill? and yet you do not look as though it were good news.'

'Never you mind my looks; I have got something to say to you. Let us walk a bit together somewhere.'

'Yes, Bill; I am quite ready.'

'But I am not, just yet. I have got to step in first and put up my things, for I am going by the packet this afternoon.'

'What! are we going to leave Formosa, and so soon?'

'No, and yes. I don't want you to ask questions, but—presently—to listen to me. In the meantime I am going to pack my clothes.'

'*Your* clothes, Bill, and not mine? You are going to leave me then? I know you are—for ever.'

'What a silly fool you are! It is impossible to reason with one who jumps to conclusions so ridiculously. It is necessary that I should start at once, upon business; that is all.'

'I would wait for a day or two, if I were you, sir,' said a cheery voice close beside him, which made him start and shiver. It was the landlady's husband, with some nets upon his back, returning from the shore.

'Why the devil should I do that?' inquired Mr Blackburn gruffly.

'Why, because I have heard you say that you are a bad sailor, and the packet is likely to get a pretty tossing. Look out yonder—there are white horses for you.'

And, indeed, although in the sheltered dell where they were standing, the change was almost imperceptible, the wind was rising, and had already changed the face of the sea.

'Yes, it is going to be dirty weather, sir; and you had better be quick with your packing if you really mean to go, for old Gourlay will be for up sail and starting, before matters get worse: we shall have a drop of rain too, and, indeed, it 's coming on already;' and as he spoke, a few drops pattered on the fuchsias.

'That will stop our walk,' said Mr William Blackburn slowly, with his eyes fixed, not on the gathering clouds, but upon the rising waves.

His landlord's simple phrase: 'It is going to be dirty weather,' had saved a life. The fact was, though it was still necessary that he should depart, he shrank from trusting himself to the sea in storm, with such a weight of crime upon his soul as he had contemplated, to sink him. Men often abstain from wicked actions, as well as perform them, from such apparently inadequate motives. This, however, was not Mr Blackburn's own reflection. He felt a touch of spiritual pride; a great temptation had presented itself, and he had put it away from him; there was, as it were, 'one to him' scored on the creditor side of the account, between himself and the other Ego. Indeed, it almost seemed to him that he had laid Providence under an obligation.

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Like many other persons who have decided, somewhat against their own inclinations, upon a merciful course of conduct, he now felt himself more than justified in indulging his temper, and saying exactly what he chose to the unconscious object of his clemency. He had been conciliatory and pleasant when his aim was to persuade his wife to take a little walk with him in the picturesque neighbourhood of the well-hole; and now that that plan had been suddenly frustrated, he resented, naturally enough, his late unnecessary simulation of good humour. Moreover, the success of the scheme which his practical mind had at once substituted for his former one, was to be furthered by violence and passion—it was his object now to terrify his wife, as it had been to reassure her—so that his new *rôle* exactly suited him every way.

'Never mind packing my clothes,' commenced he gruffly, when they had got within doors, and she had reached down his travelling trunk from its shelf, and was about to fill it; 'I'll do that myself; sit you down upon that chair yonder, and listen.' She obeyed; and taking up the little frame, her trembling fingers made pretence to resume her late occupation.

'Curse the lace-work,' cried he angrily, as he threw the contents of his wardrobe into the trunk, and stamped upon them to make them lie close; 'is it not work enough to listen to me?'

'Yes, Bill, it is indeed.'

Her wan face and timid eyes corroborated the fact beyond all force of words.

'Since that's the case,' proceeded he coolly, 'it must be a comfort to you to think that you will not have to listen much longer. This is the last time you will ever have to do it. We are going to part company for ever, we two.'

'To part company? What have I done, Bill? What have I said? What—I take Heaven to witness—have I thought, that should make you leave me? O Bill, I love you so, I do indeed—in spite of all—do not forsake me.' She threw herself upon her knees, and strove to catch his hand, but he drew it impatiently away. 'You think you will be happier, more secure, and prosperous without me—I know you have thought so often of late—but indeed it will not be so. I love you for your own sake, as no one else, except your mother, does. I can be secret as the grave; and I can work—oh, only let me work, and be your slave!'

'I don't want your work, woman.'

'Then you must be rich!' cried she involuntarily: 'that letter must have brought the news your father has so long been pining for.'

'You are right—it has,' answered the other bluntly; 'and you shall be rich too, or at least what will seem rich to you. And you shall spend the money here, in the place you like so much, and live here always.'

'What! alone?'

'That's as you please,' said he with a brutal laugh. 'I shall never interfere with you, whoever takes your fancy; and mind you never interfere with *me*, d'ye hear? for that's the thing I'm coming to. From henceforth, you are Mrs Roberts or Mrs any name you like, always excepting Blackburn. It's better not to mince matters; I have had enough of you and to spare.'

'O my God!'

'Yes, I know exactly what you are thinking. Is this the reward of all I have done for him? &c. Well, if you choose to put it in that way, yes, it is. I married you, it is true, since that seemed to be the best thing I could do just then; but circumstances alter cases. The best thing I can do now is to become a bachelor.—Don't speak, but listen: if you ever leave this island, or breathe one word of who you really are, or trouble me by any letter'—he had finished his packing now, and turned for the first time his resolute face upon her—'I'll kill you, I will, so help me.'

'So help you *who*, Bill? Will Heaven help you to desert a faithful wife—much less to kill her?'

'I don't know; perhaps the devil may instead; but I will do it, as sure as I stand here.'

'You will never do it, Bill; you never, never could!'

'Could I not, you fool? I could tell you something that would make you believe me, if it were worth my while. At all events, hear this. When I leave this house, which may be in five minutes, or may be in a quarter of an hour, according to the time when this trunk is fetched, our two lives will be henceforth as separate and apart as though they never had been one. I shall be dead to you; and you will be dead not only to me, but to all other folks who do not live upon this island. I shall myself convey the tidings of your decease—which happened months ago—to my parents and to Ellen. It is not likely that any one else will take the trouble to ask after you; but if they do, I have my answer ready for them. To-morrow, a disconsolate widower, I shall begin to wear mourning for you. Here is money enough to last you for a month or two; and before it is spent, I shall find an opportunity of sending you some considerable sum; more than I got with you, when you were young and pretty, so that you will have no right to complain; enough, if you please, to buy yourself, even now, another mate.'

For the first time for many a day the flush of indignation rose upon her pallid cheeks—for the first time she dared to hold up her thin hand to stop his cruel words. 'Your hate is sufficient,' said she with despairing calm; 'there is no need for insult and foul lies.'

'Lies!' cried he, astounded that this worm should turn. 'Are you mad, that you venture thus to answer me? This is a dutiful wife indeed, that has been mine so long! I tell lies, do I? You don't believe me when I threaten perhaps; when I told you, as I tell you again, that I would squeeze the life out of you with my hands, if ever you cross my path or come between me and my plans in any way. Then listen to this voucher for my words. I had it in my mind this very day—and not an hour ago—to—— What's that?'

There was a knock at the door, and the landlady appeared. 'There's a sailor, sir, come from the packet for your portmanteau. He says that you must start at once, for the ship sails immediately: the skipper is afraid that a gale is brewing.'

'There is the trunk,' cried her lodger hurriedly; 'let him take it.—A gale brewing? Not much of a gale, I hope. I am ready *now*—I will not keep him for an instant.—Here, my man, make haste.—Good-bye, Bess; you will remember what I told you.' He stepped towards her, as though to give her a parting embrace, but her fixed look deterred him; he had wished to save appearances before the landlady, yet he feared what his wife's despair might embolden her to say or do. So, with a nod

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of farewell, to which she made no answering sign, he took up his hat and left the house. The wind was rising rapidly, and the waves with it, and there was a noise in the air like muffled thunder.

'We shall have a roughish passage, sir,' observed his companion. 'When the well-hole begins to roar like that, it always means that mischief's brewing for us sailors.'

The colour which rage had called up in Mr William Blackburn's cheeks, and haste had kept there, deserted them at these words. What a menace would that noise have rung in his ears, had he carried out his late intention! and, even as it was, his guilty soul shook with terror. He could not now, as before, persuade himself that he had not meditated murder, for had he not been within a hairbreadth of confessing it to his proposed victim?

A MUDIE AMONG THE LOUTS.

'My lout *will* not learn!' was, some time since, the burden of the lament of an English prelate great in matters educational. In like manner—to descend from authority so high to a much more humble experience—'I shall *never* teach those louts to read!' was my exclamation, as, some two-and-twenty years ago, I sat, at the close of the day's work, seeking solace in the cup which never fails to cheer. About a year previously, I had been appointed to the charge of a greatly neglected endowed school in one of the midland counties, by the then President of the Committee of Council on Education. As the village in which the school is situated, together with several adjacent villages, is the property of the patron of the school, and as the school was entirely free to all children belonging to two villages—as, moreover, the patron provided school-books and every other requisite, setting absolutely no limit to the expense incurred to secure a good education to all classes, I put my shoulder to the wheel in earnest, seeing before me, as I thought, no obstacle to driving it in a rapid and uninterrupted career to the summit of the hill of knowledge. But, unhappily, I was exerting all my force on the *top* of the wheel, and, push as hard as I might, it remained stationary; for, fresh from a training college, I threw the whole weight of my learning upon the poor louts, who gaped at my mystifying 'ologies' in bewilderment. Thus, at the end of a year's perspiring in my vocation, I found myself just where I was at the beginning, and in the weariness of my despair, vented my despondency in that exclamation: 'I shall *never* teach those louts to read!'

'How can you expect to?' (This from my unsympathising wife, who was fondling our first-born.) 'The poor things may well be frightened at the horrid hard words you put them to read. What interest *can* they find in trying to make out a lot of sounds which have no meaning for them?'

'But they will have a meaning for them, when they once know how to apply the proper sounds to the printed words in their books.'

'Not at all, for their books are all about things they don't understand. Give them books full of pretty stories to read, or tell them a story, and then give them the book to read it from, and see if they are stupid over that! Just fancy trying to teach Trotty here to say: "Houses are made of bricks and mortar," instead of "Dadda! Mamma!" No, no; darling shall not have bricks and mortar thrown at her; there, mamma will throw her at her big-worded papa, and he shall teach her to say "Dadda" so prettily.' And, suiting the action to the word, Madam deposited the cherub in my lap with a thump, and left me to cogitate upon her advice in the intervals of our efforts to impart infantile speech. And very good advice I found it, too, especially when read by the light of our then occupation; for what were we doing but teaching our Trott to attach a meaning to arbitrary sounds, by applying them to objects of whose existence her little mind evidently had some glimmering?

So, laden with some numbers of a certain *Miscellany*, which we were taking in, we next day entered upon our labours with a determination to test our new theory. Passing a knot of the most loutish of louts, engaged in an unusually profound confabulation, we asked what was the matter, and were informed that the brother of one of them had seen 'a wild man, all hair,' in the Spinney, as he came home late the night before. It turned out, during the day, that the 'wild man' was a cow, seen by the uncertain moonlight in an unlooked-for place; but it suggested to us a tract in the periodical in question on 'Children of the Wilds;' and after a little preliminary explanation, we read one or two tales from it, and were rewarded by witnessing unmistakable indications of intelligent delight and interest overspread the usually heavy countenances around us. After the reading, we offered to lend the tract to any boy desiring to read it for himself, stipulating that each borrower should apply to us for help when he met with a word he could not make out. In this way, the periodical passed through about a dozen hands, and came back to us well thumbed, and *perfectly understood* (as proved by a searching cross-questioning) by all who had read it.

This laid the foundation of a class of 'readers for reading's sake' amongst us; and, still better, it proved the foundation of our Lending Library; for, following up this tract by other interesting tales, we soon had more borrowers than we had books to lend, a difficulty at once overcome by the Patron, with his accustomed liberality, allowing a certain annual sum for the gradual formation of a village library. This has continued to grow, until it now numbers about one thousand volumes, representing about six hundred distinct works. Incited by the interest their children took in reading the books they borrowed, the fathers and mothers of our louts began to apply for 'libraries' (a phrase coined by borrowers in the infancy of the library, and still tenaciously keeping its ground in spite of our—perhaps supererogatory—efforts to inculcate the more correct expression 'library books'), and thus necessitated the introduction of a still greater variety of reading into the library. The original periodical, however, was for many years the pet book and back-bone of the collection, as proved by the fact, that one strongly bound set has been completely thumbed to death, and the second set, equally strongly bound, is close upon death's door from over-work; while the fact that each volume of the set was borrowed, on an average, four times during the past year, proves its continued popularity. Of course, louts from the

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neighbouring villages stood aghast on finding our 'Louts' Corner' deserted, and, learning how their old friends spent their evenings, *they* began to wish to borrow books, and schools multiplying under the same munificent support, the power of reading became general, the library grew into a much prized local institution, accessible to, and extensively used by the inhabitants of six parishes (whose united population amounted at the last census to 2012), who, if they choose to invest twopence in the purchase of a catalogue, can select their own books, or, if not, can have books selected for them by the librarian on the following conditions (found in each catalogue):

'*Notice.*—This library is maintained by the Duke of ——, for the benefit of the inhabitants of the parishes of ——, ——, ——, ——, ——, and ——, any of whom can borrow books, free of charge—one volume at a time only—by applying to the librarian on Mondays. The librarian will require applicants for books who are unknown to him to produce a written recommendation from the clergyman of the parish in which they reside. Books borrowed must be punctually returned at the time named in them, or a fine of one penny a week for each volume will be strictly enforced (which fines will be placed in the poor's-box of the parish in which the borrower resides); and any book written in, damaged, or destroyed must be replaced before any member of the family in which such destruction occurred will be permitted to borrow another book. Persons sending for books are requested to specify the numbers, and not the titles of the books from this list; and to prevent disappointment, several numbers should always be put down. Any expense attending the conveyance of books to and from the library must be defrayed by the borrowers.'

The time allowed for the reading of a volume varies from two to six weeks, according to its size and character: six weeks being allowed for a volume of Knight's *Old England*, Arrowsmith's *All Round the World*, bound volumes of *Chambers's Journal*, the *Leisure Hour*, and volumes of a similar size, also for Youatt's *Horse*, *Cattle*, &c., and other works of reference; four weeks for thick octavos, such as the *Heir of Redclyffe*, the double volumes of *Chambers's Miscellany;* and three or two weeks for smaller volumes. Subject to these conditions, two thousand four hundred and five books were lent out during the year 1868; being an average of nearly four readers for each complete work contained in the library. As the collection originated in a desire to supply interesting reading for the young, *fiction* necessarily occupies a prominent place in it; but works of devotion, works on emigration, domestic economy, and agricultural matters have gradually been added, until our local Mudie has become a collection of books sought after with eagerness by every class of the population. However, as with the great Mudie, so with us, fiction is most read, as proved by the following facts. *Robinson Crusoe* found sixteen readers during the past year; a volume of *Tales from Grimm* was borrowed twenty times in the same period; Wolf's *Fairy Tales*, eighteen times; *Tales of Village Children*, twenty-one times; and other tales were equally popular. Allegories also find eager readers, the *Pilgrim's Progress*, the *Vast Army*, the *Combatants*, &c. being in constant demand. Among devotional works, the Bishop of Oxford's edition of *Thomas à Kempis*, Jowitt's *Christian Visitor*, and Hall's *Contemplations* are most borrowed. *Chambers's Journal* and kindred works are read chiefly by lout's master and mistress. Regardless of the request contained in the rules, borrowers very frequently ask for a book, not by its number nor by its title, but by reference to some incident contained in it—a method of distinguishing a book satisfactory enough, as proving it is really read, but sometimes puzzling to the librarian; thus, one lout says his brother 'wants that book where a woman took a nail-passer to church in her pocket to fasten her pew-door to keep pipple from comin' in, and when she found a lot of pipple had got there afore her, she sot down squelch athout rememberin' the nail-passer, and bounced up again with a screech.' Another wants 'that book that Tom had afore harvest, about a boy who was pulled through a keyhole.' The greatest puzzle, for a time, was to suit those who asked for an 'open book,' until it was discovered that by this phrase they meant to convey the idea of a book neither a novel nor a strictly devotional work. Some will commence with the first of a long series of volumes, and perseveringly read through the entire series. Thus, a rural policeman read once completely through the twelve volumes of Lardner's *Museum of Science*, and had gone some distance through them a second time, when promotion removed him, to his regret, beyond the limits of the circulation of the library books. One young lout undertook the study of the eight volumes of Dr Hook's *Ecclesiastical Biography*, read through three volumes, and then gave in, and took to the *Sunday at Home* by way of a change.

The impatience shewn by a rapid reader who, happening to be a volume behind a slower reader, has to wait a week or two for the return of the coveted volume of some serial before he can continue the thread of his reading, is a good test of the genuine interest taken in the books. Our village Mudie has, like all human institutions, a few detractors. One mother, for instance, whose son left his home very abruptly some years ago, declared her conviction that it was 'all along of that *Roberson Crewsher*, for Jack was alleys a talkin' of goin' to furrin parts aterwuds.' As, however, he did not go into foreign parts, but remained in England, and adopted the occupation of a hawker as an outlet for his wandering propensities, and has since married and settled down as a respectable tradesman, the mother is mollified, and admits 'them libries are uncommon good things, for when her boys had got one of them they liked, they never wanted to go out anights.' Now and then a mother complains that her daughter is not so handy in helping, because 'she alleys wants to be at her library;' but as our louts' sisters are much sought after as domestics, and secure good situations, and, as a rule, keep them with credit, the mothers admit no harm is done; while both fathers and mothers alike encourage their sons to borrow books, for they say they always know where to find them of an evening when they have got a 'library.' The intelligence and unloutishness of our louts is a subject of frequent comment amongst strangers; and much of this is due to the taste for reading fostered by our little Mudie, which, as will be seen, has grown with the wants of our louts, and has been, as far as possible adapted to, while always selected with a view to raise their tastes.

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It affords a working illustration of the good which may be effected by a large landed proprietor, by the judicious outlay of a few pounds annually for the intellectual improvement of the people on his estates—and is a partial solution of the great question of the day: 'How shall we elevate the agricultural labourer?'

PODDINS ON THE NEW VELOCIPEDE.

We were quietly running up to town as usual by the 10.45, Shopopolis North Branch, when Tweezer made this mild observation: Tweezer, who sits opposite to me, in the off back corner—Tweezer's corner by right of custom, as much as the American rocking-chair by the fireside at Washington Villa, Shopopolis South, or his own side of the bed in Tweezer's own domestic chamber. Silas B. Tweezer is in the advertising and general agency line, and his conversation often partakes of the red flaming poster and sensational hand-billious style. 'Observe,' said Tweezer, attracting special attention to his remarks from a female single second, with three halves, all in red feathers like young Indians—'observe where I pint my umbrellar! Space for passin' as narrer as the neck of a bottle—trains a-dashin' backerds and forrerds from all pints of the cumpiss—Branch Shopopolis—Shopopolis South—New City Line—Grand Metteripollitan—Washin' Cross—Kenninton Junction—and South-eastern Counties direct—all a-crossin' on these heer identical rails—pintsman gits spark in his eye—signal hitched—trains all due—the hull lot of 'em one jam smash; and there,' concluded Tweezer, pointing over the low parapet with his green gingham, and unconsciously quoting the Elder Weller—'there, gents, you air!'

Following the direction of the umbrella, I glanced down from our dizzy height above the chimney-pots to the busy road below. Two wagons, laden with agricultural implements, which happened to be passing at the moment, with a vast expenditure of clash and clatter, struck me with the idea that patent scarifiers would be uncommonly bad falling for a middle-aged retired tradesman rather inclined to be stout.

'The new methid of loky-motion,' continued Tweezer, replacing his umbrella, and quoting a green circular, 'combines the most puffik safety with extreme velocity; it is so simple in its mekkinism that a child can work it (vidy the infant Empirer, at this very moment a-treadlin' afore admirin' crowds at his paternel Tooleries), so ekkinomical that hosses in cuss of time will go out of date and fashin. I ellude, gents,' said Tweezer, distributing a few circulars, hitching out the corner of his season-ticket, and concluding rather hastily as we rolled in under the skylights of the Great Gun Street Terminus—'I ellude to the New Patint French Bicycle Ve-locipede, the most extrornerry invention of the age, for particklers of which, includin' prices, see below.'

After parting from Tweezer (whose offices are in Rumble Lane, City; gloomy caverns strewn with instruments of torture not unlike the caves of the giant in the *Progress*), I proceeded, ruminating, upon my way, until I came suddenly against a batch of spectators, who were admiring an enormous work of art, which adorned the hoarding of a burned-out tobacconist in Little Rattling Street. A gigantic individual, whose too vacant expression of countenance had apparently all run to whiskers, was depicted bestriding an extraordinary machine, like the longitudinal slice of a pony-carriage, with rapidly revolving wheels.

A little further on, in the same street, the shop-windows of an enterprising tradesman revealed the actual invention itself, rearing up against the window-frame, as though frantically endeavouring to get out into the crowded thoroughfare, and realise, amongst admiring draymen, its fabulous rates of speed. I have always had what is called 'a turn' for inventions; and unable to withstand this scientific temptation, I entered the shop and became the envied purchaser of French Velocipede No. 573, best make, patent break, and all the recent improvements.

Let me epitomise my probationary exercises on No. 573, glancing but briefly at the innocent astonishment of Emily and Polly Anne, and the energetic remonstrances of Mrs P., when the sinister-looking machine, at first (too prophetically) mistaken for a patent mangle, was set down at the door of Plum Tree Villa; at the subsequent impossibility of reconciling with any known law of mechanics the standing upright of two narrow wheels, one placed exactly in front of the other, with a stoutish gentleman on the top of them; at the scoffing and contumely heaped upon that individual by the juvenile population as he failed again and again in that vain attempt; at the gathering cries of those ragged clans of the streets at a later and more advanced stage of proceedings: 'Hi, hi! Jim, come along you! heer's the man on the dandy-oss, ain't his coat muddy—not at all!'—or, 'Bill! Charl'! heer's a game! old Poddy a-comin' down the hill atop of a razzir-grinder!'—at the strange foreign tricks of the cantankerous thing, doubling itself up at inconvenient times into an inextricable tangle of legs, wheels, cranks, arms, and coat-tails, lying helplessly on the ground until untwisted and set upright again by some passing Samaritan (not without cuticular abrasion and force of the English language)—merely glancing, I say, at these preliminary experiences, let me describe the adventure to which all this introduction tends, the great ride to Coppington Green.

It was a lovely morning—a velocipedean morning—roads dry and smooth as a pavement, not a cloud in the sky (umbrellas, by-the-bye, *are* not velocipedean), and scarcely a loose stone upon the highway. At the same time, the grand element of adventure—danger, the spice of enterprise, would by no means be absent on the occasion. The pits of the Shopopolis Gravel Company Limited are situated on one side of the Coppington road, and some particularly deep water-ditches on the other.

The great ride was commenced at an unusually early hour. In the first place, it was desirable to avoid the attentions of the juvenile population before referred to; and secondly, there still remained some little eccentricities of the machine unconquered, which made it desirable to leave a very wide margin of daylight for the return.

I may say, professionally, that the forward journey was a fine run. By dexterous steering, the contracted and narrow passage (some thirty feet or so) between stony Scylla on my left and chickweedy Charybdis on my right was kept well within. Vehicles travelling in an opposite direction were, fortunately for my serpentine course, remarkably scarce; and, with the exception of an

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old woman of the period, with eggs, pervading the road in a red cloak and crush bonnet, and obstinately insisting on being knocked down; and a timber-wagon, built of excessively contusional material, the adventure so far was a success.

But why did the tollman at Deepditch Gate (whose shins I slightly barked in passing) inquire with such intense interest if I was a-coming back agin that way? Why did that objurgatory female propound a similar query with a fiendish chuckle of revenge? Why, ah! why? Let me continue. Duly refreshing my inward man, and giving my iron steed a lubricatory feed of train-oil, I set forth upon my homeward journey.

But, what—the first mile or so being deviously passed—what—what is that deep red tinge upon the distant road?—that moving pillar of dust, that trampling of horny feet, that ferocious bellowing of beasts and men? Gracious powers above! it is a rushing, roaring, surging torrent of infuriated beef! Herds upon herds they come, maddened by pointed goad, taunted into desperation by profane drovers, bearing down upon me and my steed like the wild buffaloes of a western prairie, displaying that unpleasant mixture of fury and terror which the hateful tribe, in their hour of excitement, are only too prone to exhibit.

Dismount? turn? Alas! those operations required an amount of time and deliberation utterly inadmissible in a crisis; indeed, I may remark in passing that the immature velocipedean labours under the well-known disadvantage of the crocodile family with regard to the latter operation.

Too late I remembered the ominous placard that fluttered against Coppington Cross! Contagious Diseases Prevention Bill, Proclamation, Victoria Regina, whereas, &c., &c. Too late I saw it all! The warning of the tollman, the mysterious joy of the overturned, the scarcity of opposing vehicles—it was *Coppington Fair!* That very day, at that very hour, were Coppington roads thrown open once more to all manner of horned beasts; and towards Coppington Green, from all points of the compass, came bovines of all colour and size, compensating themselves by an extra amount of ferocious playfulness for their long period of restriction to field and paddock.

In less time, as novelists remark, than is occupied by this description, the nearest roaring, rearing, slavering, bellowing herd approached. With an energy and promptness that only a great mind displays, I grasped the occasion, and instantly decided upon a plan of action.

The deep stony gravel-pits on the one side offered no luxurious retreat; but the water-ditches on the other were unusually full and chickweedy, and, weighted as I was with that terrible machine, offered a solution to the difficulty that could not for one moment be entertained.

As to continuing my onward course—to be thrown at the first rude contact from that delicately adjusted balance; to lie twisted and entangled in the horrible embrace of wheel and crank, whilst an unlimited number of red Devons passed over my unhappy body—I shuddered as I dismissed the thought.

My decision, as I have said, was quickly made. Hastily selecting the least precipitous of the pits to be found on so short a notice, I gave one last look to the front. The great hairy, trampling monsters were upon me, one climbing upon the other in their ferocious haste. I turned the guide-handle of the machine. Ah-h-h!

The last expression very inadequately represents the amount of wind knocked out of me by a singularly large stone at the bottom of that gravel-pit.

Whilst I was gradually recovering breath and consciousness, a crowd of drovers and other passengers gathered round me.

'A clomsy tomble, mister,' remarked the most sympathetic of the lot.

'Yes, indeed,' I gasped, affectionately feeling my legs and arms; 'I 'm thankful it 's no worse.'

'Worse! You don't know how bad it is yet, *you* don't. Worse! Why, mister, you 've agot bones abroke, *you* have.'

Gradually and slowly, I acquired a comparatively upright position. Legs and arms right so far. The machine lay twisted up into a knot (as usual) at the bottom of the pit. I felt glad to see that its confounded back was broken in two places.

'If you han't agot your bones abroke,' said the first speaker, in an injured tone, 'I mean to say you ought to have! Do you go for to expect to fall a matter of ten foot, and narry a rib het off, and narry a leg abroke, nor a deslercation, nor nothing? Why, it 's agin natur!' With excusable anger and disgust, my friend looked at me once more, spat upon the ground, turned upon his heel, and went his way, a sour and disappointed man.

Well, with the exception of a damaged rib or two, and a little more fancy needlework than was quite agreeable as connected with cuts and wounds, the matter was not so very bad after all. I even proposed to renew the journey at a more propitious time; but Mrs P. strongly objecting, I consented at last to the sale of the new velocipede, which, I regret to say, at the current price of old iron, did not add much to the family exchequer.

THE DEAD INVALID.

White in a whiter shroud she lies,
Awaiting to be borne away,
Where loving friends, with sobs and sighs,
Will leave her lying, clay in clay.

Hers was a life all pain-opprest
From its dim dawn to its surcease:
Yet though it could not give her rest,
It still vouchsafed her endless peace.

If dull Despair o'erspread her mind,
Clothed in the darkness of the tomb,
Fair, full-orbed Hope rose up behind,
And chased away the gathered gloom.

And so it is—the duskiest shade
The all-illuming sunlight tracks;
And storms in murkiest mist arrayed
Bear the same glory on their backs.

Strange glimpses of the beautiful
Abound in e'en the dreariest night;
And lives the darkest warped and dull
Are all shot through with threads of light.

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AT TATTERSALL'S.

LONDON has but two mysteries, the Stock Exchange and Tattersall's, and the latter is in many respects a counterpart of the former. Standing, like it, beyond the pale of the law, it is governed by a committee of its own nomination, possessing the double powers of a court of law and of a court of honour. Like the Stock Exchange, too, Tattersall's has its Bulls and its Bears, its millionaires and its legs, its plungers and its defaulters. It has, moreover, its days of business and its settling days; and it may be added that Tattersall's, like the Stock Exchange, is, in its present form and on its present scale, an organised development of one of the characteristic traits of the age, a trait which is as strongly marked in the City clerk who dabbles in stocks on a salary of three hundred pounds a year, as in the noble who throws away an income of three hundred thousand pounds a year by making a book on a stable of yearlings.

What, however, strikes the visitor fresh from Capel Court is not the points of resemblance between the great institutions of the east and west, so much as those of difference, as he strolls into Tattersall's yard, and finds himself in what looks like a section of the Crystal Palace, with a long line of horse-boxes, an auctioneer's rostrum, a drinking-fountain, a fox, and a bust of George IV. This is the outer circle of the mystery of iniquity; and on a business day you will, in the height of the season, find it filled with a host of people, representing pretty well every shade of what is called sporting life: ministers of state, sprigs of the aristocracy, limbs of the law, broken-down legs trying to 'get on for half a sov.' upon the strength of a stable secret, and broken-down huntsmen, who, for the price of a glass of beer, will tell you the secret history of every horse entered for the Derby and the Oaks, and the winners into the bargain, if you have faith, and will cross their hands with a bit of gold. Here and there, too, if you know anything of the world represented by *Bell's Life*, you will find an ex-pugilist—now and then perhaps a man with a broken nose, who has won the champion's belt—button-holing a duke or a marquis; for on the turf, as under it, as Lord George Bentinck wittily said, 'all men are equal.'

If you possess the *entrée*, and can pass from this outer circle to the centre of the temple of horse-racing, you will find yourself in somewhat selecter company. The Subscription Room at Tattersall's is to the turf and the men of the turf what the Stock Exchange is to the City and City-men. It is closed to all except the initiated; and its 'price current' governs all the betting transactions within the four seas. In contrast with the Stock Exchange it is a palace. All its appointments are distinguished by an air of luxury and refinement. Tesselated pavement, stained-glass windows, a line of stuffed leather seats running round the room, you find here, partly in the form of an exchange, partly in the form of a club smoking-room, everything that the luxury and good taste of the Jockey Club can suggest for the convenience and pleasure of its members.

These, I need hardly say, are the *élite* of the turf—the flower of the motley host you found in the yard criticising the form of a two-year-old who had ruined her owner by losing the Derby and one hundred thousand pounds with it—peers of parliament, members of the House of Commons, City bankers whose scrawl on the back of a bill is good for a quarter of a million in Threadneedle Street; barristers whom you may find on the woolsack to-morrow, or in the ermine and horse-hair of a lord chief-baron; guardsmen and journalists; chamberlains of the royal household, and officers of the lord mayor's court. Here, till yesterday, you might see a boy from Eton, the heir to a great name and a fine estate, backing his opinion to the tune of fifty thousand pounds, with money borrowed at six hundred per cent. Here you may still find a Lincolnshire squire, whose wits are probably worth to him twenty thousand pounds a year, if he chooses to exercise them.

Admiral Rous and Sir Joseph Hawley are state pillars in this aristocratic republic. Their word upon a point of honour or upon a rule of the ring carries with it all the force of law to thousands,

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who know them only as the great twin brethren of the turf. Lord Derby and Lord Palmerston were in their day as popular at Tattersall's as in the House of Commons; and it was by mixing with English racing-men that Napoleon is said to have acquired that thorough command over the play of his features which has given him the title, even with diplomatists, of the Sphinx. You can read nothing in the face of a thorough-bred man of the turf except perfect self-possession, shrewd intellect, and a will of iron; and you may pick those out in the Subscription Room at a glance from the crowd who are purchasing their experience at the expense of their ancestral oaks, and perhaps of something worse. Here is one of these neophytes of the ring—a companion of princes, the son of a minister of cabinet rank, with the blood of the eastern emperors in his veins. He is booking a bet of 100 to 1 to a youth with the down still on his cheeks, the son of one of the most illustrious of the Crimean heroes. In the centre of a group of bookmakers and aristocratic legs stands a young man, still, I believe, on the sunny side of thirty, who tells you with the utmost nonchalance that he has just sold an estate to a City-man for three hundred thousand pounds, to square up his book and to fight the ring. He is the representative of a long line of mailed barons who fought under the walls of Jerusalem, at Cressy, and at Agincourt—statesmen and warriors who in their time administered government and war with more than the capacity of Richelieu; and he is flattering himself with the presumptuous hope that in these piping days of peace it is his destiny to add one more exploit to the achievements of his race by breaking the ring.

That is one of the illusions of youth on the turf. There are, I believe, two or three gray-bearded members of the Jockey Club who, if put to the rack, would tell us that they began their first book thirty years ago with that impression themselves. It was the hope, till the last, of Lord George Bentinck; and even after his fair lands had passed out of his hands, the Marquis of Hastings still talked of accomplishing what the Napoleon of the turf had failed in. Short, however, of attempting to break the ring, no man who really knows how to make a book, need be altogether ruined on the turf. You may meet men by the dozen at Tattersall's who, if they chose to tell you their secrets, would tell you that their wits are worth ten thousand or twenty thousand pounds a year to them. Reduced to a system, nothing is safer than 'business on the turf.' Lord George Bentinck for years kept up his magnificent stud by his book; and Mr Harry Hill, his chief ring-commissioner, could, I fancy, tell us some piquant stories, if he were to turn to his note-books. It is said that in a single year (1845, I believe) Lord George netted nearly fifty thousand pounds upon a couple of horses alone; and it oozed out in the *Qui Tam* action at Guildford that another of his horses, *Gaper*, ran at the Derby to win a hundred and twenty thousand pounds more. In the case of the Marquis of Hastings, these *coups* of Lord George Bentinck were reversed; and if it were possible to strike a balance, I suspect it would be found that Lord Hastings lost more than Lord George, with all his victories, ever won. It is, however, by the ruin of men like the Marquis of Hastings that the ring is kept up; for without them the bookmakers must soon go to the dogs. Left to themselves, they would eat each other up, like crabs, in a couple of years; and there would be nothing left of the ring but half-a-dozen leviathan bookmakers, a crowd of paupers with their note-books and metallic pencils, and the traditions of Tattersall's. At present, the peers and the legs, the porcelain and the clay, millionaires and Yorkshire stable-boys, are all mixed up together; and as long as there are peers to be fleeced and estates to be cut up to ribbons, Tattersall's will remain what it is at present—one of the most flourishing institutions in London.

Originally, Tattersall's was a mere stable-yard and horse repository, distinguished from the general run of establishments of this kind only by the larger attendance of sportsmen. The Subscription Room is, comparatively, the creation of yesterday; and there must be scores of men yet on the turf—men who have been ruined by their speculations on two-year-olds, and men who, beginning as stable-boys, now keep their banking-accounts with a standing balance of ten thousand pounds—who, when they first consulted 'Old Tattersall' about joining the Room or making a book, were bluntly told to keep their money in their pockets; for it is an odd illustration of the caprice of circumstances, that the founder of the yard—the man under whose management the Corner attained its highest prestige, and became the exchange of turf-men—had what many of his friends thought an insane horror of a betting-book, and did all that a man in his position could do to check it, by friendly hints and suggestions to youths fresh from college, and fired with the idea of making their sporting *début* in the world. Ten years have now elapsed since Old Tattersall, after a reign of fifty years, handed over his hammer to younger, if not more vigorous hands; and in those ten years the science of betting has grown and developed more than it had probably done in the previous half-century. What Old Tattersall would have said if called upon, as his descendants have been, to knock down a two-year-old with L.2500 of forfeits on his head, I cannot say; but that fact sufficiently illustrates the daring and adventurous spirit of speculation that marks the turf-men who now meet under the shadow of his rostrum to gamble away with 'dice on four legs.' Tattersall's yard has grown with the growth of horse-racing; and it now forms the central institution of the turf, is the focus of half the gambling that is carried on within the four seas, gives the cue to every bookmaker, regulates by its quotations the odds on every race-course, and through the system of agency that has sprung up within the past few years, is open to every clerk, or draper's assistant, or stable-boy who wishes to stake half-a-sovereign. Through the action of these men—men who make betting on races the profession of their lives—a million of money is often staked, in sums ranging from ten shillings to ten pounds, on a single race; and on the eve say, of the Derby, or the Oaks, or the St Leger, Tattersall's presents a scene of remarkable animation. '6 to 1 or 650 to 100 against *Dispatch*,' '8 to 1 against *Fortunatus* or *Pearl Diver*,' '100 to 7 against *Guy of Warwick*,' '1000 to 30 against *Huntsman's Daughter*,' you hear offered on all sides of you; and in this way, in the course of a couple of hours in the afternoon, one hundred thousand pounds have been known to be invested

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on five or six horses. This, in fact, is now a regular branch of commission business; and the account of what was done at Tattersall's yesterday appears in all the newspapers as regularly as the City Article and the Court Circular.

To an outsider, all this looks wild hap-hazard work, and in most cases it is so. Nine-tenths of the people who send their cheques, and post-office orders, and bank-notes to Mr Wright and Mr Sydney Smith, know nothing more about horses or jockeys than they pick up from *Bell's Life* or the *Field*. They simply invest their money 'at a venture,' acting either upon the suggestions of their own fancy, or upon the advice of Argus or Hotspur. Sir Joseph Hawley's horses are always great favourites with them. The Marquis of Hastings' were at one time. To-morrow, they will pin their faith to the colours of a Norfolk squire. These selections are the result of pure caprice; but it is remarkable how, even when acting in this way, the public acts together. Yet, after all, this is not wilder work, perhaps, in the long run than the staking money on favourites; for I believe—and experience warrants the belief—that in five years, any man with a cool head and a long purse might make enough to buy the fee-simple of Hyde Park by betting a thousand to one against all the favourites that are started for the Derby, the Oaks, and the St Leger.

The success of *Pretender* in this year's Derby will intensify the public folly, but experience proves that any horse may win, and that, in the long-run, even when favourites are run to win, the chances are vastly against them. To say that a man is making a book upon two-year-olds is, at Tattersall's, to say that a man is in a fair way to finish his career in the Court of Chancery or Basinghall Street. It is the *ne plus ultra* of gambling on the turf; and I need hardly go out of my way to illustrate its consequences, since the fact must be sufficiently obvious to every man who knows anything at all of horse-flesh, of the risks of training, of the vices of grooms, and of the foibles of jockeys.

A COUNTY FAMILY.

CHAPTER XV.—IN THE BOUDOIR.

In the boudoir at Redcombe Manor—with which pleasant chamber there was a door of communication both with Mrs Blackburn's room and that of her grand-daughter—there are seated, this autumn morning, two fair girls. One of them is its mistress, Ellen Blackburn; the other is she who should have been its mistress, and for whom it was originally decked and furnished, Lucy Waller. They are both very soberly attired, and the latter is in slight mourning. Their tongues do not go so fast as those of two young people of their sex usually do. Each has apparently her own thoughts to occupy her, as well as her needle and thread. Just now there was total silence; but presently, as they happen to look up from their work at the same moment, with a little sigh, their eyes meet, and Ellen perceives that those of her companion have tears in them.

'Dearest Lucy,' says she, 'this is very naughty of you. Did you not promise me not to fret?'

'Yes, dear, I did. I strive to bear up all I can; I do indeed. But—— Ah, you don't know!' She put up both her hands, and cleared from her forehead wearily the masses of blue-black hair that hung over her gipsy face. It was curious that Lucy, who had been nurtured so tenderly, was of so hardy a type; while Ellen, whose bringing up had been such as we have known it, was as fragile as a lily. 'I wish I could do that sort of plain work, Ellen, that you are so quick about,' observed the former. 'When one knows one is doing some good, and being of some use, the mind, I suppose, may take some interest in the business of the fingers; but as to this stupid filigree-work of mine, which papa tells me is so much more ladylike—I might fold my hands and do nothing, so far as shutting out sad thoughts is concerned.'

'And yet your papa is quite right, my dear,' returned Ellen, smiling. 'It is certainly very vulgar to employ one's self with flannels and calico. Only, as for me, I can't do anything else. I have no more idea of how to arrange those beautiful beads of yours than the butler. I had not the advantage of being brought up a lady, you know.'

'You were born one, my dear, and therefore did not need it. I wish *I* had been born a poor girl, and then—and then—but no, I would rather it was as it is, sad as it is: "'Tis better to have loved and lost, than never to have loved at all."'

'I think it must be so,' said Ellen simply. 'Even if I was never to see John again (which Heaven forbid), I should always thank God for having permitted me to know and love him.'

'And, thinking so, it would seem to you wrong and wicked, would it not, even to dream of another lover?'

'Another lover, Lucy? How can you talk so? The very idea is quite shocking. Have I not solemnly promised to be his wife—or, at all events, no other man's?'

'But if he were dead, my dear?'

'That would be just the same. At least,' said Ellen, interrupting herself hastily, 'it seems so to me now, because he 's alive. I don't like even to imagine such a dreadful thing as John's death. But still it is quite possible, surely, and by no means wrong, for a young girl whose first love has been snatched from her, on the threshold of life, to come in time to regard marriage with another man without disfavour. No one is bound to be the bride of the dead.'

'Do you really think that, Ellen?'

'Yes, I do. I do not suppose she can ever give the second the same sort of love she had to offer to the first; but she can make him a good wife, and perhaps even herself a happy one.'

Lucy looked around the little room with a sad gaze; then turned to the window, and watched in silence the soft autumn rain falling upon the croquet-ground without. Her feelings for so young a girl were not very delicately strung. Her nature, like her form, was somewhat robust; she was a good horsewoman, and had been more fond of following the hounds than even her dead lover was; she had more than once 'let off' a gun; it had even been remarked in the county at the time of her engagement, that she would make a better sportsman than her husband. But now, as she sat in the very room that her dear Dick had taken such pains to render attractive to her, and looked out upon the grounds where they had so often

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walked together, and on the fields where they had ridden, the recollection of the days that were no more became too strong for her, and her tears fell fast as the raindrops without.

Presently, she turned round softly, and perceived that her companion was weeping also. It was not willingly that Lucy had suffered herself to be made friends with by Ellen Blackburn. Her own father's urgent request that she should not hold herself aloof from the new tenants of Redcombe Hall, would not have sufficed to bring about an intimacy, had it not been for Ellen herself. She had been so importunate, and yet so delicate in her affectionate sympathy, that, little by little, she had won poor forlorn Lucy's honest heart; so completely so, that the latter and her father were now guests in the very house of which a year ago she had been the expectant mistress; nor was there another heart, notwithstanding that this friendship was of so late growth, in which she reposed more confidence, or felt more certain of meeting with tender reciprocity, than Ellen's. At times, indeed, the thought that these new Blackburns, aided by their ally Death, had ousted her lover from his home, would tinge with bitterness her feeling towards the innocent girl; and, at times, the reflection, that Death had shewn himself again this woman's friend, by sparing John while he took Richard, gave her a passing twinge of jealousy. But, on the whole, Lucy did Ellen justice in her heart, and loved her, and, now that she saw her weeping with her, for friendship's sake and pity's, her soul was drawn towards her by grateful love.

She rose from her seat, and went up and kissed her tenderly. 'Sister Ellen,' said she, 'your unselfish sorrow reminds me, by contrast, of my own selfishness. I had forgotten, until this moment, that I had some good news for you.'

'What! about John?' exclaimed Ellen brightly. 'I am sure it must be about John!'

'Yes, darling, it is; and may it never be your lot to be placed, as I am, out of the reach of such good news. I must tell you first that I found it in this letter of papa's this morning, which he gave me to read for quite another reason. Ever since—ever since last year, papa thought it would be "good for me," as he called it, to employ my mind, so I have filled the post of secretary to him, which my poor mother held, and know almost as much of his affairs as he does himself.'

'How pleasant it must be to have a father's confidence,' said Ellen.

'That depends, dear,' returned Lucy sighing. 'It is *not* pleasant when almost every post brings tidings of disappointment and disaster. But there, that is between us two—I was wrong to say as much, even to you.'

'But is not your papa rich? I understood he had very extensive commercial transactions. It is surely only a matter of how much gain! And what does it signify, if one has but enough to live on?'

'To live on and *pay one's debts*, my dear. That is also important.'

'O dear, dear; I never dreamed of that!' exclaimed Ellen earnestly. 'Cannot grandpapa help you? He has plenty of money now, and I know he has a great respect for Mr Waller.'

'He has at present,' observed Lucy cynically. 'But since I have been a woman of business, my dear, I have learned what wins the respect of one man for another, and what loses it. No, my darling, you cannot help us, thank you; although, if you were to breathe a word of this, you might injure us very much. There—I am growing selfish again. See, here is the good news I spoke of. It is only those half-dozen lines that will have any interest for you; the rest is all estimates and calculations about the Mosedale Reservoir. Papa is the chairman of the Company, and they say that the great basin is insecure. In that case, it would cost a vast sum to repair it. The matter seemed very important, though this letter from the chief-engineer has made papa more at ease.—There is the place where he mentions Mr Denton.' Lucy pointed with her finger to these words: 'I do not attach the least importance to the "crack wide enough to admit a penknife," and from which no water issues. I have no doubt it arises from the inner part of the embankment, between the puddle-wall and the water, subsiding a little, owing to the water penetrating it, and thereby making the top of the embankment incline inwards! It is certainly not worth your while to fetch me out of Wales to look at it; but to ease your mind, I will send a substitute, who will understand the matter as well as myself. I adjure you, like the man in the Scripture somewhere, not to despise him on account of his youth, which is a fault that is sure to mend, and really Mr John Denton seems to have no other fault. He is the cleverest—and what is of much more consequence—the most diligent young fellow with whom I am acquainted, and will make a mark in the world much bigger than the crack in your Mosedale Reservoir. I have known him but a few months—we are employed on the same line here—but I am proud to call him my friend.'

'O Lucy, how kind you are to let me see this. Mayn't I cut it out?'

'No; certainly not,' answered Lucy laughing. 'The idea of such a thing! Why, that letter has to be shewn to the Board of Directors at the next meeting, and "filed," and all sorts of things. It will be so much the better for Mr John Denton, for papa says there's nothing like pushing one's name about everywhere. Mr Flywheel is a first-rate man in his profession, and his praise will be a fine advertisement.'

'And what a nice man he must be!' mused Ellen. 'And what a good judge of character! He says John has no other fault but youth.'

'And even that is not so much amiss,' observed Lucy gravely, 'when a cruel grandfather compels us to dwell asunder. Why, even in ten years' time, you will be quite a couple of chickens still, you two!'

'Ten years, Lucy! How coolly you talk of such a terrible thing.'

'It is not a lifetime, darling,' said the other sadly; 'though I hope you will not have to wait so long. But, at all events, we must get your grandfather's consent to let you see him when he is with us, for he will certainly stay at our house when we return home.'

'At *your* house, Lucy? Oh, how good of you!'

'Not at all, my dear. According to what Mr Flywheel says—and I must add, that we have had a pretty good account of the young gentleman from another quarter' (here she nodded roguishly at her blushing friend)—'the obligation will be on our side. And besides, the chief-engineer (or his substitute) must, of course, be his chairman's guest; that's a mere matter of business.'

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'Alas! to think that he will be so near, and yet that I shall not see him,' sighed Ellen. 'My grandfather is very kind to me, as you have seen; but in this matter his heart is not to be touched. It was not so once; but money has made him hard.'

'There are many things that have the same effect upon men's hearts, Ellen, as the petrifying spring at Curlew Hall has upon whatever is put under it. There is money, as you say, for one thing; and there is the want of money. And it is not only grandfathers who are thus afflicted, but fathers also.'

'But surely your kind genial papa would never behave to you so cruelly? He seems to have no will of his own, but only yours.'

'Ah!' sighed Lucy in her turn, 'you are a dear little simpleton! Let us talk of something else.—Have you found out what is the matter with dear Mrs Blackburn? She seems more sad and absent than ever. I spoke to her twice this morning, and she never answered me. Do you think she can be well?'

'Yes; she is well enough in health, I believe. She tells me, too, that nothing has happened to distress her; but it is evident there is something wrong. Even your papa, who is such a favourite of hers, cannot now win a smile from her.'

'Yes,' said Lucy bitterly; 'papa always finds out the subject which is most pleasing to everybody, and converses about it as if it were his own favourite topic. He talks to you about clever folks who, from a humble position, have raised themselves to eminence by their scientific talents; he talks to your grandfather about ancestry and the great advantage of blood (which, I have heard him privately remark, has no value except to make blood-puddings); and he talks to Mrs Blackburn about her "Willy."'

Ellen had it on the tip of her tongue to reprove Lucy for this cynical talk concerning her father, and to remark what a desirable and unselfish possession this gift of interesting one's self in other people's views must be, and how popular Mr Waller justly was in consequence; but that last remark of her companion's put all these ideas to flight. The subject of 'Willy' had never been broached between the girls before. It was distasteful to Ellen on its own account; and besides, her grandfather had strictly enjoined upon her not to speak of it, unless when silence might be even worse policy than speech. This unexpected stirring of the skeleton in the cupboard sent a cold chill through her, for she felt at once that her companion had a meaning in it. Lucy was far too clever a girl not to know that the topic of 'Willy' was an unwelcome one, and too much of a gentlewoman to give gratuitous embarrassment, and far less pain.

Ellen did not speak, trusting that her silence might be a sufficient shield; but this was not to be. The first shaft had not been shot at a venture, and the second came home direct.

'Who is this Willy, my darling?'

'Willy? Why, he is my uncle William; my grandfather's eldest son.'

'I know that much, of course; and I know besides that he is his mother's pet. But why does she never speak of him, as other mothers do of their favourite sons; and why does his father never mention him at all?—I do not ask this from mere impertinent curiosity, Ellen; I hope you know me better than to suppose that. But yet, if there is any valid reason why you should be silent—any family secret, for instance, which you ought to keep, consider my question as unasked. One has no right to demand a confidence, and least of all if it compromises others.'

'Nay, indeed,' answered Nelly hastily; 'there is nobody to compromise in the matter. I never speak of Uncle William, because—because my grandfather has forbidden me to do so. They are unfortunately not on good terms.'

'And on which side lies the fault?'

'Well, on both sides, for I think my grandfather should be more forgiving. Uncle William committed a great error. He acted very, very ill, no doubt; but he has been punished for it.'

'It seems so odd,' mused Lucy, 'that your grandfather should have been at Redcombe a whole year, and yet that nobody should have seen his eldest son. You have no idea how people talk about it.'

'Indeed,' said Ellen. 'Well, they will see him soon, for he is coming home next month. He has been absent from home these five years.'

'Abroad?'

'Yes; out of England.'

'What is he like, Ellen? I mean, to look at.'

'Well, some people think him handsome. I confess I do not. He is of middle age, tall, and powerfully built. His features are not bad, but their expression is a little harsh. He is somewhat wilful, I fear; but there are many allowances to be made for him.'

'Ah, I see,' said Lucy gloomily. 'I daresay, in his youth, he was a good deal spoiled by his mother.'

'Perhaps so, dear; although, of course, I cannot speak to that, he being so much older.—The weather seems brightening, Lucy; what say you to a walk across the moor?'

Ellen spoke not only with distinctness, but with a certain incisiveness as well, as though she would have got quit of the subject. Yet once more her companion returned to the attack.

'I cannot say you have painted your uncle very pleasingly; but ugliness, like beauty, is happily often but skin-deep. Doubtless, this "Willy," upon whom his mother dotes so, has a kind and tender heart.'

'He has at least an impressionable one,' observed Ellen evasively, 'since he fell in love, and married young.'

'Married!' exclaimed Lucy, laying down her bead-work upon her knees. 'You astonish me! How long, then, has he been a widower?'

'He is not a widower at all, my dear; his wife is alive.'

Lucy Waller drew a long breath. 'I am tired of this telling of beads,' said she. 'You were proposing a walk; let us take one, by all means, while the fine weather lasts, even if we cannot get so far as the moor. How pleasant is the sunshine after rain!'

Ellen had never seen her friend in such good spirits; and coming with such suddenness as they did upon depression deeper than usual, she could not help noting how applicable Lucy's last remark was to herself as well as the weather. The cloud that had settled on the young girl's life, for once was lifted high, and how pleasant was her smile after those tears!

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CHAPTER XVI.—AT THE RESERVOIR.

Redmoor is the vast plateau of heathery waste, underneath whose southern promontory nestle Redcombe Village and Manor. A health-giving and glorious spot at all times—for even in winter the fir-woods (thanks to old Walter Stanhope of Curlew Hall) on north and east enable one to stand and admire the wide prospect in comparative shelter—but in summer-time the moor is rare and beautiful indeed. The soft, strong air that is almost always abroad upon it, is then laden with the scent of the fir, and sweeps over a prairie of purple and (where the gorse grows) of gold. The highway, along which we accompanied Anthony Blackburn on his return to his old home, divides this gorgeous table-land in twain; but now that the coaches are off the road, and all the world is drawn to and from Mosedale by the steam-horse, it has become but a local track, and there are but few passengers. When the two girls had reached the top of the winding hill that led up from the village, and could command the whole expanse of the moor, there was not a moving speck upon this road to be seen. In the extreme distance rose the circular embankment, that ought by rights, in order to have harmonised with the general tone of the landscape, to have been a Roman encampment, but which we have seen to attract old Anthony's notice as an erection of quite a modern date. On the east lay the vast plantation in the centre of which stood Curlew Hall; but from their present stand-point the house could not be seen, nor, save for the faint smoke-wreath that hung over distant Mosedale, was there a sign of human habitation anywhere.

'Now that we *are* on the moor,' said Lucy, 'and the clouds seem to have cleared off for the day, why should we not get as far as the reservoir? He will not be there yet a while, my dear; but still it will be an immense treat to you, I know, to visit the spot which will presently be gladdened by his presence.'

'Of course I should like to get there,' answered Ellen simply; 'but I am afraid it will tire you to walk so far.'

'Tire me!' echoed the other. 'I like that notion. Do I look as if I were likely to be tired by any walk that *you* could take, miss? Why, you are a lily, a mere fragile, delicate lily; and I—I'm a tiger lily.' Lucy laughed aloud as she said this. She was still in the same excellent spirits with which she started, and the fine fresh breath of the moor perhaps had added its sprightly influence. 'See! now we have caught the turret above the Hall, and there's the flag flying! Why, Mr Stanhope must be at home.'

'I think not,' returned Ellen, 'or else my grandfather would have heard of it. He is much attached to Mr Stanhope.'

'So I have heard,' said Lucy, looking askance at her friend, whose unconscious gaze was intently fixed upon the slowly rising mound. 'Mr Stanhope too, on his part, it is said, is fond of riding over to Redcombe. It is seldom one sees so much friendship between men of such different ages.'

'Yes, indeed,' answered Ellen absently. 'How far do you suppose it is from here?'

'To the lodge-gate, not a mile and a quarter; but to the house at least two miles. I don't think, however, we ought to call without a male escort.'

'Call, my dear! call where? I am speaking of the reservoir.'

'You may have been *thinking* of it, my dear; but we were talking of Mr Stanhope and Curlew Hall. It is very ungrateful of you to take so little interest in so handsome and agreeable a young gentleman, especially when he has so exerted himself to please you.'

'He is certainly both good-looking and polite,' returned Ellen gravely. 'His nature, too, seems to me to have been an excellent one; but it has been sadly warped. How could it be otherwise, since his only calling has been the turf.'

'And what do *you* know, O most sober and severe of women, about the turf?' asked Lucy in some astonishment.

Ellen blushed scarlet, as she had reason to do. Lucy saw the blush, but mistook the reason. 'Ah, that is dangerous,' said she slily, 'to own that a young man has a fine nature, which has been warped; for the admission involves both respect and pity. Now, if I were to tell Mr Denton, what mischief I might make! I hope he is not of a jealous disposition?'

'No; at least not very,' added Ellen, for she thought of that day on Slogan—only a few months back, and yet, as it seemed, so long ago—when John had expressed something like jealousy of this very man. 'But, indeed, I have never given him the slightest cause.'

'That matters nothing, my dear; and besides, I am not quite so sure of you,' said Lucy archly.—'What cavalier is this who comes riding through yonder gate at headlong speed? Who is it but Mr Herbert Stanhope, of whom our grandfather is so enamoured! Why, you Machiavellian creature, you must have known he would be here to-day, and invited me hither on purpose.'

'Indeed, I did not; I knew nothing about it,' answered Ellen, with ludicrous earnestness. 'I hope he will not see us.'

'That is very likely to happen, my dear, upon Redmoor; and particularly if you turn your face from him in that way. The ostriches do something of the same sort, and with the same result. Look! he has turned out of the high-road, and is already making for us! Alas for poor Mr John Denton!'

It was a gallant figure—both man and horse—that came galloping gaily towards them over the purple moor; the rider's hat was doffed as he drew near, and he sprang from his saddle before he reached them, and led his steed by the rein.

'I am fortunate indeed,' said he, 'for if my proposed visit to Redcombe Manor had been at a more fashionable hour, I should have missed you both, it seems. I did not know that young ladies ever ventured out before luncheon.'

'Your experience of them must have been limited; or else, and which is more probably the case, your acquaintance must be among very great ladies indeed,' said Lucy laughing. She and Stanhope never met without some sharp passage of arms; but she gave the young man cordial greeting, nevertheless, and covered with her own easy manner the embarrassment of her companion, which would otherwise have been evident enough. 'And to what are we dull Derbyshire folks indebted for Mr Herbert Stanhope's unexpected return among us?' inquired Lucy, after due inquiries and salutations.

'With two such fair reasons before me,' said

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Stanhope bowing, 'I do not think that question need be answered. I came up, however, upon business—matters concerning "my Curlew Hall estate," as Moffat delights to call it, as though I had a dozen others, and this particular one was not mortgaged to as many people. I arrived from the south coast only last night.'

'By the south coast, Mr Stanhope means Goodwood race-course, Ellen,' observed Lucy in explanation.

'Miss Waller is always right,' said he, with a smile which caused him some effort to wring from his lips. 'Except Mr Moffat, she knows more about every one in the county and their affairs than anybody. I sometimes think that she must lend money on mortgage herself.'

'I should be a great deal more popular than I am if that were the case,' returned she keenly. 'Gentlemen would then be riding full gallop Mosedale way instead of towards Redcombe.'

This was a hard hit—what is technically called 'a facer'—but Mr Stanhope's good-humour appeared to be imperturbable. 'Now, that is really very unfair,' said he: 'it is quite true that I was about to pay my respects at the Manor; but I was well aware that my old friends, the Wallers, were at present the guests of my new ones, the Blackburns, and I hoped to receive a welcome from both.'

'Lucy seems to me to be most unnecessarily severe upon you, Mr Stanhope, this morning,' said Ellen kindly. 'I am sure that Mr Waller, as well as my own folks, will be delighted to see you.'

'Now, I call *that rather* severe,' observed Lucy sententiously. 'It is almost a hint that the gentleman is *de trop* with us.'

'I am sure I never meant it to be so,' said Ellen earnestly. 'How can you be so rude, Lucy?—We are going to the reservoir, Mr Stanhope, and if you can spare time, I am sure we shall be glad of your escort.'

'You are most kind to say so, Miss Blackburn, and I only wish the reservoir was more distant.'

'He wishes the reservoir farther!' cried Lucy; 'and perhaps us too. But there, I forgot—Ellen does not understand slang. Her mind is so correct. She is not a sporting character, like you and me, Mr Stanhope; she interests herself in practical science—engineering. That is why we are going to the reservoir. They say there is a crack in it large enough to admit a penknife: only think!'

'I am sometimes inclined to believe that there is a crack in Miss Waller's brain of about the same size,' said Ellen, stung into sarcasm by her friend's merciless banter; and all three laughed aloud.

Lucy Waller and Herbert Stanhope had been friends from childhood; but even when in the nursery, their tastes being too similar perhaps for mutual agreement, they had sparred and quarrelled with one another. His jesting remark respecting her knowledge of her neighbours' affairs was well founded, at all events as respected his own. She was well aware that Herbert Stanhope was very hard-up, and she suspected that he was meditating an alliance with her friend for the sake of the fortune which everybody knew she would one day inherit. These mercenary views were become just now, for a certain reason, particularly repugnant to Lucy, and hence the unaccustomed severity of a tongue which to men (with one single exception) had been always sarcastic.

Redmoor Reservoir, although it might not add to the picturesqueness of the spot where it was placed, was a fine work in its way. It was so large that it had almost the appearance of a lake, although by nature it had no such resemblance. It was formed by throwing an embankment across the gorge, through which a moorland stream, ambitiously entitled the river Curlew, found its way into the deep Mosedale Valley. From the dam-head to the embankment, this sheet of water extended for more than a mile, and it was nearly half a mile across. It was deeper also (in some places eighty, and in others ninety feet) than most natural lakes. The embankment, which formed so striking an object upon the moor, and which could be seen for thirty miles from the valley, was a hundred feet in height, and five times as long and as thick. A mighty weir carried off the overflow, and so, in a somewhat contemptuous manner, the poor little Curlew was given back its own again, and hurried on complainingly down its own well-worn channel. Before this wrong had been done to it, it was scarcely possible to imagine a more charming spectacle, and even now it had great attractions. The gorge, indeed, down which it used to leap so gloriously was done for—dammed; the reservoir enveloped it wholly with its winding-sheet. But hills rose on both sides to some elevation, and from them rivulets carried their tribute waves to the larger stream, through rocky and even wooded channels. To look from the embankment across this great artificial water, and on to Redmoor in its autumn hues, was a fair sight; but to gaze in the opposite direction, towards Mosedale, was to behold an extent of landscape such as few mountains of thrice the elevation have to shew: the great and fertile valley, with its green pasture-lands and yellow cornfields, and the vast and growing city in its midst, to which they daily ministered, albeit it ungratefully did its best, with smoke and cinders, to mar their loveliness; though, on the other hand, at night, when these were clothed in darkness, it was Mosedale which in its turn shone and flickered with its hundreds of never-dying fires. Then, though you could not mark the lines of rail that spread on all sides from the hungry town, like threads about a spider's web, you could see distinctly the plump white puffs above the engines, and the long laden trains that laboured out and in. Beyond the town the valley widened out, and tufts of wood that were fair copses, and swelling mounds which were great hills, diversified its surface; and here and there the gilded vane of a church steeple caught the sunlight, and here and there the sail of a river-boat. Indeed, it was the river which formed the chief and loveliest feature of the view; for, standing as it were by its very cradle, one could watch it, if not quite to its grave the sea, through childhood up to full-grown age: at first a narrow thread, but always deep, because confined within precipitous banks, with scarcely room between them and the flood for mills, or even cottages; and then a broad bright stream, that meekly bore the freights men put upon it; and then a thread again, that lost itself amidst the misty hills.

'What pretty farm is that upon the little island yonder?' inquired Ellen, to whom the scene was new.

'Curlew Farm, Miss Blackburn, at your service,' answered Stanhope; then, as if in answer to a curving smile on Lucy's lips, he added: 'to

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picnic at whenever you please. So much at least I can promise, its mortgagees notwithstanding; although it is they, and not I, who would suffer in case this crack you speak of should widen and the reservoir burst.'

'What a grand sight it would be,' exclaimed Lucy, 'if the thing were to happen!'

'You would not think so if you were at home at the time,' said Stanhope: 'Mosedale itself would not go scot-free, if this water-devil here was once to break loose. While as for the farm yonder, and the mill, and that cottage of yours, Miss Blackburn'——

'That cottage of mine?' interrupted Ellen.

'Well, your grandfather's cottage, then: his brother Richard the fisherman built it, and a very charming little place it is. It is hidden from us because of the bend in the stream; but that would not save it, if this small Niagara were to thunder down any fine fishing morning. They say there are nine hundred millions of gallons in this lake here.'

'How many pints is that, Mr Stanhope?' inquired Lucy. 'You seem wonderfully well up in the subject; and we are rather interested in the matter ourselves; are we not, Ellen?'

'I am certainly interested,' returned Ellen quietly, and with a shade of discontent in her tone, 'in the possible fate of grandpapa's cottage, as well as in that of Mr Stanhope's farm. But I hope there may be no real danger. I am sure I see nothing of the crack they speak of.'

'No, nor I,' said Stanhope. 'It is very likely only a dodge to get money out of the Company for a survey—a mere trick of some engineer. Those scientific gentry are not above a job.'

'Oh, but, indeed,' observed Ellen hastily, 'that is not the case at all in the present instance, for, as Lucy knows'—— She hesitated, blushed, and stopped, while Lucy's laughter rang out merrily.

'I know nothing at all about it,' cried she. 'Don't appeal to me. All I have to remark is, that it is now noon, and if the liability of scientific people to jobbery is to be discussed here, we shall not get home by one o'clock; and there's a beautiful grouse-pie for luncheon, for Mrs Blackburn told me so herself.'

As the three turned homewards, Ellen made the remark, that though they had seen so vast a prospect, it was singular that no human being had enlivened it.

'The reason is,' replied Stanhope, 'that about the dwelling-places on the Curlew there is absolutely no space for a man to shew himself, out of his own house; while, where the stream grows wider, it is too distant to distinguish human objects; and as for the moor here, with the exception of you two adventurous young ladies, I have never seen anything human upon it.'

'Then there is a monster in human form, if at least it is not a man,' observed Lucy, pointing to some stationary object on the road; 'and, if I am not mistaken, we shall presently see the caravan out of which he has escaped.'

And indeed, while she was yet speaking, a one-horse conveyance emerged from the fir-woods, behind which lay the steep winding hill, up which most persons preferred to walk by a short way that offered itself to foot-passengers, and to wait for their vehicle at the summit.

'It must be some one about to visit the Manor,' remarked Stanhope, making a telescope of his fingers.

'Or else the reservoir,' said Lucy, with a comical look at her friend.—'Has he a scientific appearance, Mr Stanhope?'

'I don't know as to that,' returned he; 'but if I have the same long sight that I used to have, I make him out to be a very queer customer. If he is going to the Manor, I hope it is not to wait at lunch, for he has a most appetite-appeasing countenance; but as for partaking of it, that is out of the question: I will bet ten to one he is no gentleman.'

'That is a dangerous prediction,' remarked Lucy. 'Only suppose if he turns out to be a friend of Mr Blackburn's or of my papa's, after all! My papa knows some very queer people, I do assure you.'

'Perhaps he is a friend of *yours*, Miss Lucy, for he is certainly coming this way, as if to speak to us;' and indeed, after a short conversation with the driver of his fly, the stranger left his vehicle in the road, and began to make his way across the moor, with the evident intention of intercepting them.

Mr Stanhope and the young ladies all watched the coming stranger with some uneasiness, for which each had reasons of their own. The young squire dreaded lest this man should be the emissary of some Turf creditor, who, like Sir Arthur, might be desirous of making private terms with him, to which, however favourable, he would be unable to accede. Lucy Waller was not without apprehensions of a similar kind with respect to her embarrassed father; and Ellen Blackburn was filled with a vague terror, that was only too soon to take a tangible shape. She knew at the first glance that it was not John Denton; and before the newcomer had arrived within speaking distance, she recognised him not without a shudder.

'It is either a Ranter from Mosedale, who wishes to convert us,' whispered Stanhope, as the burly form, in its ill-fitting suit of black clothes, and crowned with high-craped hat, drew nigh, 'or a begging-letter impostor with a petition.'

'Hush!' said Ellen, in low and somewhat frightened tones; 'it is my uncle William.'

TRAMWAYS FOR THE SUBURBS.

SHALL we encourage tramways in the suburban roads stretching out on every side of our overgrown metropolis? And if not, why not? There certainly seems no cogent reason why this kind of accommodation should not be afforded. Things are not so beautifully managed just at present as to render the public indifferent to further improvement. Cabby was very aggravating a few months ago; and is often aggravating. He talks about forcing the authorities to do this and that for him, under penalty of wreaking awful vengeance on the travelling public by refusing to carry them and their luggage to and from railway stations; and it is not pleasant to be threatened in that way. It may be that the duties and taxes imposed upon him and his horse and his four-wheeler, or his Hansom, have been too high; indeed, our financial ministers seem to admit as much, by some of their recent revenue manipulations. But then oats are somewhat cheaper; and if tramways would act as a partial check on cabby, so much the better for tramways.

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Then, again, our omnibus system is sadly in arrear of other towns and cities. Look at Manchester and Liverpool, at Birmingham and Leeds, at Edinburgh and Glasgow; the omnibuses there are longer, broader, higher, better cushioned and seated, better lighted and ventilated, more easily entered and ascended, better driven and conducted, than ours here in London. The racing and the nursing, whenever a competing 'bus-owner springs up, are other bad features in the system. Paris, among other continental cities, eclipses us altogether in omnibuses; not only in the quality of the vehicles, but in the lowness of the fares, which would put ours to shame. When an Anglo-French company bought up six or seven hundred of the London 'buses, and established a gigantic monopoly, there was at anyrate this hope—that we should have Paris improvements to compensate us for the disadvantages of monopoly; but such has not been the case: we have the monopoly, but not the improvement. One of our public censors, more irate than the rest, declares that the omnibuses of London are 'dirty, frouzy, ramshackle packing-cases on wheels, which would disgrace the capital of a third-rate power. There is nothing to recommend them. They are neither swift nor orderly, nor well appointed nor clean. Passengers at alighting are observed to have quite a *chevaux de frise* of dirty yellow straw attached to trousers or dress. Some of them have no doors; so that the rain and snow and biting winds pelt in among the passengers as freely as if they were unsheltered. The inside seats are curiosities of hardness, the frouzy plush being apparently stretched over macadam of great knobby power; windows have stuck until they have become fixtures; while the knife-board is reached by bits of iron which bark our shins.'

Nor do our suburban railways—at least on the south of the Thames—tend to restore the equanimity of the Cockney. It is not agreeable to be charged so many ninepences instead of so many sixpences, for the daily journeys between one's suburban home in Surrey and one's warehouse in Wood Street or Mincing Lane; and it is not rendered any more pleasant by the fact, that those companies which are least likely to be affected by competition are precisely those which shew the greatest tendency to raise our fares.

People tell us there is a chance now of obtaining tramways on some of our roads; and the question is, whether such tramways would be a wholesome check upon saucy cabbies, grasping 'bus-owners, and monopolising railway companies. Our past failure in this matter ought not to discourage us. Mr Train laid down a tramway, a few years ago, from Westminster Bridge to Kensington; the adventure broke down; but it is now known that the shape and arrangement of the rails were not what they should have been. Moreover, certain eccentricities in the promoter of the scheme tended to bring it into ridicule; and we all know how powerful a weapon ridicule may become in discouraging an adventure. We must look to foreign countries, and to English cities and towns beyond the limits of the metropolis, to see the real working of the tramway system when fair-play is given to it by the proprietors, by the road-engineer, and by the public.

At Copenhagen, there is a Tramway Company, who take up this matter as a source of profit, just as our railway companies would do. The tramways are in much favour with the public, and are said to have improved the value of house-property in the streets through which they run. There are ten miles of them in length already in operation, and five miles more to be constructed. One of the lines passes over a bridge no more than ten feet wide. When the rails were first laid down, some inconvenience was caused by the skidding of the wheels; but now a grooved rail is used, which obviates this evil. In 1865, when there were about three miles of this tramway open, there were a million and a half of passengers carried; in 1866, on rather less than double that length, the number was about two millions and a half; by the year 1868 the number had increased to nearly three millions on seven miles; and now the traffic is at the rate of four millions. These are very high numbers for a city containing only one-seventeenth part as many inhabitants as our big burly London. The tramway carriages employed hold about forty passengers each. The police have powers to regulate the traffic as between tramway vehicles and general vehicles, to obviate confusion and collision. The company have a concession for forty years, and divide eleven per cent. on their capital. There is a clause in the concession to the effect that, if the tram-carriages cease to run for three months, the company must remove the rails and repave the roads.

At Geneva there are about four miles of tramway, of course in some of the principal streets only—or rather, the principal suburbs. The carriages are large, and are so well liked by the Genevans that the former road omnibuses have been withdrawn.

We might go on to notice what has been done in the tramway line at Vienna, at Brussels, and at Hamburg—where the trams also go over a very narrow bridge; but it will be more useful to bestow a little attention on America, which is essentially the land of tramways. In New York there is one street which has as many as seven parallel lines. They are so much liked, that cabs are almost disused in the streets through which the tramways are laid. At Providence, in Rhode Island, there are about fifteen miles of street thus provided, which (among a population of sixty-five thousand) carried three millions and a half of passengers in the year 1868. The company have a concession for forty years, and realise a dividend of seven per cent. on their capital; they have the exclusive right of using the rails, with some special reservation in the case of the corporation. At Halifax, where the inhabitants at first shewed some dislike to the system, tramways are now very popular. Their length is twenty miles; and one of the lines goes through a street only twenty-six feet wide, with a traffic very much like that of our Thames Street; there is a double line of tram, and very little difficulty has arisen out of the combination of road and tramway traffic in the same street. The company easily keep their own portion of the road in repair. Philadelphia, Baltimore, New Orleans, Havana, Mexico, Santiago—all have adopted the system, with the unquestioned sanction of the public. At Valparaiso there are six miles of tram, some of it double. The line runs along the whole length of the city and port, through streets having an average width of about thirty-one feet. The line is very tortuous, and some of the curves very

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sharp. The company keep in good repair a portion of road on both sides of their line.

Now for our own country. Birkenhead is quite satisfied with its tramways. Mr Train started them; but Mr Wiswell, in 1863, greatly improved the line by the use of a new kind of rail. The system is four or five miles in length; and the inhabitants generally agree in opinion that there is neither danger nor difficulty in ordinary vehicles crossing the rails. Birkenhead's opposite neighbour, Liverpool, is adopting the system, with an improved form and arrangement of rail. Some of the Pottery towns are following the same example. Whoever has gone from the Portsmouth Railway Station to South Sea pier, to take the steam-boat to the Isle of Wight, will admit the ease and comfort of the tramway arrangement now adopted, compared with the road system which preceded it. At Swansea, we can personally vouch for the capital tramway ride round the margin of the beautiful bay, from the busy town to Oystermouth and the Mumbles; the vehicles are large, roomy, light, cheerful, well ventilated, and roll along with a remarkable freedom from shaking and rattle. On the pier at Southend—that pier which stretches out into such infinite space, and is honoured by a visit from two steamers every summer day, the tramway does useful work. When a steamer is known to be approaching, Dobbin, with a train of open vehicles attached, trots along a tramway on the wooden pier; and this thing at least is certain — that when the carriages contain (which they sometimes do) as many passengers and as much luggage as would fill three of our London omnibuses, Dobbin goes along without any manifestation of over-fatigue or mental disquietude: he knows the work he has to do, and does it well and quietly. The same is the case on the pier at Ryde.

The question, then, fairly arises, whether we may not judiciously make another attempt to establish tramways on some of the roads branching out of the metropolis? Would the good results counterbalance any slight inconveniences, and would it pay as a commercial speculation? As to the particular plans recently brought under public notice, we have no special concern with them here, since we are only treating of general considerations; we may, however, just mention some of them, to shew the direction which matters are taking. One scheme comprises four groups, all connected at certain points, and all accommodating the Surrey side of the water: namely, from Westminster Bridge, through Lambeth, to Batterses Road; from Southwark Bridge to Newington Butts and the Borough High Street; from this last-named line to Kensington and Camberwell; and links to connect the Westminster with the Southwark bridge groups. Other schemes take Waterloo Bridge into account, and propose to accommodate Pimlico and Vauxhall on the one side, Peckham and Greenwich on the other. Then, north of the Thames there are lines projected from Upper Holloway to Finsbury Square, Whitechapel High Street to Stratford-le-Bow, &c. Any one of the several plans may be taken as a type of all in constructive features. It seems to be generally understood that Train's system failed in part through the faulty planning of the rails. They were five inches and a half broad, and projected an inch and a quarter above the general level of the road. This projection was the cause of many accidents. The rails now proposed to be used will be level with the road, and will be imbedded in the granite of the paving; while the groove (to take the flange of the tramway carriage) will be so narrow that the wheels of the smallest road vehicle cannot be caught in it. The rail, besides this groove, will have a corrugated edge; and outside it there will be a granite curb eighteen inches wide. The foundation of the rails would be on sleepers imbedded in concrete. The gauge will be the same as that of our national system of railways—four feet eight and a half inches. The rails will be secured to the sleepers by the aid of tie-rods. The weight of the rail will be forty pounds per yard. It is proposed either to place granite curbs on both sides of the tramway, or to macadamise the whole road, at the choice of the parish authorities; and we ourselves see no reason to doubt that the suburban roads might in this way be kept in better general repair than they are now. It is worth bearing in mind that, since the abolition of the tollbars around London, the omnibus companies wear out the roads without paying in tolls to repair them; the householders defray these repairs by means of parish rates; and there is fair ground for supposing that, if the tramway system were adopted, the expense of repairing those particular roads would in part be borne by the tramway companies.

Then, as to the carriages, we are told to expect omnibuses, sixteen feet long in the body, by six feet eight inches broad over all. At each end there will be a platform for driver and conductor; and a break at each end will supply the means of stopping the carriage within its own length—a thing never achieved by our ordinary road omnibuses. Inside, there will be a space of two feet between the knees of the *vis-à-vis* passengers—a vast improvement on the present stuffy, crowded arrangement. Each carriage will be constructed to accommodate twenty outside passengers, who will be able to ascend to their seats with a degree of ease which we may well desiderate. The speed, including stoppages, is to be about six miles an hour—certainly not a reckless one in these go-ahead days. The companies are willing to submit to a parliamentary maximum of fares—in this, as in other matters, deviating from the present omnibus system; while, at certain times in the morning and evening, for the accommodation of working-men, the fares will be lowered to a halfpenny per mile.

When, mechanically, there are so many advantages clearly obtainable, it will be hard if obstacles of other kinds should prevent us from having a much needed addition to our means of metropolitan locomotion. The mechanical advantages have been very well put forth in one of the daily journals. 'A tramway carriage stands in much the same relation to ordinary omnibuses as that in which a railway train stands to a mail-coach of the olden time. It rolls smoothly along a rail, instead of jolting over the stones. It makes a journey along the streets quiet, restful, and pleasant, instead of being noisy, tiring, and disagreeable. It is easier for the horses to draw, easier for the driver to stop, easier for the passengers to get in and out, and easy to read or talk in. Its gliding movement makes the streets quieter, saves horse-flesh and wear and tear of roads, makes lower fares not only possible but remunerative, and reduces

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the wear and tear of daily journeys to their minimum. A wide, spacious, and well-cushioned carriage, with an easy step by which to enter at either end, and a light but convenient staircase by which to reach the top, with ample headway inside, and room to walk between the rows of passengers, with break-power which can stop it within its own length—the tramway omnibus is all that an old-stage omnibus is not.'

JINNY'S THREE BALLS.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER II.—JINNY'S SECOND BALL.

'I have no one but you!'

JINNY'S dressing for the ball was a feverish affair indeed, and when she took a final survey of herself in the glass, a burst of tears was the result. 'I look so—so ugly,' she sobbed; '*he*'ll be ashamed of me.' And then she scandalised her clumsy attendant by adding in a low piteous tone: 'If I'd only prayed to be pretty all this time, I might have been made so by now.'

However, she had to choke down her tears (it was well, for she had not the rare art of crying becomingly), for the fly, which Dr Irving paid, was at the door. She had no loving, last inspections to go through; her aunt had been in bed an hour, and their one maid had 'no opinion of Miss Jinny.' Besides—awful thought!—she might keep *him* waiting. So she ran down-stairs, jumped into the fly, with breathless fervent thanks to Dr Irving, and was on her road to paradise.

The moment of alighting, of finding her arm instantly in his, of being led into a whirling world of lights and music, and all wonder and beauty; of flying with him down a long vista made by shining dresses and uniforms, seemed to Jinny ever after (such a brief earthly 'ever' as hers was!) like an incredibly glorious dream. She could not speak, nor clearly see what went on around her; could only breathe out the weight of her happiness in long sobbing sighs, till the first dance was over. Then she looked up at him with such mingled rapture and devotion that he was moved and half-frightened, and exclaimed: 'By Jove! you absurd little thing, what is it? What are you making those big eyes of yours bigger, if possible, about?'

'It is all so delightful!' she answered, clinging closer to his arm. I think that night Fitzpatrick found it delightful too; for Jinny, dressed all in white, with a tall 'mother-of-pearl' comb in her brown hair, and the unfailing black velvet round her throat, looked her best (though she had not thought so), and was stimulated to unwonted powers of repartee by a certain playful tenderness which peeped out in her 'friend's' manner, by certain small attentions too, that seemed to her guileless mind very serious and sweet signs. At first, perhaps, she danced with too hearty enjoyment to be graceful; but the passion of happiness, for which her stagnant existence had ill prepared her, acted like physical fatigue. She soon sank into a state of silent and exalted bliss, too great for words or gestures of delight; only her poor little face beamed, a great still radiance lit her round eyes, till they seemed gazing at paradise; and whether she sat at Fitzpatrick's side, or danced with him, or looked up in his face as he bent over her, there was a fond, helpless, clinging confidence in her attitude that told the same tale: 'My sun, my strength, my life, how should I live without thee.'

But the moment came when all this bliss was to end, and for ever, if she had but known it. Unhappy child! it was perhaps her very own silly hand; silly, because it forgot all else in his clasp, that wrote the first letter of the fatal 'Finis.' When she was cloaked, when Dr Irving had gone to see about the fly, Fitzpatrick staid with her, and told her he should see her home. 'We can drop the old doctor,' he said, gazing into her face with a very kind smile, and pressing her hand to his side. 'And then *I'll* see my guest home. That'll be quite the right thing to do, eh, Jinny? Won't it, little one?'

She nodded vehemently; he felt her droop and lean against him with a movement of trusting love he could not misinterpret.

'Are you tired, darling?' he asked, with a vague impulse of caressing gratitude. 'Not tired of me, you wicked little child?'

'Oh, how could I be!' she sighed; and then Dr Irving came to announce the fly, and acquiesce sleepily in Fitzpatrick's little arrangement; and they three got in, and were driven off.

'Good-night, my dear; sleep well,' said Jinny's chaperon, with a curious doubt and tremble in his voice, and a curious suspicious glance at her companion.—'Take care of her, sir; she's alone.' Then he got out, and pattered up the path to his dreary little cottage, without ever a look back at the clear stars just waning in the early morning grayness, though dead-and-gone memories were wakening in his dull breast.

Fitzpatrick was quiet enough during the rest of the drive, though he did not draw back from the girlish figure that leaned against his shoulder; though he took the thin hand that was so wofully ready to be taken, he refrained from putting his arm round her, or speaking more words of love. Slumbering honour was stirring a little; Jinny was so utterly and awfully in his power, he was for the time more afraid of her than of the most self-possessed prude in the world.

But this was not to last; when the fly had set them down, and rattled away, Fitzpatrick still lingered, and stood close to her. The sky was growing from deep blue to warm pearly gray; the stars fading tranquilly out; a soft air stirred the shrubs in the little garden, and blew a long tress that had lost its curl against his cheek, and sighed a tender little song in Jinny's ear. The sky, and the wind, and the flowers were very sweet: in that July night, society, society's restrictions and obligations seemed worlds off. He forgot for a moment that he had given his heart elsewhere; he forgot that Jinny Lake was ugly, and simple, and poor; could only spoil his worldly career, and never satisfy the fastidious cravings of eye and mind. He only realised, looking down on that innocent face, shining with a soft glory of believing love, that he was all her life to her; had moulded her every thought and deed since their first meeting, that here was a worshipper who, disowned and rejected, no after power and success could ever give back to him.

'O Jinny,' he began painfully, and stopped.

Then she found words at last—words piteous through trust, not through doubt.

'Oh, I do, do love you! You won't leave me,

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will you? I have no one but you. Indeed, indeed, I could not live!'

Her head had fallen on his shoulder; her large eyes were lifted, wet with tears; in the faint starlight he saw the half-smile of fervent happiness on her lips, and bent and kissed them—kissed that smile away from them.

'And I love you too, my own, dearest, little Jinny,' he murmured.

She lay quiet on his breast till he saw fit to release her, which he did presently with a troubled: 'I must not keep you in the night-air, my child. Give me another kiss for "Good-night."'

She was very obedient; she trusted him so: her lips were put up like a child's; she never asked whether he would come on the morrow, nor *when*, nor wanted promises and asseverations, as some women do.

'Good-night, my darling,' he said, turning away.

'Good-night, good-bye,' said Jinny, crying happily. Then she gathered a late rosebud, and gave it him; and he taking it—her first gift of love—with tender and gallant thanks, left her.

She leaned her bare arms on the top of the little gate, and looked at him, picking his way daintily across the stony road; once he turned, and took off his hat, and she kissed her hand many times, fondly. She staid there a long while, staring in vague, passionate thankfulness at the blushing sky, rehearsing over and over again in her own mind his words, his kisses, his kind looks—wishing the morning sunshine would come and bring him back; for would he not be with her always and for ever now, since he had said he loved her, and *his* love could not forsake or lie, whatever they said in story-books!

How she would obey and please him in all things! how hard she would try not to be awkward and foolish any more, to move and speak gracefully, as he said girls should move and speak, to learn the music and sketch the scenes which Fitzpatrick had admired. She would go out that very day, later, and try and copy a barn, with a group of birch trees behind it, and then begin to practise a new valse. Well, it seemed very hard to leave the spot his recent presence had made lovely, to turn away from the magical morning glow breaking over the distant wood, from the low twitter of the little birds in the nearer trees, and shut herself up in her ugly little room.

But she should take her fairy gift of joy with her there, close to her heart, never, never to leave it more, except with life, and what outer dreariness could matter now? 'Nothing, nothing matters!' she whispered to herself, fondling her own hand because he had held it in his, as she laid her head (such a dizzy throbbing head!) on the pillow; 'I can never be unhappy again!'

Morning came; Jinny gave her aunt an account of the ball, in which Fitzpatrick figured prominently enough, but she did not repeat his words. She had a vague notion he would want to see that lady himself; and if not, why, there was plenty of time to tell the sweet secret that was, as yet, her very, very own—no sharer in it.

So she drew, and practised, put on her prettiest dress, and then began to think it time for Fitzpatrick to come. She was not a bit exacting; but he had said he loved her, and she judged his love by hers.

She sat in the window waiting, or ran down the garden path, heedless of sun and dust, to look out at the gate, from morning to sunset. She strained her eyes till it was black night, and came back into the room with sad reluctance, but without the faintest touch of fear or distrust.

He did not come the next day, nor the next to that. But why drag out such a story? He did not come at all. Weeks—months passed. Through all the glaring summer, passers-by never missed the slight unformed figure crouched in the window-seat behind the faded green rep curtain, or standing at the little gate with its blistered paint, one thin hand shading the round soft eyes that stared yearningly down the dull road, and blinked back the sad tears that would rise sometimes, or pressed against two simple lips ever in a piteous quiver of expectation. People learned to notice her—notice the two muslin frocks she wore—blue and lilac 'week and week about,' growing more limp and faded each time; the heavy hair she soon ceased to dress with care and pleasure; the plain face that was plain again now, and had a startled feverish wildness in the great wistful eyes. She did not care if it was fine or dull, whether the sun scorched or the rain chilled her: if the maid brought her a cloak, she would huddle it round her abstractedly, or perhaps let it fall. It did not much matter—nothing mattered now, she repeated with dull iteration, not until he came.

I cannot tell her feelings; I can only say she loved him better than ever, if she believed in him so utterly no more. She might have thought him ill or dead; only one of the tradesmen, who sometimes went to the town where his regiment was quartered, had seen him at intervals, apparently quite well and cheerful. She thought he must have some good reason for keeping away, as he did it; perhaps he wanted to see if she really loved him.

She was patient; and waited because she could do nothing else—she knew none of his friends, and she dared not try to find out indirectly about him.

Still less, at first, did she dare to write to him; she had heard him condemn so severely a lady who had taken some such step; but as his maxims of propriety faded, as the yearning to see him widened and deepened in the woman's heart, her fears forsook her. Four months after the July dawn that saw their parting she wrote him a letter, which, abrupt and ill dictated as it was, had the pathos of a hundred impassioned appeals in its helpless pleadings. Twenty times it was written out in Jinny's best hand, and torn up; completed, it was after all a brief and simple epistle:

MY DEAREST CAPTAIN FITZPATRICK—Please will you tell me if I have done anything to vex you, for I am so very unhappy because you do not come. I know the young ladies you know do not write to gentlemen; but I have only you, and cannot help writing; and I will never do it again. Indeed, indeed, I do love you so very much, and am till I die your own JINNY.

Why did he not come? Poor Jinny! The question that perplexed her so was easily answered.

The morning after the ball, the evening glamour over, he took himself to task. He had gone too far with a child he never meant to marry—a good, affectionate, ugly little girl, whom it was absurd to suppose could ever be his wife. He was truly

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very sorry to part from her, to lose her foolish flatteries and lavish sympathy; but for her sake, even more than his own, things must go no further. It would not do to have farewell scenes, for he knew he was soft-hearted, and could not bear to see a woman cry. There were no presents to be sent back; one poor little rosebud he did indeed, with a sigh, fling into the grate; but the music he had given her, poor little soul! she was welcome to keep—even to play it to some cad of a fellow whom she would end by marrying. He became a little plaintive on this text, thinking of little Jinny's loving ways; but was soon consoled by an invitation to stay at a specially 'jolly' house in the neighbourhood, where there were lots of horses and pretty girls. That was Fitzpatrick's epitaph for his last amusement.

Jinny's letter, coming when he was on leave, first gave him a fit of the blues, and then made him quite angry it should have had such a power—so ill spelled, written, and expressed an epistle.

He tore it up, angry with himself and her, stamped about the room, and made a wholesome resolution to be careful of country-town innocence for the future.

After this ebullition, his spirits returned, and he soon became, to use his own phrase, 'as jolly as ever.'

'By Jove, cunning dodge that letter!' he laughed to himself. 'But it's no go, my little friend; we are not quite so green as you fancy. If I ever console myself about the old trouble, it won't be with you.—Ah! what a girl that other was; such a lot of style, and go, and pluck!'

Alas! if Jinny could have seen the reception of her first poor little heart-utterance, her love-letter written when love, on one side at least, had long been over!

CHAPTER III.—JINNY'S THIRD BALL.

'You did not know what you were doing, did you?'

One day Dick Jones ran over to the town to visit some friends who were staying there. Returning from his call, as he walked down the High Street, a timid voice arrested him. He turned round, and saw, sad in the gleamy winter sunshine, a wan young face with great yearning eyes in piteous search of his, a white, pinched mouth, and dark hair pushed carelessly back under a shabby brown hat.

'By Jove! Fitzpatrick's Miss Jinny,' he cried, shaking her cold hand heartily. 'But, I say, you've been ill, haven't you? Oh, poor girl, you look awfully seedy!'

'I am not ill,' said the soft voice, trying hard to be steady. 'At least, I shall be well when—when *he* comes back—Captain Fitzpatrick, you know. Is *he* well? Where is he?'

'Oh, Fitzpatrick's all right,' the good-natured officer answered soberly. 'He's on leave, but coming back for our ball, you know.'

'Your ball,' said Jinny hesitating, and with the ghost of one of her old painful blushes rising to her cheek. 'I wanted—wanted to ask—if—I thought perhaps—— O Mr Jones!' She broke down, and put her hand over her eyes, sobbing.

'Go on, go on,' said Jones, distressed and sympathetic. 'Hang it, I'll do anything.'

'I did so want a card for your ball,' she murmured, looking up tearfully. 'I have a sovereign—I could pay—oh, I wouldn't ask if I wasn't—wasn't—*wretched!*' And she cried again.

Mr Jones did not hesitate a moment. 'Pay? Bosh!' he exclaimed. 'You shall have tickets, certainly—you and that old fellow, the doctor. You should, if I had to sell my—my—grandmother. Only look here; don't you cry like that, you make one feel so horridly queer. Now, I say, that's *worse!*'

For Jinny had seized both his hands, and was trying to kiss them, a ceremony no one had assuredly ever performed towards this excellent officer before. He released himself, and departed, promising to send the tickets; and he was faithful, though he could not stay for the ball himself: he wished he could—'For I'm sure the poor little soul wants looking after,' he thought. 'O Fitz, you're a sad fellow; you've done a cruel job here, I'm afraid!'

Which 'Fitz,' all unconscious of what was hanging over him, had become very cheerful, and much on the alert. *She*, 'that other girl,' was coming to the ball, and, perhaps, who knows—as he had been so constant. Such a pretty girl—no end of style and pluck. Old Dr Irving had been away a long time, and only came back because he received an imploring note from Jinny, begging his escort for the ball—came indeed, but just in time to call for her, and take her there. So he knew nothing of the town gossip—of how Jinny Lake had lost her lover, and wore the willow openly, and how that lover was consoling himself.

This ball was no brilliant dream, but a tissue of dreary, cruel realities: this ball had no firm arm for her to lean on, no winning eyes, no fervent lips, to look and smile on hers, no bold gay voice to whisper patronising praise or kind instructions in her charmed ear, no envious feminine glances nor amused masculine ones, to follow her. Not that she had cared about those latter, save as confirmation of the happy truth, that seemed truth *then*, at least. She went down the room on her old friend's uncertain arm, trying to smile and talk to him, but looking wildly round, and starting at every passing voice or step. She had read something about a gambler's last throw, and she thought to herself this was hers. If she won it, oh, what might not be!—if she lost it, well, everything would be over. She must go away somewhere into the dark, and die: he might be sorry then, just a little, and believe she loved him—him *only*.

Her last throw—miserable little gambler! she was preparing for it, as, with flaming cheeks, the eager liquid glitter in her round eyes, restless gestures, and wild little laughs and exclamations, she stood by Dr Irving's side. A fossil plesiosaurus and a living butterfly could scarcely have presented a greater contrast; the life in him nearly burned out, the life in the other leaping, throbbing, racing, in a passion of fear and love, at a fever heat.

Alas! she did not look her best—she had not thought of trying to look her best—her dress was dowdy and unbecoming, her rapid movements and flushed anxious face did not become her either.

'Where's your young officer?' asked Dr Irving presently. 'Before, he was here to meet you.'

'Oh, he is coming, coming,' said Jinny, faithful in her faith. 'He is so kind.'

Nevertheless, she waited long and vainly. But, towards the middle of the evening, a slight quick figure, the profile of a big moustache and a glossy

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cropped head, caught her eye. Her heart came up in her throat, and strangled the cry that rose there; the floor dipped, and the ceiling came down, she thought. But she made a violent unconscious effort, and, recovering herself, stared with fixed entreaty at her false lover. Poor Jinny! she frightened his weaker nature by the very intensity of feeling that might have moved a stronger, as she stood with her neck a little stretched towards him, her quivering hands half open, as though waiting to clasp his, her large eyes aflame, as if each had a separate life, whose only object was his love, her lips starting with the quick leaps of her heart.

He glanced at her, then averted his eyes, inclined his head carelessly, and disappeared among the crowd.

A choked 'Oh, Captain Fitzpatrick!' pursued him, but it was too faint and sobbing for him to hear.

'My dear, hadn't you better go home?' said Dr Irving, with a heavy pitying look, pressing her hand a little.

'I don't want to,' she answered abstractedly, straining her eyes after the lithe figure gliding through the throng.

'You see, you don't know any one—and—hadn't you better?'

'No, no,' cried Jinny impatiently, and in a voice of despair: 'leave me alone!'

So he ceased his entreaties, seeing too plainly that this frail vessel of hope would soon shatter itself against the rocks of inevitableness, and be at rest.

And Jinny thought that was not her last throw, after all—she had one more left. One more: to get near him without his perceiving it, and speak to him before he could turn away. She would wait and be very patient, but she *would* speak that night; for, who knew? they might never meet again—*she* might die, or he go far away. She got away from Dr Irving (he was not hard to elude), and wandered about; but Fitzpatrick seemed to have disappeared. She was beginning to feel sick and hopeless with her weary search, when the gay familiar tones fell on her ear. She was in a passage leading to the supper-room, and his voice came from thence: to where that voice, calling her fond names no longer, could yet speak, she went blindly, unconscious that the old doctor followed her.

The room was empty of all but two when she stood in the doorway, and looked in: two, and who were they? A young lady, fair and pretty, and coquettish, beautifully dressed in pale blue satin and blush roses, with pearls round her white throat and in her ears, and dazzling golden hair dressed high, with showers of ringlets falling from it: a young lady in whose face wretched, awkward, foolish Jinny saw not only beauty, but wit, and earnestness, and *love*, who was smiling a soft complacent smile, and glancing up with a look half impertinent, half fond at her companion—who was evidently her lover.

Her companion—*her* lover? No, Jinny's—Jinny's by a thousand tender words, tender glances, tender thoughts, by those two passionate kisses in the dim sweetness of the July dawn, by all he had taught her which she could never unlearn, by the life which had no being save in his love, now.

And her captain, tender and true, was leaning lovingly over this new girl, saying soft things in her ear, with a look of such utter satisfaction, joy, and rest as he had never worn yet; and now, taking a slender lovely hand, and kissing it worshippingly, and now—it could not be!—holding her in his arms to his heart.

Jinny felt very tired; she thought she could hear her own heart moaning inly, because it was so lonely and so cold; her hapless eyes seemed strained wide open by cruel fingers; her lips got white, her knees wavered, her chest and her throat burned like fire. But she could not look nor move away, till, suddenly, Fitzpatrick's eyes met hers. Fresh from his recent triumph, beaming and tender, yet so familiar, she could not endure to see it. She threw up her arms with a stifled cry of agony, and staggered towards him. Then she thought something within her snapped and crashed; a strange sense of quietness, a numbness of death chilled the fiery pain, her strained eyelids relaxed, and she turned away, and came back waveringly to Dr Irving. She did not care to look any longer, nor to hear what those two said. She knew it was all over with her; she did not care for anything, since God let such cruel things as this be, except to be quiet, and away from all the people; to go back, and lie down in the dark.

'I am *so* cold. The light hurts my eyes,' she said; and he, in silence, gave her his arm, and took her home. He was very sorry; but what could he do? Perhaps, after all, the worst was over, since she was so quiet. She could not come to much harm now.

She bid him 'Good-night,' and went up to her room very quietly; undressed in a dazed mechanical way, and lay down. Even then she did not cry, or moan, or toss about. She lay open-eyed, without stirring a finger, staring into the darkness. So the maid found her when, as the morning sunlight streamed into the room, she came in full of questions about the ball, which Jinny did not hear nor answer at all, except when the woman mentioned Fitzpatrick's name. Then she stirred, and made a little sound of tired impatience, and turned away from the light.

She could not be persuaded to eat, nor get up, nor even sit up in bed. She shook her head when a book was offered her; she heeded the servant's indignation no more than the wind whistling outside; her aunt's message made no difference to her.

At last, Wilkins, the maid, got frightened, and sent for Dr Irving. He came, felt the poor child's pulse, looked at her tongue, asked whether she had 'any pain anywhere'—to which she shook her head—and then stood drearily staring at her. 'She 's low,' he said. 'Wants tonics and cheering; but there 's nothing to lie in bed for.—Will you get up, Miss Jinny?'

She shook her head again, with a look of aversion.

'Why not—eh? Nothing ails you, you foolish little girl, does it?'

Then Jinny looked up with a dim scornful smile, and spoke at last: 'I think my heart is broken,' said she. 'And, please, I want nothing.'

Irving shrugged his shoulders, and went out. There was nothing to be done; Jinny could not well be dragged out of bed, or have food forced down her throat. Some soup and wine were, however, given her in the course of the day, but with no rousing effect. She did not speak, nor cry, nor give trouble; nothing seemed to pain her except the sunshine, from which she turned wearily away. Her aunt had been bedridden for years, and besides, could not realise Jinny's strange state.

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So Jinny lay unvisited one day—two, three, five, seven, ten days. Then the doctor came again, looked very serious; and staid a long while, trying to rouse her. He talked of the ball, of Fitzpatrick—praised, blamed, reviled him; but even that once dear and powerful name was powerless now—her lips never quivered, her fixed eyes never moved.

He had her lifted out of bed, and supported (she was too weak to stand) to the window. She only shuddered a little, and seemed impatient to be disturbed. And Irving said, if she shewed no signs of mending, another doctor must be called in.

In a week she had not mended, she was worse; and the physician summoned to her gave the astounding news that she never would mend—news which chilled awfully those who had done their duty by her with indifference and almost with contempt.

'Miss Jinny' would never get well—to tease and trouble with her many wants, her awkward performance of the little tasks that fell to her share, her long foolish dreamings, any more. She was beyond all that—beyond the long watch and the vain waiting; for ever beyond improvement and deterioration alike.

Wilkins, the maid, when she had cried over the sad truth, sobbed out a confession that she did not think the poor child 'fit to go.' Of late, Wilkins said—oh, all last year—she had seemed to give over saying her prayers and reading her Bible: she had not seemed to listen or care when she, Wilkins, read it to her. The two doctors had not much to do with this, but they were sorry and disturbed. They did not guess what little messenger, soulless and dumb, was doing God's work with poor Jinny's wandering soul.

As she lay there, dimly wandering through the past year, one bitter thought, momently more intense, grew in her mind, that no one could ever love her—not her aunt, not Wilkins, not her dear captain, not even He who took up and comforted the forsaken—that therefore she was lost for ever—while with this strangely mingled the remembrance of her lover's last kiss. 'No one cares for me!' she moaned. A low soft cry answered her, something tender and warm touched her cheek. That cry, that touch, went to her very soul, though it was only the cat, whose kitten had died, and who was mourning it in her way. 'O Kitty, Kitty!' she cried, 'do *you* love me after all?' And then the tears came forth, and ran down her cheeks, and she wept for many hours.

Wilkins need not have troubled herself about her state of mind; the cat was the best missionary to poor Jinny, who had been a little heathen in all save the forms of religion till now; and then she was very near death, and so saw things with wonderful clearness and truth, though she had no words to speak of them.

Her one great fault had brought a far greater anguish, and was bringing fast upon her the peace the world could not give. She was very sorry for all she had done wrong, and prayed humbly for pardon for her idol worship—prayed that no punishment might come on the idol's head for her own silly weakness. Finally, almost at the last, when she had kissed the cat's head, and had said: 'Pussy, I hope you will have another little one to comfort you,' and it had been taken out of the room, she asked whether she might send a message to Captain Fitzpatrick. 'Tell him I wasn't angry, and I don't mind now. And give him my dear love—tell him, if he will come, I should like to give it him myself. You know,' she said to the old doctor, taking his hand with a weak smile, 'I'm not like Kitty—no other can comfort me for *him*.'

And Dr Irving, seeing her calmness, and with a certain stern wish that Fitzpatrick should behold his own work, went and did her bidding.

It was a startling thing to be snatched suddenly from the sunny-scented boudoir, where his lady-love sat singing bright little French songs to him; to stand beside the death-bed of another, loving and true, whom he had done to death through her too tender trust—stand in the still, darkened room, with no sound save her last laboured breathings, alone with his victim. Though, as he followed the doctor through the familiar gate, this thought troubled him, the remembrance of Jinny's blind adoration rendered it less terrible. She would either adore him still, he believed, or else reproach and rave at him in a way that should do much to justify his desertion. Yet his light step was sober, as it paused at her door, his bright eyes wavering and troubled, for Fitzpatrick's heart and conscience were not dead.

'Jinny,' said Irving, 'will you see him now?'

'Is he come?' said Jinny. 'O please.'

Fitzpatrick entered gently, prepared to comfort, soothe, feign his old love, if need be; for she might die happier if so deceived. But the instant his gaze fell upon the bed, his hopes, his visions of keeping still the old superior position vanished. Jinny was grown a woman, was his first thought, and almost beautiful—could not love him humbly now, as she used to do, nor trouble him with over-praise. She was white, and thin, and plainly dying; her mouth was drawn, and wore a sweet smile of conquered pain; her big eyes looked bigger than ever, and had a steady peaceful shining, an almost divine radiance that brightened all her face. The very faint movements of her hands had a strange significance and dignity—Jinny would never more be rude or shy—awkward, silly, hoydenish, little foolish Jinny would never more believe and be betrayed, trust and be forsaken, cry, or trouble, or wait and weary, again. That was all over. It was Fitzpatrick now who had no words, who was awed, almost frightened, who needed her sweet welcoming gesture before he could venture to approach. Once his slave—a queen was more approachable; once his toy—now almost an angel of God; once praying pardon so piteously for small errors or none—*now*, why her very love, if love it was that made her summon him, seemed only the far-off pity and pardon of a glorified saint. He hesitated, a dark red flush covered his face, his eyes fell as he came near her, he dared not even ask if she forgave, but broke down and sobbed at the first word.

'Oh, don't cry like that,' said Jinny, stroking his hand with both hers very tenderly. 'Never mind; you are sorry—you did not know what you were doing, did you, dear? It was my fault; I wrote I couldn't live without you, and I *am* dying, you see. But indeed, I don't care. I am quite, quite happy.'

'Oh, by Jove!' cried Fitzpatrick, the tears running down his cheeks now. 'Sorry? I should think so! You make me feel what a scoundrel I've been. I'd sooner you shot me than be so sweet, and, and talk in this way.'

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'But I must,' Jinny murmured in her weak voice. 'I couldn't be cross the last, last time.' Then she pointed to a chair by the bedside; and Fitzpatrick sat down silently, humbled, repentant, self-hating, as he had never in the course of his easy life been before.

Jinny spoke again presently, with a little sigh: 'You are going to be married, aren't you, to that young lady in pink and blue?'

'Yes, I believe so,' answered Fitzpatrick, hanging his head; he had almost added, in the depth of his remorse, 'not unless you like it.'

'Ah!' said Jinny, sighing again, 'I hope you will be happy; but, my dear captain, you won't make any one else think you love them, and then leave them, will you?'

'Never again,' answered Fitzpatrick under his breath; 'I shall never forget this, nor *you*.'

Poor Jinny, she was past blushing; but she smiled a little, and her dim eyes brightened in the old fond foolish way at his words.

Then she sank into silence, and lay quiet, holding his hand, and looking dreamily at the fading sunset red beyond the window—an early sunset, like her own. Fitzpatrick rebelled against it: he could not bear to see her lying there with a weak smile of patient fondness flickering across her lips, or a sharp gasp and quiver of pain shaking her slight frame.

'Jinny,' he asked hopelessly, 'won't you get well? What's the matter with you?'

She did not tell him, as she told the doctor, that her heart was broken, nor that it was so, as she told herself, by his desertion—she was meek and childishly tender now, as she had always been.

'No, dear,' she said faintly; 'I'm going to die.'

'O Jinny,' he muttered in a wild way, 'if you could live I'd be different to you, I swear I would.'

'No; you love some one else, my dear captain, and you must be good to *her*. I know—I know I wasn't fit to be your wife. But everything is right now.'

It was getting very dark, and a strange trembling awe crept over gay Captain Fitzpatrick's soul as he sat alone with his innocent victim, her frail fingers clinging round his hand, her failing breath on his bowed face.

She was going to die, and for his sake. Her hand was getting very cold in his this minute, but she murmured something faintly.

He bent his head to hear the question.

'Isn't there a new moon?'

'Yes.'

'You ought to wish, oughtn't you? I remember I did; but Christ's will is better than our wish, isn't it? Dear, I feel so weak; so—so'——

'I'll call the doctor. O Jinny!'

'No; don't call any one; I only want you. Don't go: I'm not afraid. Only say "Our Father" to me.'

He tried, but the first word choked him utterly, and Jinny began to whisper it herself. She soon ceased, and lay quite still for a while. Then, suddenly, she sat up, and groped in the dark.

'Where are you?' she panted. 'I'm afraid.'

'I'm here, quite close,' cried Fitzpatrick in terror. But she was thinking of him no longer, and he quailed. In the dark, he heard her nestle into the pillow, murmuring something that sounded like: 'So, so tired—all alone—so glad to rest;' and heave a long, satisfied sigh. He thought she was dead, and felt a strangely bitter pang that she had not said 'Good-bye.'

But little Jinny was faithful in death as in life. Her weak hand felt over his face, and tried tenderly to wipe away his tears. Her voice, which now he strained his ear to catch, though once he had listened to it so heedlessly, murmured in a fond, pitying sigh: 'Don't mind; don't cry, love. Please God, comfort and bless my'——

And before Fitzpatrick could credit and understand that this prayer was for him, Jinny herself was comforted, and lying in arms that could never grow cold or false, or let her go, as his had done.

He kissed her quiet hand timidly before he went away, and could hardly believe it would never stroke his cheek, or try to detain him as it used to do, any more.

He felt unwontedly heavy and sober as he left the mournful house, as though he had left there a bit of the world's brightness.

Soon, there was a little white cross in the churchyard under the old willows—the willow no one could taunt her with wearing now—and a simple inscription:

JINNY. Aged 16 years and 10 months.

'He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and bear them in His bosom.'

Old Dr Irving, standing long after by that little grave, muttered to himself sadly: 'Whom the gods love, die young;' for though the first year there was a bunch of lilies and snowdrops upon it, the second it was forgotten.

GOOD WISHES.

I KNOW but that your face is fair,
So fair, it well might task my wit
To write the sweetness smiling there
In utterance meet and music fit;
Your heart, I have no share in it;
Your home, I am a stranger there;
Yet think not that I care no whit
For one so gentle and so fair;
Cold were the heart that wished you less
Than smiling days and happiness.

Youth fills your girlish path with flowers;
May Age with blossoms strew your way;
Love gilds, I guess, your present hours;
May he for ever with you stay;
Young sorrows lightly fleet away;
Your tears are yet but April showers;
May Age's griefs no longer stay,
Nor darklier cloud your evening hours.
Dear daughter, friend and girl and wife,
May Love home with you all your life.

What more a pen can wish you here
Of good, may it to you be given—
A quiet mind, a faith sincere,
That makes this earth a lowlier heaven;
And when your age shall sigh for heaven,
And find this life no longer dear,
May hope alone to you be given,
And death for you have not a fear;
An angel here, your exile past,
Smiling, regain your home at last.

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THE COMFORTERS OF THE MODERN JOB.

We are always taught to believe that adversity, taken, as the doctors say, in moderation, is on the whole a useful stimulant, and valuable if merely as a change; and it is difficult for any who have observed the evils of a long-continued course of prosperity, of whatever kind, to doubt the truth of the dogma; of course, we limit its application, as we do that of most doctrines of the kind, to our neighbours; but as Mr Brown thinks of Mr Jones that a slight check in his career would 'do him all the good in the world,' while the latter says it would 'do Mr Brown no harm,' their common friend, without ill-feeling towards either, may fairly pray for a small draught of this moral quinine for both.

But he must not stop here: if he wish thoroughly to discharge his duty to his fellow-creature, he must complete the remedy for which he has prayed; he must call upon Messrs Brown and Jones, and condole with them on the chastisement with which Providence has seen fit to afflict them; for not until he and such as he have done this will the beneficial cup of misery be filled to the brim.

There are several ways in which this charitable deed may be performed; but, with that instinct which seems to guide any duty which becomes a pleasure, Eliphaz will be pretty sure to choose the tone best fitted to heighten the effect which he views with such unselfish delight.

First, there is the severe 'serve you right' tone; but this must be carefully used, as none but inferiors or very meek people accept it so gratefully as might be expected. Indeed, though exceedingly useful in its way, it is a dangerous manner to adopt, and requires great caution; an ill-advised selection of the subject to be operated upon has been known to result in a decided snub, or even—such is the ingratitude of mankind—in an enforced and rapid exit from the afflicted house. Provided, however, that it is safe to make use of this application at all, little skill is needed; it consists simply of a diluted version of the words 'brought on her / his / your self.'

Far more subtle than this method of consolation is that of the friend who 'had always been afraid of it from the little he saw.' This, you see, in the very act of implying superior wisdom, forms an exceedingly good corrective to your own blind want of foresight and care. You were a fond mother perhaps, trying to reclaim by kindness a vagabond son, and had fancied that the blow which you had succeeded so long in warding off would be at least as unexpected to others as it was to you. But no: Eliphaz saw it long ago; possibly he 'always told you so.' You do not remember his doing anything of the kind, in fact he always seemed to you to agree that the prodigal was going on much better. Suggest this, and you only add another drop to the tonic; how could he risk the loss of a dear friend by hinting at what he guessed? So that you, by your own selfish pride, only assisted the mischief after all.

Then comes the friend who tells you that it 'might have been worse,' as if this self-evident fact ever diminished the first agonies of a great grief by a single pang. This is the man who steps up to you when a Hansom has just knocked you down and broken your leg, and bids you be 'thankful you weren't killed.' He is great at misfortunes which cannot in any sense be said to be your own fault; because the arrow might have wounded you somewhere else, he almost thinks you ought to be thankful to the archer for hitting you at all. This is a most invaluable dose of consolation, for it will annoy your average mortal as much as anything to hear that the woe which he has been bewailing so deeply is considered quite a commonplace one after all, and that the morbid satisfaction which he had hitherto derived from pitying himself was founded merely upon his own inability to appreciate degrees of suffering. It has also another advantage; it will almost invariably appear to be just, though disagreeable, since nearly all troubles seem worse than they are until we actually begin our fight

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with them. So that, although we may be obstinately unphilosophic enough to refuse any satisfaction in the matter, regarded from any point of view whatsoever, we cannot deny the apparent truth of our friend's unpleasant observations. We are seldom calm enough to point out that, if we once enter the wide field of possibilities, we *might* have escaped altogether. Granted, that all our money might have been lost by the breaking of that bank instead of half, still, if we had chanced to invest it elsewhere, all might have been safe.

Unless we can contrive to put a stop to this objectionable mode of treatment at the outset, the versatility of our tormentor will be practically unlimited. Be our misfortune what it may, he will always be ready, under pretence of affording us comfort by the contrast, to shew us some unhappy fellow-mortal whom he fancies worse off than ourselves—in all probability, merely from ignorance of the whole circumstances of each case. The strange anomaly in the line adopted by this comforter is, that although, in common with the rest of his brethren, professedly guided by religious principles, he yet begs us to take heart by observing the afflictions of others—the true spirit of the pagan philosopher. Here again, however, the flaw probably escapes in the indignation of the moment, and as we must take physic, we gulp it down silently with the rest.

But most refined of all is the operator who bids you 'look upon the bright side.' It seems such a fine idea to persist in shutting your eyes to the black cloud that is breaking over the heads of you and all you love best in the world, and in squinting round the corner for its imaginary silver lining, that one feels a sort of foolish respect for the audacity of one's optimist friend. He is the man with the very new hat and pleasant smile, who pays you a visit in Whitecross Street to tell you 'it will all blow over soon, old boy; you must get you a clerkship somewhere' [you used to fill up half-a-dozen every year yourself]; 'and I see your wife's off home to the country already, so she'll be all right.' In minor calamities, he it is who dilates, after that bank smash, on the pittance you have left; or, after the street accident, on the goodness of your prospective wooden leg.

If by any tone the well-meaning friend can insure the full chastening effects of adversity, this is certainly the one to adopt. None of its details seem to escape him; and by inquiry or suggestion, he reproduces to the minutest touches the whole picture that we would so willingly forget. He gauges with the accuracy of an expert the difference between 'now' and 'then,' and all under the plausible pretext of looking at the 'bright side.' By all these means, employed according to his estimate of your calamity, can this comforter of the modern Job insure the trial of patience which is so valuable a use of adversity; but if he be a married man, he has a yet stronger one at his command. Let him stay at home, and delegate to his wife the mission for whose fulfilment he feels himself responsible. To every dart with which he could supply her she can add a sting.

She needs not to guide her conversation by any artfully selected tone, nor bind herself to any fixed plan of action. So much greater is the tact of a woman, that while a man, by an unintended word of kindness, will often undo the good of all the manner which he has so studiously affected, a woman will be unconsciously perfect in her part, and will attain, by her intuitive attention to the smallest details, the full effect at which she aims.

Observe the perfect way in which she comes into the room for that first call upon your poor dear wife after your unfortunate descent in the world. Her obtrusive want of observation seems to say: 'I won't pain the Blanks by appearing to notice the shabbiness of this miserable little hole; in fact, it might be kinder to praise any of the most glaring contrasts to their former condition.' So she goes to the window, and remarks on the prettiness of the unhappy yard which replaces your beautiful flower-garden, and thinks 'it must be so nice to have it all under your own eye.' Then, too, what a relief to have only one servant: really they are such nuisances that she often wishes she had no more herself. She inquires with the greatest concern whether you don't find how extravagantly your housekeeper must have carried on your *ménage*, and says how fortunate it is that your dear Isabella has such domestic tastes. And so she can run on for half an hour, taking the most amicable and lively interest in your affairs and plans, and jarring at every turn on the most tender of your recollections and regrets. If she would only talk and behave as she would have done in days gone by; if she would but forget for a moment that she need ask about details, however kindly, that she never thought of before; if she would not now and then stop short in the middle of a sentence, as if fearing to hurt your feelings by going on; if her sympathy were only less obtrusive in its delicacy! Her assumption of concealed pity irritates you far more than the selfish incivility of the dandy friend who cuts you in the street, just as whispers and footsteps on tiptoe are more annoying to the invalid than louder but more natural sounds. And when she has come and gone, you may give a sigh of relief, for you have swallowed the last drop in the cup of your bitterness, and your Nemesis is at length tired of avenging your former happiness. Most of our miseries would be tolerable, were it not for the comfort administered to us by our friends.

THE PROPHETIC PISTOL.

A WAYSIDE REMINISCENCE.

'And that,' said I, 'is pretty nearly all that I have to tell you.'

The above words formed the peroration of a synopsis of several years' travelling, communicated by me to a fellow-passenger from Helsingfors to Stockholm, as we leaned over the side of the good ship *Viborg*, and watched the countless groups of rocky islets, crested with green foliage, which arose on every side from the smooth transparent sea. My auditor was a long, lean, wiry American, with a cold clear eye, and a look of indomitable firmness in every line of his pinched sallow face, which gave him the aspect (to quote from a pugnacious friend of mine) 'of a man you would like to be back to back with in a row.'

'Wal, stranger,' remarked he at the close of my narrative, 'yu hev bin about a bit, I reckon; but yu hain't seen much, and what's more, yu hain't *done* much neither.'

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My dignity was somewhat ruffled by this plain-spoken criticism; for I privately regarded myself as a second Sindbad, on the strength of a moderate acquaintance with the majority of the countries which figure on the tourist's visiting list. Moreover, my listener had himself provoked my communicativeness by a series of searching questions upon every point of my personal history, from the colour of my grandfather's hair to the amount of pocket-money allowed me at Rugby. Consequently, there was perhaps a shade of acrimony in my tone as I replied: 'I've done what I could; but of course everybody can't have as many adventures as you.'

'Wal, yu air about right thar,' returned he, taking my words literally; 'I've seen a few things in my time, I reckon; but, mark ye, it's 'cause I've looked about me, and fixed for doin' somethin' wharever I went, 'stead o' trailin' about with my eyes shet and my hands in the pockets o' my panteys, like some folk. Now, I'll tell yu how yu Britishers travel; yu jest foller the railway track right square from one big town to another, and see the opera-houses, and the theayters, and the promenades, and sitch like; and o' course yu meet a heap o' riffraff, and mayhap get yure eye-teeth drawn a leetle too slick; and a'ter devotin' three weeks or a month to seein' a country with some millions o' people in it, yu come back and write a tarnation big book to say, "that air country ain't no great pile o' punkins a'ter all; the critters thar air all lazy and shiftless, and good for nothin' but to cheat and tell lies—and no wonder, seein' they're only cussed furriners, and hain't got the inestimable blessin' of a free British constitootion." That, now, stranger,' he concluded, with the paternal superiority of a missionary instructing a Hottentot, 'that's the way *yu* go to work; but, yu observe, 'tain't the right way, nohow yu kin fix it.'

'And how did *you* go to work, then?' asked I, wishing to divert the current of this flood of extempore criticism.

'Wal, I fixed to *do* somethin', and I *done* it; leastways, a man that's been a teamster in the Rocky Mountains, a gold-digger in Australey, a sailor in the Injine Ocean, a storekeeper at Shanghai, a newspaper editor at San Franciskey, and an agent for one notion or another in every country of Europe, mout say he'd done somethin', I guess, if he had a mind to.'

'And have you really done all that?' asked I, somewhat startled at the catalogue.

'Reckon I hev; I've been kinder movin' round ever sin' I was as big as a molasses-jar, and I ain't done yet. Guess I'm like John Brown's soul in the old song—I "go a-marchin' on" pretty consid'able, and it'll take a while to tire me of it tew.'

'And do you always travel alone, then?'

'Reckon I do; leastways, what *yu'd* call alone. I've got a bosom-friend here, though,' added he with a strange chuckle, putting his hand into his breast-pocket; 'and he's done me more'n one good turn in his time, so I tell ye. Yes, sir, he has that; and what's more, he speaks or holds his tongue jest as I please, which 'tain't every man as 'ud do!'

And with this enigmatical preface, he produced a small but very handsome revolver, fitted with a spring-bayonet, and ornamented about the stock with eleven studs of silver, arranged in the form of a square, which would be completed by the addition of a twelfth.

'Ain't *that* a friend, now, stranger?' said the Transatlantic exultingly; 'and good friends we've been, him and me; I never mistrusted him but once, and that war down in Australey, when I war gold-digging up Turon way. Two fellers cum to my tent one night, 'cause they'd hearn as I'd a heap o' gold thar, and they thought o' bein' so kind as to relieve me o' the 'sponsibility o' guardin' it. I hearn 'em creepin' in, and o' course the fust thing I did war to slap all six barrels into 'em, jest to giv 'em a hint not to call a'ter visitin' hours. I hearn a screech, and then a pattin' o' feet runnin' off; but it war tew dark to see anythin', and all the rest o' that night my feelins ain't to be 'scribed, nohow!'

'Ah, you were afraid you had killed one of them, I suppose?' said I, pleased at this solitary touch of humanity in my grisly acquaintance.

'Killed! why, darn it, stranger, d'ye want to insult me! No, by Jingo! I war 'fraid I'd *swissed* one on 'em! and to hev my own re-volver miss at close range, a'ter bein' true to me for so many years, war more'n I could bear!' (The pathos with which he said this was indescribable.) 'I felt *partic'ler* cheap all that night, so I tell ye; yu mout hev bought me for a cent, any time 'fore mornin'. But as soon as it war light, I cum out, and thar I seen one feller lyin' dead beside the tent-door, and a track o' blood all whar t' other had run off, jest like a strick o' molasses 'cross a buckwheat cake; and, says I: "Thank Heaven, I've hit 'em both!" and the weight that war took off my mind in that air moment—stranger, thar ain't no 'scribin' it!'

The real fervour of his tone as he uttered the last sentence, with all the air of a good man whose conscience has just been relieved of some overwhelming burden, cannot be conveyed in words.

'I daresay yu'd hardly guess, now, stranger, that I fust saw this re-volver in a vision; but I *did*, though, stare as much as yu like; and the way it happened war jest so: Father had bin dead 'bout a month, when I cum in late one night from fixin' a rail-fence that one of our oxen had smashed; and a'ter I'd sot by the kitchen-fire a spell, and done a tol'able stroke o' supper, I began to feel a leetle drowsy. I warn't not to say asleep, but jest so as if yu'd spoke to me sudden, I'd hev thought a minute 'fore I answered—when, all to once, I seen father stannin' right 'fore me, with his big straw-hat o' one side, and his high boots and striped shirt-sleeves, and his hands in his pockets (*that* war the only ghost-like thing 'bout him, for while he war alive they war mostly in some one else's), and he says to me, says he: "Cy, my boy" [my name's Cyrus Jehoshaphat Flint, stranger, and I ain't 'shamed on it]; "Cy, my boy, I've cum back from the spirit-world to tell yu suthin' yu 'll p'raps be none the wuss o' knowin'. I didn't leave *yu* much," says he, "'cause yu air safe to go 'long single-handed, whereas them two brothers and five sisters of yourn will kinder need proppin' up some, 'fore they kin stand by theirselves.—Now, yu jest listen to me. To-morrow mornin', the very fust thing, yu up and job open the back o' that old cupboard in the corner, jest 'bove the top shelf, and thar yu'll find a re-volver, the best yu ever fingered; and may Heaven bless it to yure use.—And now, kneel down, and receive my blessin'." I

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war jest a-gwine to du it, when all to once I slipped off my chair, and cum the all-firedest lick with my nose agin the fender as ever I seen; and when I cum-to agin, thar warn't nobody thar. "Wal, cuss it!" says I [though that air language ain't quite proper for a member o' the church], "I hope next time father comes from t'other world, he 'll contrive to do it at a reas'nable hour, 'stead o' shewin' up a'ter bedtime, and makin' his own flesh and blood break his nose in this here fash'n." But for all that, I didn't forget what he said; and fust thing next mornin' I up and into the kitchen, and out with the back o' the cupboard, and thar lay the re-volver, as sure as ever thing war in the world. —And now, stranger, if yu don't believe that air story, here *is* the 'dentical re-volver, and yu can't go again *that*, nohow!'

Against such confirmatory evidence it would have been useless to argue; and I readily assented, only venturing to inquire the mystery of the singularly arranged studs on the stock of the pistol.

'Wal, stranger,' returned my companion, 'yu wouldn't guess the trick o' them studs in a hurry, so I 'll tell yu. Each o' them air studs on that re-volver stands for the life of a man that him and me hev clared off. There 's eleven on 'em, altogether, and I reckon that 's a pretty tol'able stroke o' work for one man and one weepun.'

Used as I am to extraordinary confidences, this cool, complacent statement fairly staggered me for the moment. 'Good Heavens!' I gasped, 'do you mean to tell me that you have murdered eleven men?'

'No, stranger,' replied he slowly and sententiously: 'yu hev got into the wrong ferry-boat in makin' that air statement. I mean to tell yu that I 've found it necessairy, at different pe-ri-ods o' my life, to rub out eleven human critters who mout otherwise hev offered the same ci-vility to *me;* and I calc'late yu don't call *that* murderin'? Thar 's one wantin' yet to complete the dozen, as yu see; but,' added he cheerfully, '*that* won't be long a-cumin', I guess.'

'The old cannibal!' said I mentally; 'he talks of killing people as if he were only collecting photographs. Pray Heaven he may not take it into his head to add *me* to his museum!'

'Thar 's one 'vantage I 've got with this weepun,' pursued the Yankee; 'I kin always tell at fust sight o' a man whether I 'm a-gwine to kill him some day or not.'

'How 's that?' asked I, not without a secret shudder, and a slight anxiety as to which way the scale had turned with regard to myself.

'Wal, jest this way: whenever I meet a man that I 'm bound to rub out bime-by, the hammer o' this re-volver 's sure to gin a sorter click—so—jest to shew that *he* knows his dooty 'spectin' that air individooal; and he never makes mistakes, *he* don't.'

The perfect air of conviction with which he said this was the reverse of agreeable; and I could not help reflecting: 'A pretty thing if this precious pistol should have happened to click when he saw *me* first, and he should think it necessary to vindicate its infallibility!' My countenance probably expressed some disquietude, for my companion suddenly broke my meditations by observing, in an encouraging tone: '*Yu* hain't no call to be skeared, stranger; he didn't click at sight o' yu, and I 'm kinder glad on 't, for yu 're good kumpny in yure way, although yu *air* tarnation green in the ways o' the world.'

As this estimate of my abilities was evidently too deeply rooted to admit of refutation, I let it pass, merely inquiring whether the fatal augury had ever proved false.

'*Never*, stranger,' he replied emphatically. 'Yu can't 'spect *prophecy* to go wrong, and that air weepun 's a prophet, jest as much as Dan'l or 'Zek'l. I won't say that I wouldn't hev bin glad, *one time*, to catch him slippin'—and reezun good tew; but you mout as well 'spect Gin'ral Grant to be 'fraid, as this weepun to tell a lie.'

'And that *one time*—what was it?' asked I.

'Wal, seein' it 's yu, stranger, I don't mind tellin', though I ain't so precious spry at talkin' on that air subject, I swar. It 's a good few years now sin' I happened on a feller who hailed from a village on the Mississippi, called "Burnt Clearin'," 'cause of a big fire they 'd hed thar once on a time; and we froze together powerful, and war jest like brothers all to once. Wharever one went, t' other went; whatever one did, t' other did; and if this un hed a dollar, that un war good fur fifty cents on 't, least thing. We went down river to Noo Orleens, and up to Philadelphy by the cars, and east'ard to Charleston on a tradin' spec; and I tell ye, we fotched up the dollars right smart. I saved him from bein' chawed up by a b'ar that looked plaguy angshus to make his closer 'quaintance; and he saved me from bein' drownded in flood-time, when my canoe got turned over agin a snag; and altogether, stranger, yu mout hev tuk us fur David and Jonathan cum alive agin. But all the while thar war one thot hangin' in my mind like a risin' clond in summer, that spiles the look o' the hull sky—and that war the recollection that my weepun, fust time he ever seen this feller, hed *gin a click*.'

The cold clear tone of his voice at these last words, slightly tinged with sorrow, was such as a compassionate judge might use in pronouncing sentence of death; and to me (guessing as I did what was to come) it had a sound indescribably dreary and ominous. 'I used to try and laugh myself out o' that air fancy by sayin': "Whatever 's possible, *that* ain't! Why, to think o' our quarrellin' 'ud be like a man cuttin' hisself in half, and fightin' right hand agin left." But let me talk as I liked, the thot stuck in my head like a nail in a new log, and wouldn't go away. And at last, stranger, the time cum when it war *more* 'n a thot. One year, early in the fall, we were down in Kansas, tradin' about in spots, and makin' a pretty tol'able haul; till one day we 'greed to tote up the profits, and make a fair division, 'cause next mornin' he war startin' off to Burnt Clearin' to see his folks, and I war bound to make tracks for Boston on some business of my own. Wal, evenin' cum, and a'ter lickerin' up a spell, to ile our brains fur the cipherin', we began totin' up. But somehow or another, we couldn't come to a right settlement o' our two shares, nohow we could fix it; and what with the licker we 'd hed, and the worry o' cipherin', we both commenced to git rayther savagerous. At last, up he jumps, and hollers out: "I 'd not hev bin so thunderin' keen upon this hyur trade if I 'd known that my pardner war nuthin' but a darned mean flint-shavin' thief o' a Yankee!" At them words a shiver run all through me, like them 'lectric fixins that book-larned folks tell on, and my right hand

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flew out as if somebody moved it, and fotched him a lick 'tween the eyes that brou't him down like a pine in a clearin'. (He war a fine feller, bigger 'n me some way, and all the way out as hard; and, by Jingo! 'twar a reg'lar pleasure knockin' him down.) Up he got, lookin' mighty wrathy; and says he: "It 'll take a leetle burnt powder to put away the smell o' that air blow—cum out into the forest." The sun war settin', and everythin' war dead still, as if waitin' to see what we'd do. I follered him out readily 'nuff, for I war cool as an icicle, now I know'd the job hed got to cum through; but when I seen the dyin' light streamin' down the shadowy arches of the forest, and the everlastin' trees stannin' up tall and grand, and whisperin' with all their leaves, as if God war speakin' through them in His own Temple of Natur'—by Hevin', stranger, I cum very nigh feelin' as if I war p'raps doin' wrong!

'Wal, *that* feelin' didn't last long, I reckon. The fust click o' them locks (we'd 'greed to load only three barrels each, to save time)—the fust click o' them locks war like the smell o' roast meat to a starvin' man; and when I toed my mark at fifteen paces, I felt as comfortable as if I'd bin sittin' 'fore a big fire with a glass o' whisky in my hand. We both cracked off to once: I got a scratch on the left side, and a bit o' his sleeve went flyin' jest below the shoulder. "Better luck next time!" says I; and the second load went off. He'd aimed higher this time, and the pill skiffed my ha'r, and knocked off my hat; but jest in the same moment I seen him turn half round, and go ker-chunk right on his face. I run in upon him, like a fool, forgettin' that he'd got one shot left; and he hoisted hisself on his elby, and let slap, jest tetchin' my thigh as I cum on (his hand war shaky, yu know, or he'd not hev made sitch a bad shot); but that war his last card, and then I know'd I hed him.

"Ole feller," says I, "I 've kinder won the hand this time, thar ain't no dodgin' it. So, 'fore yu go under, hev yu any messidges to leave?"

"Wal," says he, "thar 's a gal at Burnt Clearin' that I war pretty bad on last fall—Kezia Harper, next door to the meetin'-house—guess you mout gin her this hyur locket, if 'tain't outer yure way."

"She 's as good as got it already," says I, puttin' it in my pouch.

"Thar 's a feller in the next village, Nathan Hickman, that they used to call 'Straight-eye'—I war to have fought him this fall; yu tell him why I can't cum, for no one didn't oughter think I war 'fraid."

"If the coon says a word agin yu," says I, "I 'll grease my boots with his liver. Is thar arything else?"

"Wal," says he, "I guess that 's about all."

"Good-bye, then, ole feller," says I; "bless yu!" And with that I clapped my pistol to his head, and blew it as small as corn-shucks.'

'Good-Heaven!' said I, revolted at this cold-blooded butchery, 'could you not have spared the man's life, even then?'

'Stranger,' replied the old slaughterer, with indescribable dignity, 'if yu want to find a critter so cussed mean as to hurt a man's feelins by sparin' him a'ter he'd been whipped in fair fight, I guess yu 'd better not come to Cyrus Jehoshaphat Flint!—Now, then, I calc'late we 'd best be lookin' a'ter our fixins, for them 's the spires o' Stockholm shinin' yander.'

And, so speaking, he turned upon his heel, and vanished into the cabin.

'OURS' IN JAPAN.

Two young officers of H.M. 9th Regiment have beguiled the tedium of their homeward voyage by the joint-composition of a volume, which, if neither profound nor expansive, is very amusing to its readers, and creditable to its authors.* If any one should feel inclined to compassionate the hapless victims to the exigences of the military service of their country, destined to foreign quarters in Japan, this narrative will dispel the gentle emotion. The young gentlemen are not to be pitied; there is no doubt that they get on uncommonly well, and contrive to create quite an astonishing amount of resemblance between life in or about Yokohama and life at Aldershott. Hunting, shooting, racing, billiards, theatricals, horse-dealing, and brandy-and-soda are as much institutions in the one locality as in the other, and the climate and cleanliness are incomparable. True, they were seventeen thousand miles away from home; but they rode, ate, drank, shot, made merry among themselves, and got on remarkably well with the inhabitants, which is to the credit of both parties, and is rather exceptional in the history of the mutual relations between our military countrymen and 'natives,' as, with a happy knack of generalisation, they are in the habit of designating two-thirds of the human race. In a careless, happy-go-lucky kind of way, these young officers saw (and observed, which is not always synonymous) a good deal of the country and the people; and a more clear and comprehensive notion of Japan, as the dwelling-place of a civilised people, and as a very beautiful and productive country, may be gained from this light volume, in which the exuberance of animal spirits abounds, than from the many more grave and purposeful records in which the subject is systematically handled. All the impressions were fresh, and made under fortunate conditions, for our authors had just come from Hong-kong, where a particularly sickly season had been aided by the scandalous over-crowding of the ingeniously ill-situated cantonments, in producing much illness and death in the regiment.

Their eyes had rested last upon the barren hills of Kowloon and Hong-kong, and were now refreshed by the wide-spreading panorama of the curved coasts and beautiful wooded slopes of the shores of Japan, and their attention riveted by the venerable, white-headed old mountain, Fusi-yama, which stands alone, an isolated sentinel, never off duty. The grandeur, the dignity, the solitariness of this mighty, symmetrical mountain are so impressive, that, after living some time among the Japanese, one begins to share their veneration for it. In all strange countries, the absolute novelty must for a time at least, if the traveller be possessed of any taste and intelligence, keep off *ennui;* but in Japan, it would appear that ennui can never get a chance, for the novelty never

* *Our Life in Japan.* By R. Mounteney Jephson, and Edward Pennell Elmhirst, 9th Regiment. With Illustrations from Photographs by Lord Walter Kerr, Signor Beato, and native Japanese drawings. Chapman and Hall.

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wears off. The people are a perpetual study; their intricate and, to us, odd civilisation, is always developing to the perception of the stranger in queer unexpected ways, and their absolute difference from every other race in the world making itself evident. The liveliest curiosity must therefore attend a residence among them; and to the calm observer, not bent on obstinately philanthropical schemes for improving a nation whose representatives told us with such deliciously calm politeness, after a thorough investigation of our 'system,' that they preferred their own in every particular, except the shoeing of horses, their condition must be very satisfactory. Considering the tumultuous condition of the world in general, it is very pleasant to know that anywhere on the face of the earth there are people so happy and content as the natives of Japan, of whom the writers give the following pleasant general description: 'Their manners are polished in the extreme, and, as a rule, they are exceedingly good-natured, and have a keen sense of the ridiculous—rather too much so, for we believe that if the most dutiful son, possessed of the greatest filial piety, were to see his father dying before his eyes, he could not repress a laugh, if the old gentleman were to do it at all in a comical way. Their rules of etiquette are strict and complicated, and extend to the lowest classes. Two coolies meeting each other in the street, if they are personally acquainted and off duty, will, before they commence a conversation, bow, simper, and smirk in the most grotesque manner for several moments; and on leaving each other, will repeat the same performance. This looks rather ridiculous, when we consider that the probable tailor's bill of each of these gentlemen for the half-year is the following: "To one rag (summer suit complete), 3 cash." What a difference from the "Ulloa, old cockywax; wot 's yer little game?"—the kind of salutation in vogue among the corresponding class of Englishmen.' A meeting of two Japanese swells is described as something wonderful to behold. Japanese politics, the authors declare, are things which nobody can understand; but this probably means that they did not try to understand them—at first, that is; they have some interesting particulars to divulge later on.

Soon after their arrival, and before they had seen much of the beautiful country, an invitation arrived for them, by the courtesy of the governor, to be present at an execution at the Japanese prison at Kanagawa. They went, and this is what they saw, and describe without any of the offensive levity with which military men are too apt to think it proper and professional to write of the taking of human life. 'When within a mile of our destination, we fell in with an immense crowd of people, and on inquiry, found that the criminal, who was even now being paraded on horseback through the town, would pass here on his way back to the prison and his fate. Remaining where we were, we soon saw the cortège approaching, and even at a long distance could distinguish a solitary figure raised above the level of the crowd. As they neared, and then passed slowly, we had ample opportunity of looking closely at the procession. First came two men bearing placards raised on poles—the one proclaiming the nature of the crime for which the offender was to suffer, and the punishment he was condemned to undergo; the other inscribed with his name and native place. Immediately following, rode the doomed man, tied to his horse, with his arms tightly pinioned behind him, and a rope fastened to his waist, held by a man who walked alongside. Never had it been our luck before, and we trust it may never be again, to behold a creature in God's image reduced to such a state. With a skin parched, blanched, and shrivelled; features worn and distorted; eyeballs glazed and sunk; his cheek-bones appearing to be forcing themselves out; and his withered arms hanging nerveless at his side, the wretched being strove hard to bear himself bravely, and to behave at the last as became one of his race. As he passed, his eye lit on our party, and he called out, with a scornful laugh, for "the foreigners to come and see how a Nippon could die."'

The Englishmen followed to the prison, a building of wood, in which prisoners are made to undergo every kind of cruelty and neglect. The horrible modes of punishment resorted to by the Japanese laws are justly reprobated by the writers, who, indeed, cannot endure to dwell upon them. Fortunately, this particular prisoner, though his crime was thieving—one visited with horrible and devilishly ingenious punishments—was not to be tortured on this occasion, only to be killed; and as a preliminary, they gave him, on his arrival at the prison, a good meal, which he ate with extraordinary appetite, talking to those around him, and first politely bowing to the foreigners, whom he immediately afterwards cursed. 'When half an hour had elapsed, it was intimated to him that his presence was expected, and, with the assistance of an attendant on each side, he walked into the execution-ground, and was placed, kneeling and sitting on his heels, in the universal Japanese posture, behind a small hole, dug out for the reception of his head. Some ten yards in front of him, and separated by a rope running across the square, sat the presiding Yakonin and the prison authorities, calmly fanning themselves; and beyond these, again, were the six or eight foreigners who had been admitted. The prisoner's arms were then pinioned behind his back, but before the cloth was tied over his eyes, he requested that a minute's grace might be allowed him. This being granted, he raised a weak, quavering voice to its highest pitch, and screamed out: "My friends!" Immediately, an unearthly chorus of wails answered the poor wretch from his friends outside the walls, none of whom could be seen from the interior. "Friends!" again shouted the unfortunate man; and after each sentence the same thrilling response was sent back to him. "I am about to die, but think not that I care!"—a horrible attempt at a laugh following the last words. "Do not mind me. It is quite indifferent to me. Look out for yourselves. Syonara!" (good-bye); and with a deeper and more prolonged wail, the crowd answered "Syonara!" He then signalled to his guards that he was ready, and submitted quietly to the operation of blindfolding. The executioner, who had been standing by his side—with the greatest *sang-froid* pouring water on the keen blade of his long two-handled sword—now stepped up, and carefully adjusting his head a little on one side, and in such a position as to hang exactly over the hole in the ground, signed to the officer that all was prepared; but before the latter would give the signal—and while the wretched being before us was momentarily expecting his death-stroke—

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he inquired of Mr L——, with every mark of politeness, if the English officers were ready. Of course, he quickly answered "Yes," and the word was given; when, without raising his weapon more than a foot above the neck of the condemned, the executioner brought down his heavy blade with a plainly audible thud, and the head dropped instantly into the hole prepared for it. . . . . Immediately the head fell, it was seized, carefully washed before the features could get set, and put into a bag. At the same moment, two men jumped on the body, and by means of squeezing and kneeling on it, strove to drive all the blood out of it while it was warm, which being as much as possible effected, it was rolled up, tied into a bundle, and carried off.' This dreadful scene was far more terrible to the English beholders than the informal, hap-hazard Chinese executions, on which occasions the criminals laugh and talk until the last moment, and meet their fate with *genuine* unconcern.

The Japanese horses hold an honourable place in these records. They are rather dangerous animals, and as little to be trusted as the Bettos, a distinct tribe, affected to the care of the horse. The Bettos are not at all ill-looking men; their activity is wonderful, and their strength great. They wear no clothing, but are tattooed in an extraordinary fashion all over their bodies.

A trip to Daiboots, where the great idol of the Japanese worship is to be found, is one of the chief incidents of this narrative. The way lay through beautiful scenery, with the wonderfully diversified colouring in which Japanese scenery surpasses any in the world; and past many of the 'tea-houses,' concerning which so much has been written, which these gentlemen declare to be utterly untrue; while they dilate upon their extreme comfort and dainty cleanliness. It is not easy to imagine a ride of many miles through Devonshire-like lanes between groves of camellia trees, many of them forty feet high, whose place is afterwards supplied by the crimson azalea on a correspondingly gigantic scale. The rice and barley are in full ear, and the landscape presents a rich mixture of green, crimson, and gold. Quiet, quaint thatched homesteads abound, with children playing in front, and women sitting at their spinning-wheels. Perfect peace and contentment reign; and this is the land where men fly kites (without metaphor), where the houses are made of paper, and the whole country is a volcanic eruption. Troops of pilgrims are on the road to Daiboots; and the English party fall in with some wonderful conjurers, and, calling a halt, make them go through their performances.

At Kamaharu, they stopped to visit the temples, which are similar to all others in Japan in form, but surpass every other in size, number, and costly carving. The entrance to the sacred grounds consists of three arched stone bridges, in the willow-pattern style, over a moat covered with lotus-plants and water-lilies. So very nearly a semicircle are these bridges, that the travellers had to make their way over them holding on to the sides—of course, the Japanese walked over them comfortably in their straw shoes. A gateway forms a second entrance; and there they were shewn two sacred ponies, whose fate is much to be commiserated. Perpetually caparisoned in a most grotesque style, they are never taken out of their stalls, or even allowed to lie down, being slung from the roof of their stable. Thus they are supposed to be ready at a moment's notice for the god of war, should that deity take it into his head to ride about. Daiboots is a huge bronze figure forty-three feet high, of a Buddhist god, who is represented sitting cross-legged, and with clasped hands. The approach to it consists of a splendid avenue of trees. Daiboots, it appears, has been photographed and sketched from various points of view; but one of this party, ambitious of novelty, climbed over a railing, and 'took' the venerable old gentleman in rear, when he presented anything but an imposing appearance, having two windows in the small of his back, for the purpose of ventilating his interior. Daiboots is a famous divinity, and his votaries flock to him all the year round.

The writers are admirers of the Japanese ladies, declaring that, 'fair-skinned almost as their sisters of the West; small, but neatly, nay, almost faultlessly shaped; their flowing robes displaying in its own gracefulness the model that nature has adopted, and which none of the meretricious deceptions of civilisation can improve upon; with pretty captivating manners, and a language musical and soft as Italian, the laughter-loving nymphs of the Rising Sun have many and powerful charms.' The graceful dress and the invariable cleanliness and neatness of the entire population, the delicate and tasteful appointments of the houses, in which there is hardly any furniture, and the simple and innocent recreations of the people, combined with their complacent, but not bumptious self-satisfaction, offer a very pleasant combination; and if it were not for the occasional risk of being murdered, Japan must be a very desirable place to live in. The latter consideration is a drawback certainly, especially as the danger may be excited by such an incentive as the arousing of the patriotic feelings of the audience at one of the interminable Japanese plays, inducing an ardent desire to exterminate the foreigner, and preserve the sacred soil of the country intact, or from failure to understand and execute the requirements of etiquette on the approach of a Daimio.

Among the 'sights' of Yokohama is 'Curio Street,' composed entirely of shops for the sale of Japanese curiosities, ranging from trumpery camphor-wood boxes to the finest specimens of exquisite fans, delightful gold lacquer cabinets, and antique bronzes, which are of great price. Curio Street must be a pleasant place to lounge and look about one in, especially as a stranger may go into one of these shops, and after staying an hour, if he likes, looking at and examining every article, and turning the whole shop almost upside down, may go away and not make a single purchase without any fear of having a rude or uncivil look cast at him. In return to his 'Good-day,' the 'Syonara' from the proprietor, and probably all his little family—they always have on hand a good supply of small children—will be as cheery as if he had bought a thousand ichiboo cabinet. (An ichiboo is a coin, value about eighteenpence.) They will, even after he has expressed his determination not to buy, offer him a cup of tea. It is very strange to read of the alteration a few years have made in Japan, of the utter break-down of the old system of exclusiveness, to learn that the Japanese are imitating European customs and adopting European dress; and that every mail

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from Yokohama carries a number of Japanese gentlemen on their way to Paris, as if they 'hailed' from New York. When we remember the geography lessons of our youth, which taught us that nothing was known of Japan, except that no subject of that mysterious empire was permitted to leave it, the following anecdote has a strange significance: 'We were on board the P. and O. steamer one evening before her departure, and were introduced to sixteen Japanese of all ages, from fourteen to thirty, all belonging to the same party, and all provided with note-books and pencils, sitting in the saloon round the stove, taking notes on everything they saw and heard, at a rate which threatened soon to leave them without a single blank spot in their books. They all spoke a little English, and by way of opening the conversation with us, one of them remarked, evidently prompting himself from his note-book: "Lon—don—is—a—ver—y—big—place, sir." We allowed that, and informed them that it was as big as Yedo or Osaka. At this they shook their heads incredulously, but thought it worthy of a note. . . . . "What are—its—chief—products, sir?" asked the little one of the party, who spoke like a young geography. It was on the tip of our tongue to enumerate a list of such articles as balloons, gig-lamps, chimney-pots, &c.; but a suspicion that this juvenile seeker after knowledge had already the proper answer down in his note-book, and was only asking us for the purpose of proving the correctness of his note, restrained us. We wished them good-bye, and a pleasant voyage, "which," we added, "was a long, and very often a tedious one;" and we left them all busily engaged, entering with great pains in their note-books: "The voyage from Japan to London is a long, and very often a tedious one!"' This sounds very funny, but there is an estimable side to it; and it is pleasant to find young men starting to explore a new world in a spirit of earnestness and interest, and, after an unaffected fashion, implying the possibility of their finding something under the sun to occupy their attention other than the flavour of their cigars and the condition of their moustaches.

The manufacture and flying of huge and gorgeous-coloured kites, and dexterous playing with battledore and shuttlecock, do not seem to us either manly or entertaining sports, but they are profoundly delightful to these people, who are at once so cunning and so simple, and the English officers came to take pleasure in them. A curious custom prevails all through the country, a little later than the kite-flying season. Every Nippon, high or low, to whom a son has been born during the preceding twelve months, testifies his sense of the blessing by hoisting, on a bamboo pole, in front of his house, a huge paper fish, which remains in that position, flapping and fluttering, for the next three weeks. Looking down from a hill on a village or town, it is a curious spectacle to behold several hundred huge monsters of the deep fluttering in the air.

Japan is wonderfully rich in legendary lore, and every mountain and wood has its familiar spirit, either good or evil, but more frequently the latter; and some of the popular superstitions are painful and troublesome, notably the belief, that the departed revisit the scenes of their life in this world in shapes of different animals. One day, an old man, whom they knew, came to the English officers, in a state of great depression, of which they inquired the cause. He told them he had lost his little son, Chiosin, and that his wife and a lot of old women, her friends, were worrying him to death. 'Every beastly animal that comes into my house,' he said, 'there is a cry amongst them all: "Chiosin, Chiosin has come back!" And the house swarms with dogs, and cats, and rats; for they say they are not quite sure which is Chiosin, and that they had better be kind to the lot, than run the risk of treating him badly. The consequence is, all these brutes are fed on my rice and meat; and now I am driven out of doors, and called an unnatural parent, because I killed a mosquito which bit me!'

If any of our Japanese visitors see the dwellings of the poor in England, or, indeed, if they merely observe the aspect of the places through which they must pass in their journeys, how profoundly disgusted they must be at what they have come to. This is what they leave: 'Every Japanese, no matter how low his station, how small his means, how small his dwelling, prides himself upon its exquisite neatness. Cleanliness is universal. The matting on the floors of the poorest habitations is scrupulously clean. The utensils, mostly made of wood, are scoured and polished perpetually, until they always look as if they had just left the hands of the carpenter. We have sometimes staid at farm-houses for a few days, and in the event of a scarcity of tables, have not had the slightest objection to having our meals laid out on the floor, and partaking of them sitting *à la Turque*, or lying at full length.' Sport in Japan is very good, and there is no lack of excitement, as fires are perpetually occurring, which is not surprising where all the houses are made of paper, and nobody thinks anything of leaving a lighted torch against the wall. Wrestling is a favourite national sport; and the authors' description of the training and the performances of the huge wrestlers, who are enormously fat and heavy, is more curious than pleasant. So is their account of the mode and *matériel* of eating in Japan. But one dwells with unalloyed pleasure and wonder on the pictures of the unsurpassed scenery of the country, and especially on the most charming description in the book, that of the summer residence of Prince Satsuma, and the gardens, 'such as you read of in the *Arabian Nights*, but never come across in European real life.' They are three miles in extent, a perfect labyrinth of taste and beauty; and to look at them is to be forced to acknowledge that the best of our miniature landscape-gardeners are generations behind the great masters of the art in so-called barbarous Japan.

A COUNTY FAMILY.

CHAPTER XVII.—A DISCONSOLATE WIDOWER.

THE moment was not altogether propitious for Mr William Blackburn's introduction to the family circle; but even allowing for that circumstance, his voice and manner were not calculated to produce a favourable impression.

'Well, Miss Ellen,' said he, taking his niece's hand with more roughness than affection, and looking suspiciously at Stanhope, 'you don't seem over-glad to see me, nor over-ready to introduce me to your friends.'

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'You took me so by surprise, uncle; why, I did not even know you were in England.—This is Miss Lucy Waller, who is now staying with us at the Manor with her father; and this is Mr Herbert Stanhope of Curlew Hall yonder.—How glad grandmother will be to see you!—How is dear Aunt Bess?'

'She is dead, Ellen.' The would-be widower heaved a sigh and pointed to his hat-band. 'She went to rest some weeks ago, poor thing!'

Without being an accomplished hypocrite, Mr William Blackburn had that sort of power of dissimulation which suffices with our criminal classes to impose upon chaplains in jails; he could use the conventional phraseology of religion, and pull down the corners of his mouth.

'Uncle or no uncle, he *is* either a Ranter *or* a begging-letter impostor,' thought Stanhope.

Ellen, greatly shocked by this unexpected news, was weeping behind her handkerchief. Lucy Waller, who had suddenly grown very pale, echoed mechanically: 'Poor thing!'

The widower fixed his eyes upon her with what he intended to be a smile of gratitude: 'You have a feeling heart, young lady, as well as a lovely face. Forgive me, but you remind me—— Ellen, dear, does not Miss Waller remind *you* of her that 's gone?'

It was with the utmost difficulty, and only by causing the horse which he was leading to violently jerk his bit and rein, that Stanhope could conceal a burst of merriment.

'How dreadful is this news! Oh, why, why did you not write and tell us?' cried Ellen, plunged in grief, and unconscious of her uncle's remark. 'The last time we heard of her, she wrote so hopefully, and seemed so happy in that'——

She was about to say 'that island,' when a frown from the widower stopped her. 'The south of France did seem to agree with her at first,' said he, 'but it soon failed to do her good. It is a sad story, and we will not talk about it now.'

'Your uncle has been many years out of England, has he not, Ellen?' inquired Lucy, after a somewhat awkward pause, during which the newcomer glanced askance at both his niece's friends—at the man, with jealousy; at the girl, with furtive admiration.

'Yes, for just five years.—Have you not, uncle?'

'Upon my life, I cannot tell whether it is five or six.'

'The *dolce far niente* of the sunny south makes time pass so imperceptibly away, does it not?' remarked Stanhope.

There was no touch of banter in the tone, and of course Mr William Blackburn could not judge how uncharacteristic was this platitude of him who uttered it; yet he looked up with quick suspicion ere he answered: 'Well, I don't know as to that; it was dull enough.'

'Then, for your part, you like England better than the continent?' said Lucy.

'Just so, miss; and English ladies better than all foreign ones. Why—not that I am one to flatter, but I have not seen a face like yours, which does one such good to look at, for these last twelve months.'

'I thought you said the late Mrs William Blackburn was so very like Miss Waller,' observed Stanhope drily.

'And if I did, sir,' answered the widower angrily, 'I am not aware that I addressed myself to you. But since you have done me the favour to listen to me so attentively, *you* may also *remember* that I expressed the wish that the conversation should not again revert to so distressing a subject.'

'I am sure, Uncle William,' interposed Ellen, 'that Mr Herbert Stanhope is the last man intentionally to wound another's feelings: he is a great favourite of your father's, who, I am sure, would wish you to be good friends with one another.'

'Who wants to be anything but good friends?' inquired Mr Blackburn with surly irritation. 'All I object to is the being taken up so short in every word one says.'

'I am exceedingly sorry to have taken you up short,' observed Stanhope gravely. 'It was only that I was so interested in that fortuitous likeness between the ladies, of which, however, I will take care to speak no further.'

'Is this fellow staying at our house along with this girl?' inquired Uncle William in a hasty whisper of his niece.

'No; he only joined us on the moor,' answered she in the same low tone. 'Pray, do not be uncivil to him, uncle.'

'Uncivil, begad! Do you suppose, you stuck-up little fool, that I don't know how to behave myself like a gentleman? I will let him know, though he does seem so sure of having you upon his side, that he must also win my good word if he is to continue to be welcome at Redcombe.—Mr Stanhope,' continued he, raising his voice to a tone that he flattered himself was dignified, 'my niece has been telling me that you have been so good as to form the escort of these young ladies; it is no longer necessary, however, to trouble you further, since I am about to accompany them home.'

'You overrate the trouble, my good sir,' rejoined Stanhope coolly; 'and you are unaware of the promised recompense. I am now going to Redcombe Manor to eat grouse-pie; since, as I presume, Miss Blackburn, you have not rescinded your invitation on account of your uncle's arrival. There will be enough for him and me also, will there not?'

'Yes, indeed there will,' said Ellen earnestly. 'Uncle William, who has been so long away from us, does not understand, Mr Stanhope, that you are not a chance acquaintance, but a friend and neighbour of ours, whom his father and mother are always pleased to see.'

'Yes, yes, sir; it 's all right,' said Blackburn, who had seen a look of disgust steal over Lucy's features, which he was conscious of having caused. 'I am not one to refuse to own when I am in the wrong, and far less to bear malice. Let me shake your hand, sir. You were speaking of grouse-pie—are there ever any grouse upon this moor?'

Full of his amicable purpose, Mr Blackburn crossed over to Stanhope, who was walking on the other side of his horse, so that the animal now intervened between the two men and the young ladies. 'I am sometimes short-tempered, Mr Stanhope, but always devilish sorry for it afterwards. Let by-gones be by-gones. We will presently drink a glass of brandy together, to our future friendship. It seems to me that there is some likelihood of our being not only friends, but relatives, eh?' And into his new friend's white waistcoat he playfully dug a dirty thumb-nail, to enhance the keenness of his remark.

For perhaps the second time in his whole life,

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Herbert Stanhope blushed: he was not without scruples (as we have seen) concerning the part which he had set himself to play; and to have been detected in it thus early by so gross an observer was humiliating indeed. His right hand closed upon the rein he held with quick and strong clutch, and for one single instant Mr William Blackburn was in immediate peril of measuring his length upon Redmoor.

'You are very observant of human nature, sir,' was, however, his smiling reply. 'We poor English folks are no match for you who have seen so many men and cities.'

'You are right there,' answered the late inhabitant of Formosa; 'nothing's like mixing with the world. Still, one can't know everything all at once just by looking at people; and—— We've overwalked the ladies a bit, so that they are out of earshot—who is this Miss Lucy Waller, eh? I have not seen such a deuced nice-looking girl since'——

'Hush! Yes; I know: since you were a widower. Well, she's Miss Ellen Blackburn's companion. Teaches her all sorts of useful accomplishments, potichomanie, and to knit beads for purses'——

'The deuce she does! Why, I thought she was an heiress! How comes her father to be staying with my people, then? Is he a drawing-master, or what?'

'No, not exactly. They are both much respected in the county.—But, hush! She is coming up with us.—I must apologise for *Roland*, ladies; but he is not accustomed to walk in such fair company. He is too fast by half.'

'Like master, like horse,' observed Lucy, laughing.

'Do *you* like fast men, Miss Waller?' inquired Mr Blackburn, stepping to her side.—She had already been far from favourably impressed with him, but there was something in his manner now that was unmistakably insolent. She did not, of course, understand that this was caused by the conclusion to which he had just been led, that she was in a dependent and subordinate position; but she noticed a marked change in the style of his address, and shrank from it.—'You pretty girls always do like rakes,' he went on in a confidential tone, that was in itself, under the circumstances, an impertinence; and he stuck his heavily craped hat upon one side, and thrust a careless hand into his pocket, to convey the idea that he also could be a rake, should love demand so great a sacrifice of personal character. In justice to Mr William Blackburn, we must remember that he had not, in reality, to bewail the recent demise of an attached consort, and may be so far excused for his buoyant behaviour; but to Lucy Waller, who, of course, credited his tale of woe, this sudden philandering on the part of the mourner—as unexpected as the curvetings of a hearse-horse—was inexpressibly repugnant, and her countenance did not fail to shew it.

'Ah, you are cross with me now, I see,' observed Mr William, whose good opinion of himself and his personal attractions was certainly not inferior to their merit; 'but I think you would be kinder, if it were not for these other folks being by. We shall be better friends in a day or two, when we come to understand one another, I feel sure.—Now, how do you get on with the governor?'

'Sir? I have not the least idea to whom or what you refer.'

'Oh, I say!—come, that's being a little too innocent. Why, I mean your emp—that is to say, my father of course. How does the old hunks treat you? You need never fear my telling him, for he and I have never hit it off together; indeed, I went abroad entirely to get out of his way. And just fancy; until three days ago, I never knew that that young interloper, Richard Blackburn, had popped off the hooks, and so let me into my rights at last!—I suppose, by the way, that is the Manor-house lying yonder?'

Lucy could not have spoken to save her life; her countenance, if he had looked at it, must (notwithstanding even *his* gross self-esteem) have shewn him contemptuous abhorrence—loathing; but, wrapt in the sight of his newly acquired property, he took heed of nothing else.

'A very tidy place, upon my life,' said he approvingly. 'I daresay you find it snug enough yourself, even in your position. Then, think what it must be to be master there; and I shall be master soon, you know, for it's quite impossible the old cock can keep upon the twig much longer; as for the hen-bird, I had just as soon she staid on as not—she's devoted to me, she is. And if I chose to say I will marry this or that girl, no matter who she was or how poor, she would never gainsay me; she always knew better than to oppose herself to anything I wished—I will say that for the old woman.'

'Are you speaking of your mother, sir?' inquired Lucy, her face as pale as a corpse, her eyes staring at the house that was once to have been her home.

'Of course I am—of old Mother Blackburn, as I have no doubt you call her, when you and your father get alone together. That's quite natural—nobody cares for old people; whereas, with young ones, at least young girls, it's altogether different, especially when they are pretty ones, like you.' He cast from his wolf-eyes a glance intended to be sheepish, and she met it without shrinking; he sidled towards her, and she stood her ground. 'Now, look at that *other* couple,' he continued, motioning towards the pair in front, who, deep in talk, were walking slowly on, unconscious that their companions had halted: 'she is not half such a fine girl as somebody I have seen to-day; and, indeed, in my opinion, is a sickly little fool, without a pennyworth of spirit, although, I daresay, she takes it out of *you*, Miss Lucy; and yet, only look how he cottons to her! Not that he has only eyes for her looks, I'll be sworn—he thinks she is going to be an heiress. But there's many a slip between the cup and the lip; and I daresay you won't be sorry to see it in her case. Young ladies, for all their kissing and hugging, are seldom very fond of one another, especially when one has the upper hand. But for the future, you have got me upon your side—remember that:

> Oh, fair Lucy Neal,
> Oh, sweet Lucy Neal,
> And since you've got me by your side,
> How happy you should feel.'

And Mr William Blackburn accompanied this skilful adaptation of a popular melody with the nearest approach to a tender glance which he could compass—an unmistakable leer. Some young women would have fainted on the spot, or gone into hysterics; others would have smacked his face. But Miss Lucy Waller only looked at him

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with much the same sort of shuddering curiosity that belongs to folks who visit the Reptile House in the Zoological Gardens for the first time. He was repugnant to her, of course, but she had her reasons for being well pleased to see each cruel coil and deadly fang exhibit themselves so openly.

'We had better walk on, sir,' said she; 'I hear some one coming.'

And even while she spoke there issued from a by-lane into the road immediately before them, a handsome red-faced old gentleman, well and gaily dressed, but with his hands clasped behind him, and his eyes fixed upon the ground. He came on, deep in thought, without noticing that he was not alone, until he almost touched the pair, then looked up with astonishment and annoyance. 'Hullo, how came you here, and who is this—person, Lucy?'

'This is Mr William Blackburn, papa,' said she in distinct tones. 'We met him, Ellen and I, upon the moor; he has, it seems, returned home somewhat suddenly.'

'How strange—how very strange!' exclaimed the old gentleman cheerily as he held out his ample palm. 'What an unexpected pleasure you will afford down yonder, sir; your dear mother can scarcely speak of any one else!'

'And yet she can't have had much to say upon that subject, neither,' answered the other gruffly, 'since she has not written to me for a twelvemonth.'

'Is it so long indeed? But you have been abroad, I hear; and when one shifts from place to place upon the continent, roving, as I do not doubt was your case, from one spot to another in search of beauty or of pleasure, the postal delivery becomes exceedingly uncertain.'

'Just so,' assented Mr Blackburn drily. 'You talk like a book; like one of those conversation books as folks take abroad with them—all question and no answer. But I am not agoing to be pumped by anybody—so, there.'

'I am afraid you are a little too deep for us country-folks to fathom, even if we were inclined to be inquisitive,' returned the old gentleman, smiling good-naturedly, and stroking his double chin.

'That's just what the other one—him they call Stanhope—said, so I suppose it's right,' replied Mr William, with an air of vulgar triumph. 'I'm equal to hold my own in the world, I daresay, with most folks.'

'What sagacity can do, I do not doubt you have effected,' observed Mr Waller; 'but fate is sometimes too strong even for the most able. You seem to have been in trouble yourself lately.'

'In trouble!' cried the other, turning pale and speaking very passionately. 'What the deuce do you mean by that, sir?'

'Nay, sir; I meant no offence: I only feared, from the crape about your hat, that you had suffered some bereavement,' explained the old gentleman smoothly.

'Oh, ah! just so. I have. I forgot that I was sailing, as it were, under—what do you call it?—the black flag. Yes, sir—a sad loss. I was telling your daughter about it as we came along. My poor Bess has been taken from me these many weeks.'

'Receive, sir, my respectful sympathy,' responded the old gentleman, wondering within himself who Bess could be, and whether it was possible that this remarkable creature was in mourning for some favourite mare. 'All pleasure has its alloy, and you could scarcely hope that this long-looked-for return to Redcombe Manor, your introduction to wealth and station, should be altogether without its drawback. Permit me, sir, to be the first to congratulate you upon this day and its prospects. I esteem it great good fortune to be at the Manor on so auspicious an occasion.'

'This *certainly* must be the drawing-master, or some poor devil of that sort,' mused Mr William Blackburn, 'or why should he be so confoundedly polite? I am not quite sure whether he's not taking a liberty in speaking to me at all. But for his daughter's sake I'll let him go on. He must have a deuce of a salary to afford to rig himself out like that; the idea of his having a frilled shirt; why, he's better dressed than I am! Such a gift of the gab too as the beggar has!—"A great good fortune," and "this auspicious occasion," indeed—why, he'd talk a dog's hind-leg off. Upon the whole, however, I am glad to have met him, for he'll make that first coming across the governor easy—the idea of which I don't much relish—I daresay he will be like a bear with a sore head, because I have come back without his leave, as though his only son and heir were to stay any longer upon that blessed island, while he has been in clover here, guzzling and swilling of the best, I'll warrant, for the last twelve months. But now I *have* come, I'll make up for lost time, or else my name's not William Roberts—I mean Blackburn.'

'I see Ellen and Mr Stanhope waiting for us at the garden-gate, papa,' said Lucy coldly; 'had we not better join them?'

'Why the deuce don't they go on, and let the governor know that I am coming?' observed Mr William with irritation.

'I should think the driver of your fly, who should have arrived this half-hour, would have spread that news,' said Lucy.

'Yes, but then he does not know it,' answered the newcomer, biting his lips. 'One can't be too cautious in a general way about one's self and one's affairs, and I told him I was only a visitor.'

Father and daughter exchanged a rapid glance, the former of humorous amusement, the latter of keen contempt.

'If my humble services can be of the least use to you, Mr William Blackburn,' observed Mr Waller, 'pray, command them. You are naturally desirous of sparing your parents such a sudden shock; they are neither of them young people, and joy may be almost as dangerous as sorrow when it befalls so unexpectedly. Shall I take upon myself to be your herald, and break the tidings of your arrival to your father and mother?'

'The old woman is of no consequence whatever,' answered Mr William thoughtfully. 'But, upon my life, if you would just step on ahead and tell the governor that I am here, I should feel really obliged to you. You see it was my mother who wrote, and not him, and I ought to have got the letter a year ago; and altogether it's deuced awkward.'

'Your hesitation does you honour, sir. Some sons would have rushed into their father's presence without the precaution dictated by your thoughtfulness. I cheerfully undertake the task of envoy. In ten minutes I will answer for it you will be

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received with open arms, and without the embarrassment of a domestic scene.'

And with that Mr Waller nodded gaily, and trotted on ahead, with the confident air of a stout and sagacious poodle who has possessed himself of his master's walking-stick, and is carrying it home in his mouth.

CHAPTER XVIII.—DRAWING THE BADGER.

Mr Blackburn senior was in that snug little back apartment so popular with his deceased brethren, smoking a pipe, and sipping some light liquor, which might have been water, except for the suspicious circumstance that there was a spoon in the tumbler, when Mr Waller broke in upon his privacy, all smiles. He was, however, a privileged visitor in that chamber, and had seen the squire partaking of that same refreshment at somewhat early hours before. It was singular enough that this old man, who, in his poverty, had been so scrupulously temperate, should in his days of prosperity—and especially in these later ones—have taken up with so reprehensible a habit; and the circumstance had set the wits of his astute friend to work to discover its cause. Why do men indulge in drink? he had inquired of himself. Because they have always done it, and like it; or because of some trouble, the thought of which they wish to drown. The first, from 'information received,' as the detectives say—and no detective was ever more keen in gleaning information that could possibly advantage him than Mr Waller—was not, he knew, the case with his venerable friend and host. In the second, therefore, must lie the explanation. Now, what trouble could possibly affect a gentleman with four thousand a year in land and no debts? This was a question which, with all his astuteness, and indeed in consequence of it, Mr Waller had found it very difficult to answer. At fifty years of age, his study of human nature (which had been unremitting) as a thriving man of business, as a jobbing member of parliament, and as a speculator heavily dipped, had led him to the conclusion, that mankind were divided into two classes—Good and Bad; that is, into men whose names were good for a bill, and those whose names were bad for a bill. The former were happy; the latter were always full of trouble. But Mr Blackburn was certainly not in the second category, and yet he had taken to drinking gin-and-water before lunch.

Mr Waller had not had the opportunity of discovering whether trouble had caused his hostess to adopt a similar remedial treatment; but Mrs Blackburn also had evidently of late suffered under some mental distress, though that was of less significance, since women, he had observed, had the faculty of distressing themselves about matters very unimportant, because wholly disconnected with finance; moreover, in her case, this worry of mind had only lasted a very few days, probably since her husband had thought fit to communicate to her the cause of his own annoyance.

This puzzle had baffled the ex-M.P. (he had lost his seat for Mosedale at the last election through certain injurious commercial reports concerning him which had crept into those rascally newspapers); but now that he had seen Mr Blackburn junior, he had a shrewd suspicion that he had hit upon the solution of it, or at least upon the right scent of the solution. Not only, thought he, has the Squire quarrelled with his son, but there has been some good ground for quarrel; that sulky cub must, at one time or another, have thoroughly disgraced himself, which explains also Mrs B.'s doting fondness for him (since the moral cripple, like the physical, is always the mother's favourite child), as well as her enforced reticence upon that darling theme.

Altogether, Mr Waller congratulated himself exceedingly that he had taken that charming autumn walk along Violet Lane, the better to reflect, in solitude and leisure, over the affairs of a certain Insurance Company in which he was a director, and concerning which, in that morning's paper, there had appeared a disagreeable advertisement, calling upon the shareholders and policyholders 'to communicate with the undersigned with respect to taking measures for mutual protection.' He was accustomed to fish in troubled waters, and the motion of the craft (however crazy) in which he happened to be embarked rarely seriously inconvenienced him: if it should even have gone to the bottom, his natural buoyancy was such that he would perhaps have felt little personal fear; but, at all events, if anywhere in the cloudy atmosphere that had long environed him a gleam of sunshine shewed itself, it was always sufficient to put him in spirits; and such a gleam had, in his opinion, appeared to-day in the return of this prodigal son. As for the company he might have been keeping, or the sort of husks which might have formed his meals during his exile, that mattered but little to Mr Waller. Had he not already established amicable, nay, confidential relations with this young man? and (what was better) had not his daughter apparently done so likewise? He had talked with Lucy more than once of this unseen mysterious scion of the House of Blackburn, and especially upon that very morning—which had brought such news of coming storm as had made him more than ever look out for harbour—had he dropped a hint or two, which she had certainly understood, if they had not met with favour, of the desirability of her cultivating this gentleman's good graces. Mr Waller was ignorant of Mr William's being a married man; he loved his daughter as much as, or, at all events, next to himself; and of course—or else what was the use of experience?—he knew better than she possibly could know what was best for her. He would doubtless have been pleased to find Mr William Blackburn with somewhat higher traces of civilisation; but still, argued he with himself, it is astonishing what improvements can be effected in a man, however dull and brusque, by a clever wife; and how much better such marriages often turn out in the end than those of mere sentiment.

'Glad to see you, Waller,' said the old Squire cheerily, in reply to that gentleman's apology for his intrusion. 'It is no use my asking you to take a glass, I know (though it's the wholesomest thing in the world, in my opinion); but you will smoke a small cigar before luncheon?'

'Just a whiff or two, thank you,' returned Mr Waller (who entertained, and justly, the very highest opinion of the virtues of tobacco for soothing and smoothing); 'but I did not come to sponge upon your cigar-box, I do assure you. I have got some news for you.'

'Then I am sure it's good news, or you would

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not be the man to bring it,' said Mr Blackburn smiling. 'I have a very small experience, to be sure, in the matter, but you seem to me, for one of the calculating sort, to take such cheerful views of everything. Now, there's Moffat, who is as great a schemer as yourself, he is full of complaints and difficulties; but you, you are the pink of a business man.'

'Let us say the rose colour,' rejoined Mr Waller laughing, 'for I own I like to look on the bright side of things; and when they turn out badly, I forget it, and start afresh. The two best rules in life are these: "What's done can't be undone," and, "It's no use crying after spilt milk."'

'Then it's not good news after all,' returned the old man—'eh?'

'Yes, it is; or at least it ought to be. I have just come upon Miss Ellen and my daughter in the road leading out of Violet Lane, and who do you think they had with them? They're bringing him home to lunch, only I've got the start of them. Now, guess.'

'*I* know,' replied the old man placidly; 'and I am not at all surprised. And you're quite right, in my opinion, in calling his return good news; for, with all his faults, I like the young fellow uncommonly, and am always glad to welcome him to Redcombe. It's Herbert, of course?'

'Well, Stanhope is with them, as it happens; but there's somebody else also—somebody that has a better right here than even a friend and neighbour—somebody that you have not seen for —— Good heavens! what is the matter, Blackburn?' The old man had dashed his pipe on the ground, and started to his feet.

'You don't mean to say that scoundrel of a son of mine has dared to come back without my leave?'

'My dear friend, pray, calm yourself. Mr William Blackburn has indeed come back, and very hearty and well he is looking; as fine a young fellow as you would wish to see. But, as I understood him to say, he has returned home in consequence of a letter from his mother, which has been unaccountably delayed in transmission.'

'I will soon see whether he is lying or not,' observed the Squire, ringing the bell with violence. 'I have had reason, and good reason, to be much dissatisfied with my son, sir; and if he has not been invited hither—and I believe he has not—I will not see his face, nor shall he set foot within my house.—Mottle, tell your mistress that I wish to see her here—at once—*immediately*.'

'My dear Blackburn,' said Mr Waller soothingly, as soon as they were left alone, 'let me adjure you, as a man of the world, not to give way so to passion before a servant. They exaggerate any family disturbance so abominably. And, pray, do nothing rash as respects your son. He is here now, with or without leave, and there's an end on't: the least said is the soonest mended.'

'If that fellow, whom I have forbidden my house, has returned to it of his own head, sir, he goes back again whence he came, though he were ten times my son. And if my wife, contrary to my express injunction, has written to him before the term which—which—I assigned as the just limit of his chastisement—— But here is my wife!'

'Shall I leave the room, Blackburn?' asked Mr Waller hesitatingly, and looking from the stern face of the Squire to the pale and frightened countenance of his hostess; 'or shall I stay here, as the warm friend of both of you, and one who has your common interest at heart?'

'I shall be obliged by your remaining here, Waller,' answered the old man, who, although looking the picture of implacability, had now regained the control of his feelings, and was sorry for having lost it. 'I have been hitherto silent about this subject, because it was an unpleasant one; but since it has thus forced itself upon your notice, there is no reason for further reticence.—I have sent for you, Mrs Blackburn, to ask whether, in despite of my particular commandment, you have invited William hither?'

'O Anthony, pray, forgive me,' cried she passionately. 'Oh, I knew this would happen!—Ask him to forgive me, Mr Waller! It was not my fault, but that letter which I wrote a year ago; he knows the one I mean; I missed it from my desk the other day.—I had been looking at it, Anthony—only looking at the outside, and thinking how pleased our Willy would have been to get it—and I left it addressed and sealed upon the lid, and the maid found it there when I was out, and thinking it was meant for post, she put it in the letter-box. I did not dare to tell you, husband; but that is what has made me of late so wretched: the fear of your displeasure, not with myself, but with my poor boy.'

'There! you see there is nobody in fault, Blackburn,' exclaimed Mr Waller triumphantly, 'with the exception of some officious domestic. I have more than once had letters posted myself in that way by my servants, in compensation, I suppose, for their so often forgetting to post those that ought to have gone.'

'I told you to burn that letter, woman,' said the old Squire, with difficulty suppressing a groan.

'You did, Anthony, and so far I am in fault; but it was my only comfort to handle and look at it, and to think of the joy which it would give to Willy when it did reach his hands. You gave me permission to send it in a month hence, you know; what difference then can a few weeks make?—Oh, speak to Anthony, Mr Waller, for you know so well what to say, and, alas, I can think of nothing except my boy!'

But the ex-M.P., more sagacious than his impassioned hostess, held up a finger for silence. The Squire was leaning thoughtfully upon the mantelpiece, stroking his long beard with a tremulous hand; and it seemed to his observant guest that he had grown grayer and older within the last quarter of an hour; the fire in his eyes had quite died out, though the shaggy brows were still knit above them.

'To come just now,' ran his bitter thoughts, 'upon the very day that that young man has returned here, unable any longer to resist dear Nelly's charms. How like his evil choice in everything! Stanhope is proud, and will never brook his rudeness, even if he should see nothing worse in him, hear nothing worse of him. These dead brothers of mine, who treated their own flesh and blood so ill, had no such son as this to curse them, and why should I have? Three weeks hence, three days hence, and all might have been well. But he must needs come now by misadventure—it seems as though it was fated to be so—and Heaven only knows what ruin he may not bring with him. And yet to drive him from my door would be to excite suspicion of I know not what, something

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almost as bad, if that were possible, as the thing itself! It is no use crying after spilt milk, says my smooth-tongued friend yonder; and I must, it seems, perforce adopt his advice; but first to give him so much of my confidence as may put a stop to further inquiries.'

'Mr Waller,' exclaimed the Squire frankly, 'you and my wife have conquered, although I must confess I feel it difficult to submit; and since you have so kindly interested yourself in a matter that is so entirely a trouble of my own, it is only right that you should know its exact nature.'

Mrs Blackburn started, and glanced imploringly towards her husband.

'Yes, Mary,' continued he; 'the truth must come out sooner or later; and through Mr Waller's lips it will receive, I know, a more charitable interpretation than if told by any one else.—My son, sir, has displeased me in various ways, I may almost say from a mere child; and when he arrived at manhood he crowned his wilfulness by an act, for which no subsequent good behaviour—of which, however, I am bound to say he has shewn no signs—could atone. Without asking my permission, he made—I do not say a disgraceful, but certainly, considering his possible expectations, a most unsatisfactory and unsuitable marriage.'

Across Mr Waller's face there flitted a momentary expression of disappointment—almost of despair; and for once the ready river of his speech refused to flow.

'And yet poor Bess has her good points,' observed Mrs Blackburn, intensely relieved at the limited extent of the Squire's disclosure, and good-naturedly disposed even towards the woman whose unlucky existence interposed between her son and the best match in the county.

'One moment, my dear friend,' observed Mr Waller with a serious air, as the Squire moved slowly towards the door. 'Do I understand Mrs Blackburn to say that the young lady—your daughter-in-law—was called, in the abbreviation of affection, Bess?'

'I believe so,' said the Squire coldly.

'Yes, yes, she was,' answered Mrs Blackburn eagerly. 'What of her? I love her dearly, for she is certainly most devoted to my Willy.'

'Alas, madam, she has now reaped her reward for that'—Mr Waller cast his eyes slowly upward, past the fishing-rods and the stuffed trout, to the smoke-stained ceiling of the little room, and added impressively—'up yonder.'

'What! is dear Bess dead?' cried Mrs Blackburn, shedding genuine tears. 'How truly sorry I am, for poor dear Willy!'

'She is dead, dear madam; and the happiness of your son at his return is sadly clouded by that circumstance.'

'Humph!' said the Squire, who was thinking that he might have spared himself the revelation of at least one humiliating domestic circumstance, although it was a minor one. 'And when did this happen?'

'To judge by his deep mourning, I should imagine but very recently,' said Mr Waller.—'You need not grieve, madam, for one who, from your description of her domestic virtues, is doubtless'—perhaps the stuffed trout had discomposed him upon the first occasion, for he now fixed his eyes upon the empty fireplace—'is doubtless in perfect security; while, on the other hand, since the innocent cause of your son's transgression has been thus removed, I do hope, my dear Blackburn, that you will forget his past, and hopefully regard his future.'

This peroration, so often received with favour, when used in his capacity of chairman of some Company whose shares were at a discount, or as director of some railway which had not as yet declared a dividend, did not have its usual success upon the present occasion; the audience he was addressing (if we may so term the Squire) had for once a less good opinion of the concern in question than he entertained himself. Mr Blackburn did not even vouchsafe him a reply, but walked slowly out of the room, with trembling limbs, but head erect, in the direction of the front door. Before he reached it, Mrs Blackburn overtook him, trembling also, although from another cause, and clasped his hand.

'Anthony, dear Anthony,' she whispered, 'don't be hard upon him, now that he is in sorrow. This may have changed him altogether, for all we know, and he may live to be a comfort to us yet.'

Through the open door, was borne upon the summer wind a coarse low chuckle, and a voice upon the terrace muttered harshly: 'Well, clever as he may be, miss, it seems to have taken him a deal of time to draw the badger.'

Mr William Blackburn was sitting upon the balustrade of the terrace, between two stone vases of red geraniums, swinging his legs, and tapping his teeth with the handle of his umbrella, as though applauding the humour of his last remark. If his attitude and bearing were not artistically graceful or in harmony with his surroundings, he looked tolerably at ease. Stanhope and the two young ladies were standing by him, and intrenched, as it were, in that position, he seemed to himself pretty secure against the paternal ire. The longer the enemy was held in parley, the better (notwithstanding his allusion to his tardiness) he augured of his ambassador's success, for it was plain that the latter had at least persuaded the Squire to listen to what he had to say in his principal's favour. The evident fear in which Ellen stood of him, and even the quiet scorn with which Lucy received his observations—for he translated that as cautious reserve in the presence of the others—had given him more and more of confidence; and, above all, he had refreshed himself since we last saw him with a pull at that flask which always lay in the side-pocket next his heart. And yet, when his father and mother appeared hand-in-hand at the front-door, so immediately following that *jeu d'esprit* about the badger, that they could not have failed to hear it, Mr William Blackburn looked a good deal embarrassed, and descended from his elevated position in a hurried and undignified manner.

His mother, however, with one cry of joy, ran forward and folded him in silence in her arms; and thus, as it were, in sanctuary, he remained for a decent interval rallying those native powers of impudence and assurance which the inopportuneness of the moment had put to flight.

'How are you, William?' said the Squire, holding out his hand. 'We are sorry to see you in so sad a garb.'

For an instant the idea flashed upon him, that the misfit of his clothes—which he had purchased at a ready-made shop as he hurried through

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London—formed the subject of the paternal remark, but fortunately his eye fell upon his black gloves, and he remembered that he was in mourning.

'Yes, indeed, sir,' replied he—and it was curious how even his feigned sorrow took egotistic shape—'I have had a very sad time of it lately. Poor Bess has been gone these three weeks. I was so cut up, that I had not the heart to write about it.'

'Poor dear boy!' ejaculated Mrs Blackburn fondly. 'What a trial it must have been! Was she ill long? I trust she did not suffer much?'

'Not much,' returned the widower; 'not so much as I did in seeing her suffer. I never left her night or day, as you may be sure. She sent her best love to you and Ellen; and her duty to you, father.'

'We must do all we can to cheer you, Willy,' said Mrs Blackburn. 'There is no need to mourn for so good a soul, as Mr Waller here has just been telling us, except upon our own accounts in having lost her.'

'Not lost, but gone before,' interposed that gentleman deferentially. He had followed his host and hostess to the scene of reconciliation, and now offered this neat quotation (which he had read on a tablet in the church during last Sunday's sermon) with the air of one who dispenses some comfortable liquid upon a silver tray. An embarrassing pause ensued; and Mr Waller continued more cheerfully: 'As I came through the hall, my dear madam, the servant was about to announce lunch, and I told him that I would save him that trouble.—You must be hungry, sir, what with your long journey and your walk across the moor.'

'Well, I could pick a little, and that's a fact,' observed Mr William; 'though it's long indeed,' added he with some precipitancy, 'that I have had an appetite for anything.'

He was about to offer his arm to Lucy, but Mr Waller nudged him so sharply towards Mrs Blackburn, that he could not mistake the hint.

'Lean on *me*, mother,' said he; 'for though you are looking well enough, you are not so young as when I last saw you.'

'I shall grow young now,' returned she tenderly. 'I have not felt so happy for fifty years as I do this day, Willy.'

The rest of the party—Mr Waller with his daughter, and Stanhope with Ellen—followed them into the house, with the exception of the Squire, who remained alone upon the terrace, pacing thoughtfully to and fro, and muttering to himself at intervals—like minute-guns over that dead hope which, though unowned, had after all perhaps held a place within his heart—some sentences such as these: 'No change, nor chance of change;' 'As bad and base as ever;' 'Rotten to the core.'

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

The Society of Arts are attending to certain matters, in which they may reckon on public support. They have appointed a committee to work at the reduction-of-postage question, with particular reference to small parcels and printed matter; and this committee is working, seeking co-operation at home, and information abroad from those governments which have already adopted lower rates for printed matter and parcels. Another subject taken up by the Council is Cab Reform, which they intend to discuss fully; and another is an improved form of steamer for crossing the Channel between France and England. This is much wanted, for it is discreditable to our mechanical and nautical skill that passengers cannot cross from Dover to Calais in blowing weather without being drenched by the sea. Why should they not be as well protected from the weather on the deck of a steamer as in a railway carriage? It is of no use to answer that passengers can go below. Travellers do not like going below to be stifled.

A remarkable instance of the effect of pine-trees on the soil in which they grow has been published in the Woods and Waters Reports of the north of France. A forest near Valenciennes, comprising about eighteen hundred acres of scrub and stunted oak and birch, was grubbed up in 1843, and replaced by Scotch firs (*Pinus sylvestris*). The soil, composed of silicious sands mingled with a small quantity of clay, was in some places very wet; it contained two or three springs, from one of which flowed a small stream. The firs succeeded beyond expectation, and large handsome stems now grow vigorously over the whole ground. It was in the early stages of their growth that the remarkable effect above referred to was noticed. The soil began to dry; the snipes that once frequented the place migrated to a more congenial locality; the ground became drier and drier, until at last the springs and the stream ceased to flow. Deep trenches were dug to lay open the sources of the springs, and discover the cause of the drying up; but nothing was found except that the roots of the firs had penetrated the earth to a depth of five or six feet. Borings were then made; and six feet below the source of the spring, a bed of water was met with of considerable depth, from which, it was inferred, the spring had formerly been fed. But in what way its level had been lowered by the action of the firs could not be determined, and is still a matter of speculation. But the fact remains, and may be utilised by any one interested in tree-culture. For years it has been turned to account in Gascony, where the lagoons that intersect the sandy *dunes* have been dried up by planting the *Pinus maritimus* along their margin. Hence we may arrive at the conclusion that while leafy trees feed springs, and maintain the moisture of the soil, the contrary function is reserved for spine or needle bearing trees, which dry the soil, and improve its quality. Our War Office might perhaps do well to take note thereof, seeing that the forts now building at the mouth of the Medway shew a tendency to sink into the soft marshy soil. If the ground can be consolidated by plantations of the maritime pine, it would be good economy to have them planted.

A paper read at the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, Birmingham, is interesting to all concerned in the iron trade, for it treats of *further Utilisation of the Waste Gas from Blast Furnaces*. A few years ago, all the gas that rushed from the top of the furnaces was absolutely wasted: then experiments were tried, and it was found that a portion at least of the gas could be intercepted and made to heat the boiler of the steam-engine. Then, in the Cleveland district (north-east Yorkshire) bigger furnaces were built, seventy-five feet

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high instead of forty feet, in order that the gas might be further economised by passing through a taller column of the material to be melted than it did in the low furnaces. This upper stratum of material absorbs heat from the gas, is somewhat softened thereby, and is of course melted with a less expenditure of fuel when it descends to the bottom of the furnace. The saving thus effected amounts to rather more than four hundred-weights of coke for each ton of iron produced. Hence it will be seen, that in the manufacture of iron, an important economy has been achieved by results of intelligent observation; and we have the more satisfaction in making these facts known, as we understand that experiments are still continued with a view to further advantage.

As an example of economy to be effected by engineering, we mention that a suspension-bridge, to be called the Cornwall Bridge, is to be built across the river Hudson, forty-two miles above New York. The total length will be 2499 feet, and the clear span 1600 feet. By this bridge the railway from the mining districts of Pennsylvania will be connected with the New England States, and the New Englanders will save four shillings a ton on their yearly consumption of four million tons of coal.

As mentioned in our last, the railway from the Atlantic to the Pacific is now completed, except that some of the bridges are not yet built. One of the largest, 2800 feet long, is now erecting across the Missouri at Omaha. Including seventy feet below the treacherous bed of the river, the iron cylinders on which it is to be supported will be 139 feet in length. From New York to San Francisco the distance is about 3400 miles, the fare at present about L.31, and the time of the journey from one place to the other will be a week. They must be very enterprising passengers who at present undertake such a trip, and very robust if they find themselves alive at the end of it.

The granite rocks which have so long impeded the navigation of the arm of the sea between New York and Long Island, are now being blasted. Proper apparatus is erected for working a drill under water by steam. The drill bar at its cutting end is an inch and a half in diameter, and has nineteen diamonds embedded in its face. When in motion, it makes from three hundred to five hundred rotations a minute, and in that time, such is the cutting effect of the diamonds, the hole is sunk an inch and a half. A number of holes, consequently, can be drilled in a day. A diver then descends, charges them with cartridges of nitroglycerine, which are exploded in the usual way. We recommend these particulars to the authorities of British or Irish ports where rocks encumber the channel, as a good practical suggestion, which may be turned to account in the interests of navigation.

The Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society have published the Report of their last annual meeting, with particulars of new mechanical inventions exhibited thereat. Among these was a pyrometer, intended for use in a baker's oven, which indicates the exact amount of heat, and thus enables a baker to save the bread from spoiling; and an atmizometer, or evaporating gauge, for shewing the amount of evaporation from the earth's surface, comprised in a cylindrical wooden vessel mounted on a spring-balance. Water is poured into the vessel until the balance is brought to zero: then, on exposure to the sun and air, the amount of evaporation can be observed to the thousandth of an inch.—Another invention was an improvement in the Cornish pumping-engine, which comes into use when any part of the machinery breaks. A cushion of steam is then suddenly thrown on one side of the piston, and thereby the force of its blow is broken.

In the same Report it is stated that the Wheal Vor Mine, in the parish of Breage, has yielded more than L.3,000,000 worth of tin and copper; and that, in order to mitigate the distress occasioned by the falling off in mining produce, a project is being talked of for the establishment of pottery-works in Cornwall.

Let wine-drinkers be on their guard, for certain clever chemists in Belgium have started the manufacture of mock-champagne and other light sparkling wines on a great scale. Aided by patent machinery, they can produce the wine for sale at a franc a bottle, and gain a profit of seventy-five per cent.; and it is stated that hundreds of houses on the continent will soon be ready to supply customers.

An experiment was made in February last to ascertain the time of sending a telegraphic signal along the wires from San Francisco to Cambridge, Massachusetts, and back, the double distance being 7200 miles. The time was one-eighth of a second!

FROM A HUSBAND.

Fonder, tenderer, ever fonder,
But increase my love can know,
Here on earth, hereafter yonder,
Love with me must ever grow;
Loving you, it must be so.

Dearer, dearer, ever dearer;
Loved in youth for that fair face,
Now my heart has seen you nearer,
That first love to this gives place,
For your soul's diviner grace.

Ah! how sweet was that young passion,
Caught from fairness, O how fair!
That fed full even from the fashion
Of the dress you deigned to wear,
When your beauty sunned the air.

O the life-quake then that shook me
When on me seemed turned that gaze,
When hair, brow, speech or laughter took me
Captive with a dumb amaze,
Dazzled with your beauty's blaze.

Time that charm has not marred blindly,
If his touch a harm has wrought,
Still some rarer beauty, kindly,
Every fondling year has brought,
Softer, dearer to my thought.

How much more than youth was seeing
Now I love, with heart grown wise;
Now the whole dear perfect being
I have fitlier learned to prize,
Clear at last to the soul's eyes!

Dearer through joys, cares, and sorrows;
Known, how well! through smiles and tears,
Now I feel that all the morrows,
Hopes and pleasures, labours, fears,
Bring but knowledge that endears.

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ROBERT'S CAPITAL HIT.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

My mother-in-law and I were sitting in her best parlour—not that it was much to boast of, but she thought a great deal about it, and covered it up with anti-macassars to that extent, that nothing short of collecting them in a bundle, and burning them out of hand, would ever have got them effectually off my mind. We were not sitting in the best parlour for our own comfort, or because the windows opened upon a little garden, which, though dreadfully prim and formal, could not help being fragrant in that beautiful month of May, and which would have had the afternoon sun shining on it just now, in a perfectly delightful manner, but that my mother-in-law, in the interests of her drab and yellow Brussels carpet, had hastened to pull down the dark yellow holland blinds. We were not even sitting in the best parlour because we were expecting visitors. I should not have objected to that, for all our visitors entertained the best parlour superstition also; and we should have been 'despiseable,' like Harvey Birch, if they had ever got a glimpse of our ordinary occupations, or seen any more lively literature about than Johnson's *Lives*, Baxter's *Saints' Rest*, Hannah More *passim*, and the county history. We were sitting in the best parlour for *its* good, not our pleasure or dignity—'to air the room,' as my mother-in-law said. 'Fires are occasionally necessary, of course,' she would say; 'but they don't do altogether. People should always sit in their best parlour once a month or so, to take the chill off.' Whence she derived this notion, I do not know; but she entertained it, and stuck to it, and in the best parlour on this particular day we were sitting, 'to take the chill off.'

My mother-in-law was a good-looking woman for her age, which was fifty-five. She was tall, strongly built, and terribly healthy. She had a great deal of very heavy gray hair, which she wore in deep bands, like watch-pockets, upon her forehead; and she never deviated from one kind of cap, severe in form, and laden with lutestring ribbon of a harsh dull shade of purple. She was always well dressed, in a certain tasteless fashion which she considered the only mode proper to women at her age, not to be departed from, without a compromise of propriety, not to say morality; and a more self-sufficient woman than my mother-in-law never existed. Women more ignorant, no doubt, there have been, and are; but I hope not many who prize and pet general ignorance as she did, and are so arrogantly vain of their possession of certain specialities of knowledge. I do not want to make her out at all more disagreeable than she was, or to deny her the good qualities which she possessed; nor am I 'down on her' for that generally conclusive and satisfactory reason that she *was* my mother-in-law. I speak quite fairly; and, indeed, I need not complain, for she liked me quite as well as she liked Robert. Robert was (and is) my husband, Robert Heron, of the firm of Shaw and Heron, solicitors, said by their friends to be 'rising' young men, but who certainly had not done anything remarkable as yet, in an upward direction.

'Though I say it who ought not,' is a customary deprecatory phrase when one member of a family praises another; but I never could see the meaning of it. Who is so likely to know the good that is in any individual as those nearest to him, and who see most of his life? Who, then, has the best right to announce the results of that contiguity and supervision? Society permits people's relatives to abuse them, does it not? It is not in the least shocked at *that*, is it? Very well, then, I am not going to be bullied and put down by society for praising my husband; and I maintain, on the contrary, that no one has *so much* right as I to declare that Robert was (and is) the best of men, and a very fine-looking one also. I do not see much change in him now. His beautiful blue eyes are not so bright, perhaps; but they are just as deep and as soft, and they have just the same look for me in them; and I don't think his being slightly bald is any defect at all. Every one admits that baldness is intellectual.

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I distinctly remember a hairdresser, a really clever man, who knew at a glance that I never used pomatum, telling me it was caused by the activity of the brain. This was most true in Robert's case, I am sure. However, he really had almost too much hair at the time I am telling about—beautiful, dark brown, curly; and as it was not the fashion then to crop the hair until the skull shewed through in patches, and all the bumps asserted themselves unpleasantly, but it was worn rather long, I assure you he had quite a captivatingly sentimental look; and as he had rather low spirits naturally, many people suspected him of being poetical—I mean, of actually writing verses. But this was a mistake. He never did. Of course, he could have written beautiful poetry—if you could only know the things he has said to me in that very identical best parlour!—if he had liked, but he never did. I am wandering away from my mother-in-law all this time. I know I am apt to get tiresome when I begin to talk about Robert; but I will endeavour to avoid it. I will merely say that he was very good, and very handsome, and very clever; and that if any woman of my acquaintance says she has a better husband, I can afford to let her say it, for I don't believe her.

Robert and my mother-in-law did not get on together very well. Strange to say, he was not her favourite son; and John, who was always quite uninteresting to me, was. But John was a prosperous man, and remarkably like her in his ways and ideas; while Robert had not the knack of getting on rapidly, and did not in the least resemble her. He was considered to be a striking likeness of his father, the late Mr Heron, whom I believe to have been a thoroughly good and estimable man, but whose memory was not warmly cherished by his widow and her eldest son. He had not left them as much money as they expected. He had been rather unfortunate for some time before his death, and that was held to be a perfectly sufficient reason for that event being regarded with resignation. John was married to a woman with a large fortune (for people in our position), with an imperial nose, a mouth like a shark's, big feet, and *such* a temper! Robert used to say he would not have married Mary Anne Barton for a million of money. John, however, had done it much cheaper than that, and I really do not think he ever knew how disagreeable she was. He was afraid of her; and it was just as well. There are many men for whom it is very good that they should be afraid of their wives. John was one of them. But it was very singular that our joint mother-in-law was also afraid of 'Mrs John' (nobody ever called her Mary Anne), and was accustomed to speak of her as 'fine' as to her *physique*, and 'superior' as to her intellect. I did not mind. If Mrs John was a 'fine' woman, give me insignificance; if she was 'superior,' give me mediocrity. Robert was quite of my opinion, and Mrs John knew it. She had a mighty contempt for me; first, because I am small and pale, while she is of stately stature, and has the kind of complexion which people describe as 'a great deal of colour;' secondly, because I am of a contented disposition, and do not form any visions about Shaw and Heron attaining 'the top of the tree;' thirdly, because I am afraid of all servants; and, lastly, because I did not bring Robert more hundreds than she brought John thousands of pounds. All very sound reasons for despising me, and I should not think of disputing them; but Mrs John imparted them to my mother-in-law, who adopted them, and that was not pleasant.

My mother-in-law lived at Clapham, and looked like it. I don't mean like the dwellers at the Clapham of the present, with its enormous railway 'junction,' with ever so many hundreds of trains a day running through it—no two authorities agree about the number—its unlimited resources of bewilderment for the unaccustomed traveller, its handsome shops, and its alarmingly Catholic features and institutions. I allude to the Clapham of the past, when the highly respectable chocolate-coloured omnibuses, which fared soberly to and from the *Plough Inn*, were the sole mode of conveyance for the vulgar; when the grave houses in their solemn gardens looked out upon the severe solitude of the common, and heavily laden wagons stopped on the other side, that the big lumpish horses might drink at ungainly wooden troughs, curiously inspected the while by cheerful vagrant dogs who had never heard of Mayne or muzzles. I speak of a time when you might as well have looked for a mosque as for a music-hall at Clapham, and when, judging by appearances, the higher branches of commerce in that suburb were confined to Berlin-wool and baskets; when Wilberforce was remembered as a local tradition, and there were green fields out Stockwell-way. It is not very long ago either, a much shorter time than any one would believe, who has not seen the wonderful changes which a few years have worked in London; but the Clapham people of that date had looks and ways peculiar to themselves, a grim respectability, a weekly-bill-paying-with-inflexible-regularity, and comfortable-investment-in-government-securities expression in their faces, raiment, and residences, which was exceedingly depressing to the outside world of strugglers, contemptible people, who did not always know the exact amount of their resources, and were sometimes uncomfortably uncertain about how they were to be 'realised.' Of the former class, though not 'in the very first line' of it, was my mother-in-law. She was not by any means a rich woman, even for a period which rated wealth by a much more moderate standard than that of the present; but she was 'well to do,' and she looked it. Security, not of the barrel-of-flour and cruse-of-oil order, but of that more satisfactory to the modern mind, which expresses *itself* by dividends, a happy absence of sympathy with anything so weak and stupid as anxiety and poverty, and the calm consciousness of being a good manager, were the characteristics which my mother-in-law's appearance impressed upon the observer.

I did not like Clapham, and I cannot assign a better reason for disliking it than that my mother-in-law lived there, and I had to live with her. If any of my readers think I could not *have* a better, I pity them. They too have suffered. The necessity for this family arrangement was a sore subject with us all, and especially with Robert, for it could by no means be denied that it had originated through his means. We had begun comfortably enough, much more so, our older and wiser friends told us, than was good for two young people, who had been so imprudent as to think so much of love and so little of money. It would vex me even now, when things are so different with us, that I

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can smile at the recollection of Clapham, and its prim best-parlour gentility, to tell you about our own pretty little house at Hampstead, and all the small devices I had for its adornment, and how very happy we were in it for two whole years, though my mother-in-law always thought it extravagantly kept, and Mrs John used to sniff at the furniture, and look uncomfortably too large for the rooms.

Mind, I am not prepared to admit that it was a fault, but it certainly was a peculiarity of Robert's that he liked speculation. 'A little bit of a venture,' as he would call it, with a jocose persuasiveness which took all dangerous meaning out of the word, to my ears. Tales of the celerity with which fortunes had been made, every new method of making them quickly, had interest and attraction for him. I knew this arose from the vividness and versatility of his intelligence, but his mother called it a taste for gambling.

'It 's a more decent way of gratifying it, my dear Martha,' she said once, when Robert had been just a little unlucky, 'than going to those horrible places which I have been told are defiantly called "hells" by the impious persons who frequent them; but it 's quite as dangerous in the long run, as you will find out some day, when he has brought you to ruin with his coal mines and copper mines, and such-like nonsense.'

Well, he did not exactly bring me to ruin, but he brought me to something not very far from being as unpleasant—namely, to giving up our own house, and going to live with his mother. This was the only form in which she would help him; to have done so in any other, she would have held to be 'encouraging' him. It was not very easy to bear, I must say; but then to endure it with fortitude was the only way in which I could assist Robert out of the difficulty he had got into, and that was not much for me to do. He had to bear all the brunt of life; it would have ill become me to have objected to my share of the smaller worry, especially as it was my money which he had lost in that unlucky 'little bit of a venture'—happily, not quite all, but the greater part of it—a circumstance which I carefully concealed from my mother-in-law, but which Mrs John divined by dint of that 'superiority' of her intellect, which, so far as I have observed it, mainly exhibits itself in finding out things which people particularly wish to conceal. This divination led to much laudation of the superior wisdom of herself and her friends in the arrangement of her money matters, and exultation in the 'settling' of her fortune so securely on herself, that, as she plainly put it, 'if John were to turn into as great a fool as Robert to-morrow, *she* could not come to any harm.' And, indeed, I believe the settlements in question were so drawn up, that the deadliest suspicion and animosity might have been supposed, by observers, to have existed between the contracting parties. I was thankful that they said these things to me only, and I used to try and get over them before Robert came home from the City, and generally succeeded in keeping the small annoyances of the day pretty well out of his sight. He found out, however, soon after we went to Clapham, that I was looking rather pale and thin, and would have involved me in a great deal of trouble by making a fuss about it, only that I begged him to remember what a dislike his mother had to delicate people, and how, whenever anybody was suspected of being nervous, she always recommended the administration of something which that unlucky individual especially disliked. So I prevailed on him to take no notice of my paleness and thinness, and promised to grow very fat and rosy in the autumn, when we hoped to be able to escape from Clapham, and get away on a little tour, but only of strictly Cockney dimensions, all by ourselves.

It was not a pleasant life, and there were such anxieties and efforts in it, that I look back to them now with a feeling of wonder at having lived through them so well, on the whole. But I had a little philosophy about me, and though I was not strong-minded or dogmatic in other respects, I had one fixed belief, to which I adhered practically. I held then, when I had a great many troubles, and I hold now, when I have comparatively few, that a woman who has married the man whom she loves, and respects with all her heart and conscience, and has never seen the least shadow on the brightness of their mutual love, is not to be pitied for any trouble or struggle which she may be called upon to bear. Every one must have his or her share of the heritage of sorrow; but the woman who is thoroughly, cloudlessly happy as a wife, and does not fully recognise and realise her supreme good fortune, even though it wear the form of unrelieved poverty, must be very ungrateful, and very foolish. I never entertained this belief more strongly than during our Clapham experiences, and, indeed, I found pretty constant occasion to recall my faith, and confirm myself in it.

One trial which recurred, not very frequently, but often enough to be irritating, was visiting Mrs John. She lived at Kingston-on-Thames, and, I am ashamed to say, I never could be brought to appreciate the beauty of the place. All the 'villas' had an offensively rich look to me: not that I was envious, but I always think when one is either normally poor, or in incidental difficulties, there is something depressing in the contemplation of comfortably secure, safely growing wealth. Robert could not understand my sentiments on this point, and found in those very 'villas' many proofs of the wisdom of 'ventures' little and great. This one had come by his villa and all it represented by mines, the other by railways, a third by steamers, a fourth was a well-known contractor, who did the most sporting things, and a fifth was the sharpest man going, and had done wonders on the Stock Exchange, through his happy facility of foreseeing 'what they were up to' in continental countries. But I did not like Kingston a bit the more for all that; and not one of the small efforts I had to make continuously, cost me so much as the visiting Mrs John's fine, cold, distressingly new house, where money and patent floorcloth seemed to be always palpably present, and where I never was permitted to forget that Robert had been 'so very imprudent' about that Grand Junction Canal business.

My mother-in-law and I invariably went on these formidable excursions in a heavy lop-sided brougham, which presented a mysterious appearance of having once been a carriage of another and a clumsier form, and having been inartistically compressed and otherwise altered. It had very narrow windows, and slanting cushions, and doors which it was exceedingly difficult to open, and next to impossible to shut. It was drawn by a

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heavy, ugly, lop-sided horse, with a bare patch on one of his sides; and the driver was the most ill-tempered man I ever saw in my life, even on a coach-box. This vehicle was an object of extreme aversion to me, chiefly, however, because John paid for the use which we made of it, and no doubt made a very cheap bargain with Mr Thompson, the livery-stable keeper. How I used to enjoy my omnibus drives with Robert, when I went into the City to do a little shopping, and when he would become quite animated in describing the kind of carriage he fully intended to keep for me, when one or two little things he had in view should have 'turned up trumps!' Robert mixed his metaphors sometimes, it must be confessed, and I did not like to hear him use any expression connected with gambling. It almost sounded as if my mother-in-law might possibly be right. Next to the visits to Mrs John, I placed our best-parlour days in the category of small inflictions. Whether it was the varnish, the anti-macassars, the influence of art, as exemplified in six awful pictures pervaded by a cerulean tinge, and misrepresenting the bay and city of Naples, or the dreary literature which described a kind of cart-wheel pattern on the shiny, inlaid round table, that inspired my mother-in-law to be preternaturally unpleasant on such occasions, or whether it was her self-enforced abstinence from reading the newspaper and mending her stockings (neither occupation being considered suitable to the dignity of the best parlour), I cannot say. The fact was so; and when she aired her best parlour, I aired my best resolutions.

It was afternoon, and I had got on very well so far. I had brought no unbound books, and none but 'company' work into the best parlour. I had sat contentedly bolt upright upon an uncomfortable chair, so as to avoid crushing the clean anti-macassar; I had abstained from the use of a footstool adorned gorgeously with a blue worsted parrot, for a similar reason. I had in every respect been as conciliatory as possible; but the time had appeared unusually long, and the moment at which I might put on my bonnet and go to the *Plough Inn* to meet Robert—a pleasure I enjoyed every day and in all weathers—seemed unattainably far off.

I think there is a great deal of varied eloquence in sniffs. The derisive, the contemptuous, the incredulous, the condemnatory, the deprecatory, and the warning sniff, must be familiar, and, I should suppose, aggravating to every one. I never knew such a proficient in the practice of the sniff, in all its varieties, as my mother-in-law; and she had contrived, on this occasion, to run through the whole sniff gamut, until really I felt so nervous and so cross I hardly knew how to bear it. The postman's knock was quite a relief; though my mother-in-law was not a pleasant person about letters, requiring to see at least the outside of every one which came to the house, and putting on an expression, more or less meek, according to her mood, of being aggrieved, when she was not made acquainted with their contents. Two letters were brought in, handed to her, and duly inspected by her, and then she pushed one over to me. It was from my sister, who was very chatty and confidential with me about everything, especially about a love-affair of the most imprudent and unpromising kind, being an engagement between herself and a lieutenant of marines, with nothing but his pay at present, and no reasonable expectations for the future. Nevertheless, I was much interested in this charming idyllic affair, and believed that a little poverty would do Gerty no more harm than it had done me; but I was not at all desirous of introducing the subject to the notice of my mother-in-law. She did not like my family; she included them all under the opprobrious denomination 'worldlings;' and some people being kind enough to think Gerty and myself rather pretty, she objected to that opinion, declaring that we were not her 'style.' A glance at Gerty's letter shewed me it was a long one, so I looked over the first page, and then put it away in my pocket; a proceeding observed and resented by my mother-in-law, who performed a sniff of a novel and wholly exasperating kind, and took up the second letter with a contemptuous smile. 'For Robert, I see,' she observed; 'and very like a prospectus. No doubt it is one. Some mine in the moon, a railway at the bottom of the sea, in which he will do well to invest his large amount of floating capital. Be sure you give it to him, my dear; it would be a pity to deprive him of an opportunity for indulging his taste and improving his circumstances.'

My mother-in-law was epigrammatical at times, but only under the influence of spite.

Much nettled by this speech, I broke open the letter in question, a proceeding which produced another sniff of the same kind as before. 'Any letters addressed to Robert *here*, I have his leave to open,' I said.

'Oh, indeed.'

The horrid thing *was* a prospectus; or, perhaps, I should rather say it was a scheme for the formation of a company to work a gold mine in Brazil, situated in the richest district of the gold-bearing country, and which could be purchased, owing to peculiar circumstances, on surprisingly advantageous terms. This communication was not printed or lithographed, but written, in a very plain clerk-like hand, and was headed 'Private and Confidential.' But I did not think anything of that; lots of things had come to Robert with a similar injunction, which could have no other meaning than that they were to be as public and as little confidential as possible. I gave the open sheet of paper into my mother-in-law's hand, and she eyed it curiously.

'So it *is* a prospectus,' she said: 'I thought so. Robert must be pretty well known to have a taste for ruining himself and other people, or they would not be giving him notice of the villainies that are on hand in that place.' She always spoke of the City as if it were one vast recognised den of thieves.

'He has not been very fortunate himself,' I ventured to observe; 'but I don't think Robert has ever injured any other person by his speculations.'

'I don't know, I'm sure; but I don't hold with speculation—I never did. I can't understand why people shouldn't be content with their own proper business and their lawful gains. Gold mines indeed! Can't they let the places be, in those distant countries, as God Almighty made them. There's been more robbing and murdering since those "diggings" and mines came up, than there ever was in my time before them, I can tell you.'

This was a view of the subject with which I could not contend, so I said nothing.

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My mother-in-law continued: 'And as to getting any good out of speculations without doing other people harm, I don't believe a word of it. All the profits which go into one set of pockets *must* come out of another set, you know; there's no getting over that, you know; and for *my* part, I don't consider it honest.'

I felt uncomfortable, though I confess I had generally little respect for my mother-in-law's opinions, and less for her reasons; but I had said something not unlike this to Robert on one occasion myself, and he had taken, somewhat ineffectually, a good deal of trouble to make me understand that there are speculations, and speculations; some to which the argument, that one could gain only by another's loss, applies but too clearly, and others by which all concerned may make legitimate profit, as, for instance, in this very case of a gold mine. I did try to plead the difference, but in vain; I produced no effect upon my mother-in-law beyond inducing her to declare, more emphatically than before, that she 'did not hold with speculations,' and that they were 'all villainy together.' She concluded by prophesying that Robert would never stop until he had brought himself and me to the workhouse, and that then he would be satisfied. Which seemed improbable.

It was not Robert's time yet; but I was so tired, this best-parlour day had been so more than usually trying, that I pretended to mistake the hour, and set off to meet my husband. After a long desultory stroll, I saw the familiar chocolate-coloured omnibus nearing the *Plough*, and stood still at the corner as usual, while Robert descended from the sober vehicle, and joined me. Robert has a very sweet and sensible expression of countenance, but it is not gay—no, certainly not gay—mildly cheerful, perhaps, which I like (how I detest a simper or a grin, the usual expression of people 'blessed with high spirits!'); but to-day, he had a decided smile in his eyes and on his lips, as he tucked my arm under his, and walked away with me.

'Martha, my darling!' said he, 'I have a bit of good news for you.'

'Have you, Robert?' said I. 'What is it about?'

'It is about a gold mine,' replied my husband.

WESTWARD HO!—TO THE PACIFIC.

THE last sleeper is laid, the last rail spiked down, of the railway which the Americans have completed across the whole breadth of the United States' dominion.

Let us understand the full significance of this announcement. The railway-makers on the other side of the Atlantic tell us that, before many months have passed, we Britishers will be travelling through their country to get to the vast Pacific Ocean—that we shall abjure Cape Horn and the Cape of Good Hope, the Isthmus of Suez and the Isthmus of Panama, and take the overland route across America to California, whence steamers will conduct the trade to Japan, China, New Zealand, and Australia. But there are reasons for thinking that our Trans-Atlantic cousins somewhat misinterpret this matter. That the trade of New York, Boston, and the other Atlantic cities of the Union will largely take this route, is probable enough, especially as considerable success has attended the establishment of lines of steamers from San Francisco across the Pacific to eastern Asia; but the conditions of the problem are different when we are treating of Europe. Even if we allow only ten days to cross the Atlantic from Liverpool to New York, and six days to cross America from New York to San Francisco, there would be no gain over our P. and O. route from England to China. The time would be almost exactly the same to Shanghae (forty-three days); it would be eight days more to Hong-kong (forty-seven days against thirty-nine); and ten days less to Yokohama in Japan (thirty-eight days against forty-eight). Further south, an examination of the map and the time-tables tells us that, while the new route will be shorter than the old to New Zealand, it will be longer to Australia, and so much longer to India as to place competition altogether out of the question.

Nevertheless, the Atlantic and Pacific Railway is a great and grand thing, for which the Americans justly deserve the credit which they claim. As soon as the Mexican war had placed the Washington government in possession of Texas, New Mexico, and California (somewhat more than twenty years ago), a railway across the continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific began to be talked about. It was known that the Rocky Mountains would have to be crossed at some point or other; it was known that the total length of line would have to be measured by thousands rather than hundreds of miles; and therefore the undertaking would necessarily be vast in relation both to cost and to engineering. Almost immediately afterwards, gold was discovered in California, and this discovery naturally increased the desire to establish good road-communication between the states of the Union east and west of the Rocky Mountains. No wonder that it has taken twenty years to achieve this result, considering the manifold difficulties that surrounded it.

In 1853, Congress empowered the government to take this matter in hand. The first task was to make explorations and surveys, as a means of determining in what latitude the mountain-range should be crossed. The United States' possessions, in this longitude of the American continent, extend north and south from latitude thirty degrees to latitude forty-nine degrees—about thirteen hundred miles in a straight line; and therefore ample scope was afforded in selecting the line of route. These explorations and surveys were continued until 1857, and the results embodied in many bulky volumes presented to Congress. One result of the examination was, to shew that the Rocky Mountains are in many places flanked by easier slopes than had before been supposed, and are crossed by many passes of comparatively small altitude. Six routes especially were reported on: 1. From the Red River in Eastern Texas to somewhat low down in California, crossing the Rocky Mountains about latitude thirty-five degrees. 2. From Port Smith on the Arkansas to St Pedro on the Pacific, crossing in latitude thirty-five degrees. 3. Crossing the range about the latitude just named, but beginning at Kansas City on the Missouri, and ending at San Francisco. 4. From Kansas City due west to the mountains, which would be crossed about latitude thirty-eight degrees. 5. From Omaha or Council Bluffs to San Francisco, crossing at latitude forty-two degrees. 6. From the extreme waters of the Mississippi, near Lake Superior, crossing the Rocky

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Mountains about latitude forty-seven degrees, and so to Columbia River and Puget Sound. At first, the Washington government leaned towards the southernmost of these six routes; but political and engineering considerations gradually drew attention towards other quarters. About the time of the breaking out of the Civil War, railways were already finished from New York and Boston to Chicago, and from Philadelphia and Washington to St Louis (at the junction of the Missouri with the Mississippi); and hence arose a struggle between the great cities whether Chicago or St Louis should be the starting-point of the Pacific Railway. Chicago carried the day, the line to pass through Nebraska Territory instead of Kansas, and to be constructed by two distinct companies—the Union Pacific eastward of the Rocky Mountains, and the Central Pacific thence westward to California. It is the opinion of many Americans that the Kansas line would have passed through a more fertile country, and would have been more central; indeed, our go-ahead cousins already say that *one* railway from ocean to ocean will not satisfy their wants.

The government aid to the Pacific Railway is very important. In the first place, a right of way is given through the several states and territories, free of cost. In the second place, a most valuable strip of land is *given* to the companies, one mile in width along the whole length of the railway, amounting to twelve thousand eight hundred acres per mile run: available for cultivation, building, manufactures, or any other purposes for which it may be suitable. In the third place, the companies may use, for the construction of their lines, any coal, timber, or iron that may be met with on the way. And in the fourth place, loans are made by the state of half the capital required, at a certain rate of interest—the whole to be repaid in the course of thirty years. In return for these great items of assistance, the government requires that the railway and telegraph lines shall be kept in good order; that government dispatches and munitions of war shall have preference of transmission, if required; that the government shall pay for such services by cancelling an equivalent amount of loan, instead of in cash; and that the companies shall lay by a sinking fund each year out of their net receipts, to wipe off gradually the rest of the debt.

This grand undertaking is now virtually finished. There are eleven hundred miles on the east of the Rocky Mountains, and seven hundred on the west—all this beyond Omaha, which is itself many hundred miles beyond the Mississippi. The available capital is about one hundred and fifty million dollars, equal to thirty million pounds; but the line has not cost nearly so much, there being a considerable surplus applicable to the construction of branches and other works. From Omaha the line runs along the Platte Valley in Nebraska Territory; it ascends to the dividing ridge by easy gradients, but the country traversed is rather wild and sterile; the ridge is crossed at an elevation of 8262 feet above the sea-level, and then the Laramie Plains are entered, a kind of upland plateau. These plains have the Sweet Water gold-diggings on the north, and those of Colorado on the south—a position which promises a great future for the railway in these regions. Mr W. A. Bell, who has visited the whole district, says on this point: 'The miners, whose wants are very great, require all the necessaries and such of the luxuries of life as they seek to be carried to them by rail. A non-producing population, say, of a thousand miners, as well on account of their migratory habits as their many requirements, is a larger source of revenue to a railroad than six times the population depending upon agriculture—even if we disregard altogether the transportation of ores, an item often of the greatest importance.' Beyond the Rocky Mountains, the line traverses two hundred miles of rather desolate country, through Bitter Creek and Green River. Then comes the Wahsatch belt of mountains, after which it enters the basin of Great Salt Lake. The railway does not go nearer than thirty miles to the celebrated city of the Mormons; but we may rely upon those enterprising people obtaining a branch-line as soon as it suits their purpose. Next comes a region in which silver mines are being discovered more and more every year; then the Sierra Nevada; and then a continuous descent to the Pacific at San Francisco. This last is the most difficult part of the line; for the engineers had to manage about seven thousand feet of descent in little more than one hundred miles.

Mr Bell gives an amusing account, by an American writer, of the energetic way in which these works have been carried on. 'The whole organisation of the force engaged in the construction of the railway is military. The men who go ahead, locating the road, are the advanced guard. Following these is the second line, cutting through the gorges, grading the road, and building bridges. Then comes the main line of the army, placing the sleepers, laying the track, spiking down the rails, perfecting the alignment, ballasting the road, and dressing up and completing for immediate use.' Never before was known such a rattling mode of laying down a railway as was adopted in the Salt Lake and Humboldt basins, during the latter part of 1868 and the beginning of 1869. 'A light car, drawn by a single horse, gallops up to the front with its load of rails. Two men seize the end of a rail and start forward, the rest of the gang taking hold by twos, until it is clear of the car. They come forward at a run. At the word of command, the rail is dropped in its place, right side up, with care, while the same process goes on at the other side of the car. Less than thirty seconds to a rail for each gang, and so four rails go down to the minute. The moment the car is empty, it is tipped over on the side of the track, to let the next loaded car pass it, and then it is tipped back again, and sent back flying for another load. Close behind the first gang come the gaugers, spikers, and bolters; and a lively time they make of it. It is a grand anvil chorus that those sturdy sledges are playing across the plain; it is in triple time, three strokes to a spike. There are ten spikes to a rail, four hundred rails to a mile, eighteen hundred miles to San Francisco.' In this way the writer arrives at a calculation that more than twenty-one million blows with sledge-hammers will have been given to the spikes which fasten down the rails of the Great Pacific Railway. Most of these blows, in the section westward of the Rocky Mountains, have been given by Chinamen, who were engaged ten thousand at a time by the energetic Californians.

An important question for England and her

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colonies is: How will these vast American railways affect us? The Chicago and Salt Lake line is open, or nearly so; the Kansas line is being pushed on so rapidly from St Louis towards the Rocky Mountains, that there is a fair chance of our seeing a South Pacific as well as a Central Pacific Railway. But besides these, the Americans are looking with longing eyes towards a North Pacific line, running throughout its whole length almost close to the British boundary, and through a very fertile country. We lately noticed the expected transfer of the Hudson's Bay Company's territories to Canada; and now the question arises about this north route to the Pacific. We fear that the slowness of colonial proceedings will leave us far in arrear of Yankee go-aheadism. We have to settle whether the Hudson's Bay Company's territories will really pass into the hands of Canada; then, whether the other confederated colonies will work heartily with Canada in any schemes for developing the vast region; then, whether Vancouver and British Columbia can be prevented from falling into the power of the United States; and lastly, whether the capital necessary for new railways, canals, and roads is to be provided by the imperial government, by the colonial governments, or by joint-stock companies. Unquestionably, much time will pass before all these preliminaries are disposed of; and there can hardly be a doubt that the Americans will try to get any new route in that region to pass through their own territory instead of ours, if possible. That the Fertile Belt is in *our* part of America, and that it would form an admirable route of travel from the Atlantic to the Pacific, is admitted; but, it is not impossible that we may wake up some fine day and find our American cousins seizing the Fertile Belt itself, on some pretext or other, and beginning the railway which we have supinely neglected. This Fertile Belt lies between Lake Superior and the Rocky Mountains, and is watered by Red River, the Assiniboine, the Saskatchewan, and several beautiful lakes, the chief of which are the Lake of the Woods, Rainy Lake, and Lake Winnipeg. At present, the Belt is cut off from easy access by a stony region; but a road of two hundred miles would obviate this difficulty, and then the Belt itself would be easily traversed either by road or railway. So remarkably do the rivers and lakes connect themselves with the great lakes of Canada, that there is water-communication from the mouth of the St Lawrence to the remote end of Lake Superior, and from the Lake of the Woods to within a hundred and fifty miles of the Rocky Mountains. The gap between Lake Superior and the Lake of the Woods is the two hundred miles of distance above mentioned. There are a few rapids and shoals, it is true, but these might be so far improved as to be no interruption to navigation. The Belt, containing something like a hundred thousand square *miles* of rich fertile land, leads almost in a straight line to the Leather Head Pass, one of the lowest and most easily accessible in the whole range of the Rocky Mountains. Those who have read Lord Milton and Mr Cheadle's volume will remember their description of this pass; the ascent was so easy that the travellers did not know they had reached the top until they noticed that the streams flowed towards the west. But a water-communication by means of the rivers and lakes would not alone suffice. What is wanted to place British America on anything like a par with the United States, would be a railway extending from Canada to British Columbia, through the Fertile Belt, and over the easy pass of the Rocky Mountains. It has now been clearly ascertained that this route is peculiarly well fitted for a railway, both on account of its easy gradients and of the facility for supporting and employing a large and busy population. Once let such a railway be formed, and not only would there be this busy hive of industry gradually collected under the British crown, but there would be a new mail and commercial route established across the Pacific to China and Japan, from the magnificent harbour of Esquimault in British Columbia. It sounds formidable to talk of a travel-route across a continent three thousand miles wide (which is about the distance from the Atlantic to the Pacific in these parts); but there is already magnificent steam-communication on the St Lawrence and the great lakes, leaving a comparatively easy country beyond to be 'exploited' by the railway engineers. There is not, in the whole range of British enterprise, a present scheme more worthy of attention than this. Almost every inducement, political and commercial, tends that way; and it will be a great shame to us and our American colonists if the citizens of the United States should be allowed to absorb *all* the routes from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

EDMUND KEAN.

The transitoriness of fame is one of the best worn subjects on which human tongues and pens have ever been engaged. The ultra-transitoriness of the fame of the actor is an especially well-worn section of that subject, and yet there are few pleasanter or more popular books than the biographies of the great players of a period which we are never tired of contrasting with our own, in certain aspects, to the disadvantage of the latter. Under the Protean masks of the actor, we like to see the man; and perhaps for the very reason that his achievements are ephemeral, because to him death means annihilation as an artist, we have great curiosity about him, as he lived and was, off the stage.

Biographies of every sort are generally written by partisans; biographies of actors are commonly written by enthusiasts, and Mr Hawkins's *Life of Edmund Kean** is no exception to this rule. But it is all the pleasanter reading for that, carrying one along with quite a gleeful sense of the thorough good will, the ardent belief, the passionate admiration of the writer. One can understand that the task of writing the life of Edmund Kean must have been full of pain; that the contrast between the intellectual and the moral nature of the great tragedian must have been constantly present; and that the effort to exhibit his genius in its full grandeur and brilliancy must have been very hard to maintain in the inexorable presence of his hopeless and many-sided perversity. Happily, the effort is well sustained; and though it is not possible to forget how bad a man Kean was, Mr Hawkins forces us to realise, much more fully, his greatness as an actor.

* *The Life of Edmund Kean, from published and original Sources.* By F. W. Hawkins. London: Tinsley Brothers.

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Fate and fortune were terribly against the clever, unruly boy, with an 'Italian' face, and dauntlessly vagabond propensities, who inherited some 'good' blood, but whose birth was illegitimate, and whose maternal ancestors were remarkable for their misfortunes. George Saville Carey, his grandfather, struggled all his life long with poverty, and played many motley parts upon the stage of life. He never gained more than a bare subsistence, and was indebted to charity for a decent funeral. Henry Carey, his great-grandfather, was a lyrical and dramatic writer of some reputation — he is the reputed author of the *National Anthem;* but he was always in difficulties, and constitutionally melancholy—a combination which led to his committing suicide.

Edmund Kean's mother seems to have been as worthless a specimen of her sex as ever lived to bring disgrace on a son, to whom she was always an unnatural parent, and whose hard-earned prosperity was considerably marred by her 'turning up.' The conduct of this wretched person was such as to suggest the doubt whether Edmund Kean really was her son, and the suspicion that to Miss Tidswell, who gave him food, shelter, and some measure of affection, that title, so unlikely ever to prove a distinction, really belonged. Anne Carey was as bad as a daughter as she was as a mother. She ran away from home at fifteen to join a company of strolling players, and in the intervals of business figured as a hawker in the streets of London. Here Aaron Kean, an architect, saw her, and took her under his protection, but abandoned her after the birth of her son, who came into the world under most unfavourable circumstances in every respect, on the 4th November 1787, in a lodging-house in Chancery Lane. His mother took care of him until he was three months old, and then left him to the mercy of anybody who might exercise that virtue in his favour, which some one did for two years, of which there is no record. One November night in 1789, a poor man and his wife found the little child in a doorway, cold, starving, and forsaken, and took him home with them. His mother came shortly, and demanded her 'property;' and then the drama of Edmund Kean's life began, a drama as strange and wild, as full of human passion and misery as any he ever played in later, and shook men's nerves, and wrung their hearts by his rendering of its emotions.

He was a beautiful child, with graceful limbs and fine black eyes, destined afterwards to emulate the 'wonderful eyes' of 'little Davy;' and at three years old he lay at the feet of Sylvia and Cymon, as Cupid, in a ballet by Noverre, at Drury Lane. Then he was placed in the hands of a posture-master, to be tortured into pantomimic possibilities, but the beautiful child was too young, too delicate, and the graceful limbs were distorted, so that they had to be placed in iron supports. Their symmetry was restored; but Edmund Kean's shortness of stature was caused, says Mr Hawkins, 'by his mother's persistence that he should continue his work at the theatre, the irons being at the same time attached to his body.' He was totally ignorant, until a few decent people, attracted by his beauty and intelligence, subscribed to send him to a little school in Chapel Street, Soho. But the spirit of restlessness and insubordination was rising in him now, and when less than eight years old, he told his mother he meant to go to sea, whereupon she beat him lustily. This decided him; and the tiny child, with a bundle and a stick, set out—the original of David Copperfield—to walk to Portsmouth. He did it, though, encountering no Aunt Betsy, and shipped himself as a cabin-boy for Madeira. What a story to be compressed into eight years! Edmund Kean was forty-six years old at his death, but can he be said to have died young? The story of his childhood and boyhood is too terrible, too degrading, too much charged with poverty and struggle, with every depressing influence, and above all, with close contact with all that is hard, base, and unfeeling in human nature, to permit one to think of him as a young man at all. In this childish adventure there was a wonderful indication of the character and the future of its hero. One shrinks from the picture of the suffering, lonely, over-taxed child, all unused to pity, yet raging in his pain, and driven to the most desperate resort of deception and preternatural cunning which surely ever presented itself to the tender years of childhood. There is something acutely painful in the wonderful fear and pain-taught cunning which enabled Edmund Kean to assume deafness and lameness so perfectly as to deceive his captain and the whole ship's crew for two months, and in the amazing strength of will and nerve which gave a child not yet nine years old the power of so controlling his emotions as to remain apparently deaf to the tremendous noise of a tempest in which the ship was all but lost. There is also something demon-like in the following picture, in a few lines: 'Arrived on shore, he tendered his gratitude to those who carried him from the ship by a sudden and vigorous execution of the College hornpipe, and disappeared among the ramifications of Portsmouth before his custodians recovered from the stupefying amazement with which they beheld this extraordinary transformation.'

The child tramped back to London, to find himself homeless and destitute, his mother having gone off on her wanderings again; and he knocked, as a desperate venture, at the door of his uncle, Moses Kean, mimic, ventriloquist, and general 'entertainer.' This queer person, not at all a bad fellow in his way, received his prematurely scampish little nephew kindly, and introduced him to his own humble by-paths of dramatic art, and then to Shakspeare, as performed at Drury Lane. Moses Kean, his uncle, Mrs Price, his mother's sister, and Miss Tidswell the actress were his friends, patrons, and the arbiters of his destiny. They sent him to a day-school, and in the evenings 'Tid' taught him the mechanical principles of the actor's art, D'Egville taught him stage-dancing, and Angelo made him 'cunning of fence.' From Incledon he learned to sing, and nature had gifted him with ear, taste, and voice. He was very clever, very quick, very industrious in a fitful way, but wild, mischievous, and ungovernable; and he displayed terribly soon that inclination for dissipation, which afterwards made his career such a painful story to contemplate, and turned all his greatness to a mockery and a shame. At this period of his life, the future Lear, Hamlet, Richard, Othello, was in the constant habit of running away from his friends, performing acrobatic antics for halfpence in the streets and at public-houses, and was, on one occasion, actually found by Miss

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Tidswell tarred and feathered in St George's Fields, and dragged home by her, by a rope fastened round his waist. They locked him up, but he escaped, at the risk of his neck. They soldered a brass collar round his neck, with the inscription: 'This boy belongs to 9 Lisle Street, Leicester Square. Please bring him home;' but he tied a handkerchief round the collar, and was free. At length he got an engagement to play child's parts at Drury Lane; and as Arthur, when John Kemble played King John to the Constance of Mrs Siddons, was uproariously applauded. What a long, dreary, heart-sickening interval and struggle lay between the success of the child-actor and the splendid triumph of the young man, almost done to death by failure, by want, by heart-sickness and misery, who was to achieve such a reputation upon that very stage, when hope had been so long deferred that he said: 'If I succeed, I shall go mad!'

When his uncle died, and he was thrown entirely on the bounty of Miss Tidswell, he abandoned his acrobatic pursuits, and took to serious study of Shakspeare, especially *Richard III.*, and conceived some notion of his own wonderful powers, together with the lofty and novel ambition to restore fidelity to nature to the stage. Then comes the episode to which Mr Hawkins, with pardonable special pleading, attributes the sharp, sudden, and very decided turn towards evil of the boy's character. He was warmly 'taken up' by Mr and Mrs Clarke, wealthy people, at whose house he gave recitations, and enjoyed decent society, and the delightful sense of being appreciated. A paradise opened its gates to him awhile, the neglected child was cared for, the struggling genius developed. Mrs Clarke instructed him in various branches of literature, and he taught himself to play upon the pianoforte, to compose music, and construct little plays. His manners became gentle, his natural tastes developed. Had this care, this comfort, this training lasted, Edmund Kean might have been a very different man. But they did not last, and the end of them came thus: 'Some visitors at the house at Guildford Street were arranging to go to the theatre, and on Edmund's name being included in the list of the playgoers, a gentleman inquired—"What! Does *he* sit in the box with us?" "Certainly," was the reply. The doubt implied in the question was too much for the sensitive boy. He rushed out of the house, and it was not until three weeks after, that he was found asleep on a dust-heap, near Mrs Clarke's house, ragged, squalid, and footsore. He stated that he had tramped to Bristol, with the intention of shipping himself to America; but that, as none of the seafaring men would take him, in consequence of his apparent weakness, he bent his steps back again to London, and, after enduring every variety of wretchedness on the way, he had fallen exhausted on the spot where they had found him. Mrs Clarke's interest in the player-boy ceased, and a benefit having been made up in order that his departure might not wear a look of dismissal, he was again thrown on the charity of Miss Tidswell.' It is evident from this incident that Edmund Kean had a bad temper, and was entirely wanting in reasonableness; and dispassionate readers will not blame Mrs Clarke very strongly for losing her interest in the player-boy, who acted towards her like an ungrateful lunatic, because he had received an affront with which she had nothing to do. They will also find it difficult to discern in Kean that 'inherent gentleness of disposition' which Mr Hawkins assigns to him, and which he says 'had aroused him to a consciousness of the superiority of the new life over the old one, so that, finding his cherished hopes of permanently clearing himself from all trace of his former associations were destroyed, that he was again reduced to the level of a street Arab, and that he should be forced to mingle again with the lowest of the low, he became filled with bitterness, which eventually resolved itself into an implacable aversion to rank, wealth, and refinement.' This is a strictly one-sided view. It was not so much what Edmund Kean hated, as what he loved, which was deplorable.

The Shakspearian prodigy became a tumbler at Bartholomew Fair, giving imitations of a monkey and a nightingale; climbing, like a squirrel, a ladder balanced on a man's chin, sliding down to the ground, and gliding away in wonderful mimicry of a snake; playing Tom Thumb to a strolling Queen Dollalolla; performing startling equestrian feats in the ring, in the course of which he broke both his legs; undergoing every conceivable kind of drudgery, and being mixed up with the very dregs of society. We follow him back to Lisle Street after this escapade, and find him studying Shakspeare under Miss Tidswell's superintendence, and startling everybody by his originality; then rushing off to Portsmouth, on the strength of a report of his mother's being there, without any money beyond his bare subsistence on the journey. Ann Carey was not at Portsmouth, and the boy had apparently no resource but begging his way back to town. He would not beg, however, and this was what he did. 'At fourteen years of age, and with nothing but his good looks to recommend him, he hired, on credit, a room in one of the Portsmouth inns, for the purpose of giving an entertainment; and in a performance consisting of selections from *Hamlet*, *Richard III.*, and *Jane Shore*, interspersed with a series of acrobatic evolutions and some exquisite singing, he achieved such a success that it was repeated on the next day; and after paying expenses, found himself in possession of three pounds.' This delightful earnest of future success determined his career; and he studied and worked with a desperate perseverance which is one of the most interesting traits in his character. He recites Rollo's address to the Peruvians; gets an engagement to play leading parts at the York theatre for twenty nights; and astonishes 'Tid' by his entirely original and subtle conception of the character of Shylock—audaciously setting at naught the great Kemble and Cooke traditions. With his engagement at York, his life as a strolling player began. He soon joined Richardson's troupe, and found his mother, who improved the sentimental occasion by inducing him to carry her pack of pomatums, hair-brushes, and other hawkers' goods for her, and help her to sell them. She also proposed that he should hand over all his earnings to her. But he would not submit to this: a quarrel ensued; he gave Miss Carey a sketch of his opinion of her, and she dismissed him with an emphatic curse! What an episode in a young man's life! It may truly be said he had few chances for good allotted to him.

His success as a stroller was immediate. Richardson discovered that he had picked up an 'extraordinary genius;' the boy was commanded to

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Windsor, to give his 'recitations' before the king, and amply justified the expectation entertained. Within a week, he was withdrawn from Richardson's company, and a mysterious period of his life began. Mr Hawkins maintains that Edmund Kean was educated at Eton, which is denied by Mr Procter and Mr Leman Rede, and of which there is no reliable testimony, unless the great tragedian's very indifferent Latin and equally defective English composition (he had an extraordinary fancy for introducing bad Latin on all occasions) be accepted by cynics as more than presumptive evidence. The point is not important now; but it may be supposed that he could not have been placed at Eton by Miss Tidswell; and if not, who was to do it? The boy was friendless except for her, and moneyless except for his small salary. Trustworthy information turns up in his eighteenth year, when we find him playing, at Dumfries, low comedian in Moss's company; anon at Northallerton, then at Gloucester; in short, going the ordinary rounds of a strolling player, but manifesting genius, originality, and versatility so extraordinary as to be often bewildering to his audiences. His talent was of the most brilliant and attractive description, but it would be difficult to imagine any temper more repulsive. There is an element of savagery, of moody, brute-like ferocity in many of the anecdotes of Kean at this time, when his great powers were maturing, and his perceptive faculties were being brought, by constant use, to the perfection of skill, quickness, and accuracy. He mastered every subtlety of human expression, every indication, intonation, gesture of human passion in this period of insignificance, and never lost faith in the coming of the time when he should reveal himself as the master of his art, the greatest interpreter to men of the greatest genius among mankind. 'He studied and slaved,' his wife said afterwards, 'beyond any actor I ever knew.'

In his twentieth year, he married Miss Chambers, an actress, but of respectable family, then in her twenty-ninth year, and was dismissed by Manager Beverley, on the pretext that the attraction of Kean, little as it was, would wane when it was discovered that he was no longer an unmarried tragedian, and that the lady was a mere encumbrance. Then began a life of terrible suffering, privation, and disappointment, destined to last six years. The story is a miserable one in every aspect—the pair were in abject poverty always, in actual want frequently. But Edmund Kean was determined to win; his resolution, his courage never flagged, his intense study was never relaxed; and though he was addicted to drinking from his boyhood, the vice did not hinder him. A curious instance of his sound judgment is given in the fact that, when playing at Birmingham, at a salary of a guinea a week, he refused Stephen Kemble's offer of an engagement in London, replying that his powers had not yet arrived at maturity, and that it would not do to perfect himself beneath the critical eye of a London audience. Here is one story of this terrible time. 'At four o'clock one July morning, Kean set out from Birmingham, having closed with an offer from Manager Cherry of Swansea. Two hundred miles to be travelled over on foot, and Mrs Kean likely to become a mother before the journey is half accomplished. Kean would fain have left her in Birmingham, but there was a furious pack of unsatisfied creditors in that town, and the unfortunate lady was compelled to accompany her husband. Travelling twelve miles a day, and eking out their scanty funds by giving recitations in gentlemen's houses, they arrived in a fortnight at Bristol, and crossed in a boat to Newport. Passing through Cardiff, Cowbridge, and other towns, they eventually reached Swansea, where they obtained a little tiled parlour and bedroom for eight shillings a week.' Here their first son, Howard, was born; and here Mrs Kean underwent, no doubt, much suffering of many kinds, for her husband was reduced to playing secondary characters, his temper was furious, and he was habitually what Mr Hawkins, with the tender euphemism of a biographer, calls 'unsober.'

Then came more strolling, including an Irish tour—during which Charles Kean was born at Waterford—a Scotch tour, and a weary tramp from Carlisle to York, where a despairing effort to get up an 'entertainment' having no success, seemed to overwhelm the wretched man. His wife, so badly rewarded for her faithful friendship, her heroic endurance, her constant sustainment, her bitter sufferings—his wife, the victim of his drunken ferocity in their obscurity, of his heartless infidelity in their better days, could no longer cheer him. Utter want oppressed them, and only charity saved them from starvation. 'On one occasion, a bitter curse upon his perverse destiny broke savagely from his lips. For a moment, the heroic courage with which Mrs Kean had borne up against the adverse tide abandoned her also, and sinking down upon her knees she looked upon her children, and offered a heartfelt prayer that God might see fit to terminate their sufferings and her own by death. The husband and father recovered himself, kissed away his wife's tears, and murmured: "I will go on; I will hope against hope."' He did hope; he did try; he resumed his ramblings, and played at Weymouth Hamlet and harlequin, the latter with more unequivocal success than the former, and his magnificent Othello with no appreciation at all. A frightful failure at Guernsey, and a cruel attack upon him by the newspapers, then came quickly on the heels of his many misfortunes; but now the tide was about to turn. He came back to England, and at Dorchester fell in with his old friend, Dr Drury, who actively interested himself on the nearly despairing actor's behalf with the Drury Lane committee. But Dr Drury did not tell him what he was doing for him, and in the meantime Kean had accepted an engagement from Elliston to play melodramatic characters at the London Olympic for four pounds a week. The terrible necessities of his position drove him to the sacrifice of his cherished ambition at last, just at the moment when it was about to be realised. The complication of circumstances at this period of Kean's life is highly dramatic and touching. The sparkling cup was to come to his lips indeed, but dashed with what bitterness! Slights from the theatrical powers; disputes with Elliston and Arnold, solved only by abject entreaty, on Kean's part, dread, misgiving, and, worse than all, the death of his beloved child, Howard. In all the story of Edmund Kean's brilliant, lamentable life, there is nothing which engages one's sympathies for him like the love and grief he shewed for that child.

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Things were at the worst, the promised arrangement seemed quite hopeless, when, on the 22d January 1814, Edmund Kean went out from Cecil Street with utter despair in his heart, meditating suicide. An acquaintance met him, and congratulated him upon a certain announcement, of which Kean was ignorant, and which ran thus:

THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY LANE.

This Evening, *Illusion*

After which, *Two Strings to Your Bow;* to which will be added the new splendid Comic Pantomime, called

Harlequin Harper, or a Jump from Japan.

On Monday, *Othello*, with the Pantomime.

On Tuesday, *The Castle of Andalusia*, with the Pantomime.

On Wednesday, Mr KEAN, from the Theatre-royal Exeter, will make his first appearance at this Theatre, as Shylock, in the *Merchant of Venice.*

There was no heralding of this event, no puffing of the poor struggling actor, who had many enemies, and very few friends. He stood on his merits alone, that 'little man in the capes,' when on the 26th January 1814, Edmund Kean took the world by storm, and realised the fixed purpose, the unchanging ambition of his life. The story of that wonderful achievement, of that magnificent success, is the best known incident in stage-history. As a reminiscence, its sequel has most power now to please. Kean left the theatre, hardly heeding the obsequious congratulations of the green-room. 'In an almost frenzied ecstasy, he rushed through the wet to his humble lodging, sprang up the stairs, and threw open the door. His wife ran to meet him. No words were required; his radiant countenance told all; and they mingled together tears of true happiness. He told her of his proud achievement, and in a burst of exultation exclaimed: "Mary, you shall ride in your carriage; and Charley, my boy"—taking the child from the cradle, and kissing him—"you shall go to Eton; and"—his face changed, his joy passed away; he murmured in broken accents: "O that Howard had lived to see it! But he is better where he is."'

In the career of the actor, from day to day, henceforth, there is growing prosperity, there is increasing brilliancy, wealth, fame, popularity; the admiration of the great, the learned, the rich, the powerful; the sincere tribute of the masses to his wondrous genius, evidenced in the flocking of enthusiastic crowds to the theatre. The erstwhile street Arab was an honoured guest in the noblest houses of the land; but his tastes did not lie in that direction. He hated 'that tinsel-covered mass of envy, hatred, and all uncharitableness—polished society.' He erred on the opposite side to pride and ostentation, being rough in manner, and regardless of fashion in dress. The *Coal Hole Tavern*, Adelphi, had charms for him not found in the saloons of Holland House, where he had to encounter noblemen, of whom he said: 'They talk a great deal of what I don't understand—politics and other abstruse matters; but when it comes to plays, they talk such infernal nonsense.' He cordially liked Byron, not so much for his genius perhaps, as for other qualities of the noble poet which resembled his own, and atoned for the offence of his being a 'lord.'

It is pleasant to find that Kean did not forget 'Tid' in the days of his prosperity, and not surprising to learn that Nance Carey did not forget him. She extracted an annuity of fifty-one pounds from her son with much celerity, and set spurious relatives upon him continually with more or less success. He was kind, considerate, and generous to the friend of his wretched childhood, who was destined to nurse him in his last illness, and to mourn, doubtless as no other could have mourned, with sincerity over his grave. A vast quantity of criticism exists on the numerous characters played by Kean during his wonderful career, all interesting to read, though, of course, to us, discoursing of a great abstraction. The splendid and the base run parallel in this great and despicable man's character, and the reader cannot cease from wondering how the lower impulses of his nature gained such ascendency over the grand inspirations, the marvellous insight, the exquisitely delicate perceptions of his intellect. His domestic history is so painful, that one wishes only a theatrical memoir of him had been attempted, for, though 'Mary' did ride in her carriage, and 'Charley' did go to Eton, Edmund Kean was a bad husband and father, and those who like to think, undisturbed, of the genius which interpreted, and which may be almost said to have enriched Shakspeare, will do well to take leave of him at the end of his ninth season, when the measure of his splendid achievements was full. The disgraceful episode of Mrs Cox, his separation from his injured wife, his utter abandonment to low excess, his eccentric, indeed absurd expedition to America, and adventures among the Hurons, a period of wildness only to be explained by the charitable hypothesis that he was—'a little m——, you know,' as Miss Flite puts it, are all of the most miserable complexion.

In January 1827, he reappeared at Drury Lane as Shylock, and Dr Doran thus graphically describes the occasion: 'A rush so fearful, an audience so packed, a reconciliation so complete, acting so faultless, a dramatic enjoyment so exquisite, I never remember. Nothing was heeded; indeed, the scenes were passed over until Shylock was to appear, and I have heard no such shout since as that which greeted him.' But that overwhelming 'welcome' from thousands of voices greeted, not, as the people and the critics thought, the incomparable player still in all his former vigour. The actors knew better; they saw the unnatural exertion, stimulated by the tremendous excitement, and knew that Kean was a failing man. That 7th January was an epoch in his life, and in the history of the stage; never again was such a performance witnessed; that was his real farewell to all his greatness. Inequality marked all he did afterwards; his strength failed, and, in plain English, he drank incessantly. He became moody and morose, wan, haggard, and, but for the piercing brilliancy of his eyes, unrecognisable. He became a prey to remorse, and in fact, though he had yet some years to live, and though there were occasional resuscitations of his former achievements, there is nothing more in his life on which one can dwell with any pleasure. The degrading vice whose slave he became has no mercy; everything must give way before it; truth, honour, and gratitude have no place where it rules. The ruin of Mr Grattan's play—his friend, true, steadfast, immovable—by Kean's coming on the stage incapably drunk to perform his part of it, is one

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of the most revolting incidents in this melancholy and repulsive story. There was one more reconciliation, besides that with the public, for Edmund Kean—a reconciliation with his deeply injured wife. When life was closing for him, when he had sunk into a loathsome state of disease, when he had abused every gift of nature, and found that his punishment was not to be escaped, he wrote to his wife: 'DEAR MARY—Let us be no longer fools. Come home; forget and forgive. If I have erred, it was my head, not my heart, and most severely have I suffered for it. My future life shall be employed in contributing to your happiness; and you, I trust, will return that feeling by a total obliteration of the past. Your wild, but really affectionate husband,

EDMUND KEAN.'

It is difficult to perceive Mrs Kean's share in the 'folly;' but a fuller *amende* was not to be expected from such a man. Of course, she *came* home; and the meeting between the two was very affecting. But there remained very little more life for Edmund Kean. He died on the 15th May 1833, and then there was no 'home' for the widow. The cottage at Richmond and its contents were the property of Kean's creditors, for he who had made two hundred thousand pounds in England alone, died insolvent. Mrs Kean was handsomely provided for by her son; and Nance Carey survived Edmund Kean only eight days. What became of the immense sums he received, no one knows. He was very lavish of money always, and threw it away recklessly when he was drunk; but it takes a great deal of lavishness to waste the fortune which he wasted. He was splendidly generous; this is one of the traits it is delightful to remember and record; he never held his hand when any need or suffering was to be relieved, general or individual; he was a noble benefactor to his own profession; he gave large sums to the starving Irish; and the poor loved him. It has been said, eloquently and truly: 'In all romance, in all literature, there is nothing more melancholy, nothing more utterly tragic than the story of the career of Edmund Kean. So bitter and weary a struggle for a chance, so splendid and bewildering a success, so sad a waste of genius and of fortune, so lamentable a fall, can hardly be found among all the records of the follies, and sins, and misfortunes of genius.'

A COUNTY FAMILY.

CHAPTER XIX.—AN EXCELLENT MEMORY.

THE sight of Redcombe Manor, with its park and grounds, when William Blackburn's greedy eyes first lit upon them from afar, had, as we saw, somewhat quelled his insolent spirit. The prize had seemed to him too great to lie within reach of his itching palm, just as at first a stake of unwonted magnitude appears to the gambler too great a stroke of fortune to befall him—an unlikely thing to win. But, as in the gambler's case, now that the first great obstacle—his father's opposition and disfavour—had been smoothed away with such apparent ease, his hopes rose all the higher for his late depression; all seemed to lie within his grasp. The evidences of the wealth about him—which would surely at no distant date be his—inflated him with vulgar pride. The absence of his father from the luncheon-table removed what little check might have been imposed upon his behaviour; and with every glass of wine he swallowed, he grew more confident and coarse. With a shiver at the heart, Lucy Waller contrasted this boastful ruffian with him who had once sat in his place, and dispensed hospitality at that same table in so different a fashion. Ellen herself regarded her uncle with little less aversion. He had grown positively rude to Mr Stanhope, and she felt genuinely grateful to the latter for the restraint which she well knew he was exercising upon himself for her sake and for that of her grandmother. His nature was fiery, and his wit keen enough to suggest such a retort as would have disconcerted even his half-drunken host, and covered him with shame; but he spared him. Mr Waller, whose age might have fitly entitled him to reprove, or at least repress, and who was very skilful in the management of men, kept an unusual silence, and even seemed, to judge by the gracious manner in which he received the newcomer's rough sallies, to encourage them. As for Mrs Blackburn, it is probable she scarcely caught the meaning of much that dropped from her son's lips; it was enough for her to know that he was in good spirits, and she rejoiced accordingly.

When the somewhat protracted meal was over, Stanhope asked permission to ring for his horse to be brought round; and when this was done, and the animal appeared before the terrace, he took his leave. The Squire had departed elsewhere, and the young man could not well help treating his son as his *locum tenens;* so, when he had bidden farewell to the rest, he held out his hand to William.

'I will see you to the gates,' returned the latter gruffly, taking no notice of this gesture; and he walked on in moody silence beside the horse and rider until they had turned the angle of the house, and were out of sight of the others. Then he stopped, and laid his hand upon the rein. 'Look you here, Mr Stanhope, or whatever your name is; I have something to say to you, once for all.'

For the second time that day, Herbert Stanhope's fingers involuntarily tightened their hold of the handle of his riding-whip. 'I never permit my bridle to be touched, sir,' said he quietly; 'that is also once for all.'

William Blackburn's swarthy face turned ashen pale, and he let go his hold; but his voice slackened not one whit in its imperious tone as he rejoined: 'Neither your horse nor you will be here again, I reckon, as you have been wont to be. I know you, sir, better than you think. Horses have done you much harm. You are not so rich, though you do live at Curlew Hall, but that a wife with money would be agreeable to you. Yes, yes. You have had nobody here until now to deal with but an old man already in his dotage, but henceforward it will be very different—do you understand? Then, listen to this: I do not choose my niece to be married at present—nor to you at all.'

'Indeed, sir,' returned Stanhope coolly. 'Have you any other commands to communicate?—your wish, as you may easily imagine, will always be my law.'

His contemptuous smile, even more than his

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mocking words, stung the other to frenzy; but repartee was not his strong point.

'You are vastly clever, Mr Stanhope, but you will find you have met your match—another sort of match than that you expected here.'

'I am not clever, Mr William Blackburn, but I have a most excellent memory. I may say, indeed, as is said of the royal family, that I never forget a face that I have once seen, and I have seen yours before to-day.'

'Never you mind that,' rejoined the other doggedly, but not without a change of colour; 'you will henceforth not see it very often, at least at Redcombe Manor.'

'I am not so sure of that, my good friend,' said Stanhope, taking out of his pocket a small book, and referring to it with much deliberation. 'Let me see: yes, it was in the same year that *Donnybrook* won the Derby, when I was quite a lad, that I first saw you—at Chester.'

'I never was at Chester in my life.'

'That's strange; for if you never were, it was your twin-brother whom I saw brought up before the magistrates for horse-poisoning. You were bribed to nobble the *Khan* for the Chester Cup. I sat on the bench with my father, and remember the case perfectly well. You were in with Richardson and that lot, but they could only bring the thing home to *you*. Instead of using arsenic, you tried (not from motives of humanity, I'll be sworn) some corrosive sublimate, which you put in his oats, and so only sickened the horse. There was another charge against you for cutting the sinews of some horse that was entered for another race—but that fell through. But I well remember—for I was interested in the case, and watched it after you were committed for trial, you got five years—*and they are not over yet*, Mr William *Roberts!*'

'It's a lie!' gasped the unhappy wretch through his white lips.

'That is—of course—what it occurs to a fellow—of your stamp—to say,' observed the other, carefully lighting a cigar. 'You have the misfortune to be not only a vile knave, but a gross fool. You don't even know when you are beat, you stupid cur!'

The relics of the other's Dutch courage oozed away to the last dregs as he replied, with his evil face cast down, and his heel denting the soft gravel savagely: 'What, in the Fiend's name, is it you want of me?'

'There, now, that's common sense, my man, and the nearest approach to reason which I have yet seen in you. What do I want as the price of my silence?—for not saying what I know about William Blackburn, alias Roberts, the man that poisoned the horse at Chester? Well, of course, I shall want lots of things.'

'Then, *you* shall not have them!' exclaimed the ruffian passionately. 'Do you suppose I'm going to put myself in your vice, to be screwed up as tight as *you* please, all my life long? No; do your worst. Supposing all you say is true (and I don't say it is—mind that), what harm can you do to me? Even, according to your own shewing, if I *have* done anything amiss, it's paid for—ain't it?'

'Well, not just yet: you had five years, you know, and they are not quite over; you must be out on ticket-of-leave, and are therefore still under the supervision of the police. You wince at that; but really you ought to feel obliged to the foolish clemency of the law, which permits a gentleman of your class and character to be at large a single day before the date of his discharge. You have not, perhaps, studied the discussion upon this matter in your late retirement, but I assure you that the papers have been full of it. How you must have greened the chaplain, and how easy he must have been to "green!" However, you certainly have, as you were about to say, been punished, and may consider yourself a free man. The law has been avenged, but not society. We can't admit horse-poisoners into county circles, my good sir; we can't allow them to marry into county families, my excellent friend—that is to say, if the crime is known. On the other hand, so long as the secret is preserved, they may do almost anything they please. Having brought the argument thus far, your sagacity is surely sufficient to permit of your drawing the deduction, that my silence must at any price be secured.'

The force of contempt and bitterness could no farther go than in the young man's air and tone; but the fact was, that he not only despised the wretch before him, but also himself, for being under the necessity of making terms with such a creature. It is easy enough for a fool to be indignant with the vices to which he is not inclined, and to be blind to his own shortcomings; but Herbert Stanhope was no fool, and could not play the hypocrite with his own conscience. No one knew better than himself how vile was the part that he had undertaken to play in the house of his friend and neighbour; and the few words that William Blackburn had remarked upon it had secretly stung him far more keenly than all his sarcasms had affected the other. He had been, from the nature of his pursuit, acquainted with many a scoundrel, and had often had a common interest with them; but he had hitherto contrived, in that respect, to keep his turf experiences and his own private life distinct and apart from one another. At that very moment, he was justly liable to disgrace and outlawry among a certain set of persons with whom he had chosen to cast in his lot. He did not spare himself at all in the view he took of that matter, but his ways outside the betting ring had been always those of a gentleman. For the first time, he now found himself, in what might be called his Home relations, about to become hand and glove with a villain. If William Blackburn's crime had not been one connected with the calling in which he had himself gone so far astray, he would not have been so bitter against him; but we are as fanciful in our moral as we are in our physical disease, and he loathed him because he appeared to mirror some distorted and odious image of himself. 'Well, your answer, sir?' exclaimed he harshly, as the other continued his excavation in the gravel without a nod. 'Or, shall I ride back and tell your father that I must decline the invitation he has given me to pass the next few days at the Manor? since, though I am sorry to lose his friendship, I cannot permit myself to share the same roof with a felon.'

'No, no,' said the other, with an affectation of frankness; 'you can come if you like, of course. There is no need for us two to quarrel. You have only to hold your tongue, and you will have my good word with Ellen. The old man will cut up well, and there will be plenty for her as well as

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for me. I am sorry I was so rough with you—there, a gentleman can't say more than that. Henceforth, we'll work together; that's a bargain, and here's my hand upon it.'

'There's no necessity for that,' rejoined Stanhope coldly. 'And perhaps it will be as well, since you shewed such temper just now upon the terrace, that we should not appear in public on the best of terms with one another. You can grunt "How do you do?" instead of shaking hands, I daresay. I shall be here to-morrow for a day or two. Good-bye.' And with a careless nod, Stanhope slowly rode away along the avenue, without once turning his head. Had he done so, he would have seen his late companion still standing on the same spot, and watching him with wolfish eyes.

'If I only had him in the well-hole at Formosa,' muttered he through his clenched teeth, 'and could watch from above the rising tide, and see him climb, and cling, and slowly drown; or, better still, if he could scramble near the top, and think he should be saved, and come within my reach, so that I might make him lose his hold—then, and not till then, should he and I be quits.'

CHAPTER XX.—THRUST AND PARRY.

As Stanhope passed through the lodge gate, he beheld, to his surprise, and not with pleasure—for he was by no means inclined just then for company—Mr Waller standing on the turf by the roadside, and evidently waiting for him. He had come from the terrace by a shorter way than through the avenue, and would have intercepted him in any case; but not a little time had been taken up by the parley with William Blackburn, and the look with which the ex-M.P. received him was pregnant with curious inquiry. 'What on earth have you been doing, Stanhope? I began to get quite alarmed, not indeed upon your account, but upon that of our friend in the black dittoes. Have you been horse-whipping that wretched cub, or what? He was certainly very rude to you.'

'As to that, he was rude to everybody; and upon my life, Waller—though, under the circumstances, it was not for me to interfere—if I had been a relative of any lady at table, I should have felt it my duty, at all hazards, to have put a stop to it.'

'Well, the fact is it was a deuced delicate business, my good fellow. In the first place, the man was drunk, and remonstrance is not only thrown away in such a case, but sometimes makes matters much worse. He might have got angry and "said things," you know, before the women; then, again, if there had been a row, his father must have heard of it, and it would have ruined the poor devil altogether. They're not the best of friends, you see, as it is, and one would not have liked to have widened the breach, would one? It is about this very matter that I want to have a few words with you. I think we should give a chance to this just returned prodigal. If he *is* a beggar on horseback, we ought not to let him ride to the deuce.'

'Why not?' asked Stanhope coldly, looking hard in the other's face. 'I have been riding in that direction myself these five years, and you have never attempted to stop *me*.'

'But you have not ridden so fast as this man, my good sir,' added Mr Waller smiling, 'although I daresay you have outrun the constable. Besides, you are not the sort of man to take the advice of a neighbour, however well meaning it might be.'

'Then you think that gentleman yonder'—and Stanhope pointed contemptuously over his shoulder with his whip—'is one more likely to listen to reason?'

'No; not exactly that: he would not be easily led; but I think he might be *driven*, that is, if one knew, *as you do*, what sort of goad was efficacious.'

'*I* know? How can I possibly know?'

'My dear Stanhope, why should you attempt to deceive me? If you have not been horse-whipping this fellow—which I confess I thought you had, by the expression of your face—you have certainly got the better of him in some way or another. How does a man obtain a mastery over a fellow-creature wilder and more savage than himself?—By a stick. You have not employed a material one; you must therefore have used a moral one. Mr William Blackburn is not a person to have been swayed by mere eloquence—for I have tried that with him myself—it is plain to me, therefore, that you have made him afraid of you. You are his Rarey—the tamer of this wild animal; and to become a Rarey, you must possess a secret.'

'My dear Mr Waller,' returned Stanhope with an amused air, 'your logic is most admirable, and I am quite sorry to think that you have only a poor country-gentleman like me to listen to it. I have never doubted your sagacity, nor has anybody in these parts ever ventured to do so: at the same time, I have heard a whisper, now and then, which is not quite so favourable to your disinterestedness. May I inquire—in case, that is, you intend to ask *me* any more questions—how this matter can possibly affect *you*? Forgive me if I cannot easily believe that the welfare of Mr William Blackburn is your sole consideration.'

'My dear young friend,' said Mr Waller blandly, 'I am sorry that at your time of life you should be so suspicious; a circumstance, however, which (as foreign to the generosity of your character) I attribute to your connection with the turf. I cannot help what evil tongues may say of me; though I am sorry their slanders have entered ears which I had hoped were friendly to me. I solemnly assure you I have no underhand motive in this affair whatsoever. I have no great interest in the young man, perhaps, although at the same time we should remember he has been severely tried.'

An irrepressible smile flitted across Stanhope's face.

'Gad! perhaps he *has* been tried!' thought Mr Waller.

'You and I,' continued the ex-M.P., 'have had no experience of poverty, and of the temptations to which it is exposed. We were brought up tenderly, and taken care of until we could take care of ourselves. This man, upon the contrary, has had a hard life of it from the cradle. I am no humanity-monger, as you well know, but I think we should look with charity upon such cases. I give you my word of honour that I honestly believe there may be good in this rough fellow; that if he only has a fair chance he may still turn out a respectable member of society; and it is my fixed intention to do my best to make him so.'

'Upon my life, I begin to think Waller is in earnest,' thought the young man; 'but then, he is such a very clever fellow.'

'And yet, my dear Stanhope, as I have confessed, my interest in this unhappy person is very small as compared with what I feel for his parents.

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They are both, as we know, kind and hospitable folks. Anthony Blackburn comes of as good a stock as yourself—one which we all respect—and his wife is in her way an excellent creature. If this son of theirs goes to the dogs, his father will die of vexation (from the shame of it), and his mother of a broken heart: and again, let me ask you, by the way, is not the very circumstance of her devotion to him a proof that there is some good in the man? The Squire, it is true, has no such affection for him, but the main point is that the happiness of both of them is, for whatever reason, equally bound up in his future. His disgrace would destroy them, as well as do grievous harm to that charming young lady, their grand-daughter. You must surely go with me thus far, my dear young friend?'

Stanhope nodded with a grave smile.

'Well, these excellent people have been good enough to repose some confidence in me.'

'Now he is going to put a little water in the pump,' mused the other, 'in order that he may coax out of it whole bucketsful.'

'They have reposed no confidence in *me*,' observed Stanhope drily.

'No; but you have obtained some information from the fountain-head: let us put our two sums together, and add them up. It fell to me, as you know, to break the news just now of this William Blackburn's arrival to his father. He was terribly put out by it. I never saw a man more moved, that is, with anger. His behaviour was such that he thought it right (in explanation of it) to acquaint me with the cause of his displeasure. It appears that this lady, who has so lately died, was a person whom Mr Blackburn strongly disapproved of, as respected her position in life, and that his son married her contrary to the Squire's wishes.'

'But now that she is dead, my good sir, I see no reason for a continuance of this ill feeling between father and son, and nevertheless it still exists.'

'What excellent sense you have, my dear Stanhope! It was only because I knew you to have so great a faculty of observation, that I made up my mind to tell you this much—which I should otherwise have certainly treated as a confidential communication. Stanhope will be sure, said I, to find out for himself that this marriage with "Bess" was a *mésalliance*. I can do no harm by the revelation; and with this fact to go upon, we may, as common friends of the family, take counsel for their benefit; and here we are laying our heads together accordingly. Now, since besides this marriage, there must have been something else to make the old man so bitter against his only son, the question is: What was it?'

And the ex-M.P. smiled good-humouredly, and patted the mane of his friend's horse, as though he would have elicited the views of that sagacious animal, as well as those of his rider, upon the matter in hand.

'*You*, of course, Stanhope know all about it.'

The suddenness of the inquiry, accompanied by the rapid looking up of the speaker into the young man's face, disconcerted him so, that if he had contemplated any deception, it would have been put to flight; but he had entertained no such design.

'Yes, I do,' said he frankly; 'at the same time, Mr Waller, you must excuse me, if I claim for myself the same privilege which you confess you would have exercised. You say you would have considered it a breach of confidence to tell me what you have just communicated, had it not been within my own power to guess it. Now, you, on your part, have *not* guessed what it is which has caused Mr Blackburn and his son to be on such bad terms with one another; and notwithstanding my high opinion of your sagacity, I will add that I do not think it likely you *will* guess it. This is surely a sufficient reason for my silence: but besides, the matter in question was not revealed to me in tacit confidence only; I have passed my word to keep it as a secret. Under these circumstances, I need not, I am sure, say to Mr Waller: "Do not press me to break my word."' And Stanhope gathered up the reins from his horse's neck.

'One moment, one single moment,' exclaimed the ex-M.P., in accents which, though intended to be cheerful, could not quite disguise his chagrin. 'You may be sure I shall not ask you to do wrong. But—only to relieve my mind—just tell me this,' he looked furtively round and sank his voice to a whisper: 'I know this unfortunate man has been in sad straits, but—he never *stole* anything, did he?'

'What a horrible idea!' ejaculated Stanhope. 'He certainly did *not*. If such an assurance be any satisfaction to you, you are very welcome to it.—And now, good-day.'

'Then it must have been poaching,' whispered the other earnestly. 'I am perfectly convinced that it was poach'——

But Stanhope touched his horse with his heel, and with a good-natured 'No, no, Mr Waller, that won't do,' trotted away without another word.

'A very obstinate young man,' murmured his discomfited inquirer; 'and a secretive young man—which is a bad sign. I'll lay my life, however, it was poaching. How sharp the fellow took me up when I asked him, on the hill yonder, if he had not been "in trouble" lately; and again, did I not see Stanhope smile when I talked of the man's having been "severely tried." I daresay he was punished severely. The game-laws are most oppressive, and a disgrace to the country, as I always intended to say in the House of Commons. I'll write a pamphlet against them, and give it to William Blackburn to read; then I shall easily find out the truth. Though it was certainly poaching. Upon my life, I am afraid he has been in jail. That's what comes of "Justice's justice." Poor fellow! Why, I know lots of people who poach habitually, but then they're rich men; which is very different. From what the Squire said, it was evidently quite an early peccadillo; I daresay merely a boyish folly, which it was cruel in the law to so chastise, and still more cruel in his father to resent so long and bitterly. Yes, yes; it was a mere frolic, I feel sure.'

Mr Waller's face wore its usual smile, as he re-entered the avenue, in the middle of which it, however, grew once more serious, as he stopped and muttered to himself: 'Eh gad, I hope he did not kill a keeper, though!' Then, adding briskly: 'Let us hope he only shot him in the legs,' he hummed an air, not very correctly, from the last new opera, and hurried gaily on.

In the croquet-ground were Ellen and Lucy with their mallets; they were by no means pursuing the game with the usual ardour of young

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ladies, but rather made it serve as a cover to conversation. Here follows the substance of their talk since luncheon.

'Well, and what do you think of him, Ellen?'

'My dear Lucy, what a question! You know it is not the first time that I have seen him.'

'That is scarcely an answer.—It is my green ball to play, is it not?—You must confess, at all events' (thud), 'that he did his best to make himself agreeable.'

Ellen sighed, and missed a hoop.

'You are thinking of something else, my dear, or you would not play so badly,' remarked Lucy, holding up her finger reproachfully. 'I shall think it my duty to tell Mr Denton, I shall, indeed. Supposing even that meeting on the moor was accidental'——

'What *do* you mean, Lucy?—I thought you were speaking of my uncle.'

'Indeed, I was not' (tight croquet, and ball sent to the confines of the grounds); 'I am talking of Mr Stanhope. You are aware, I suppose, that he was making love to you?'

'He certainly was not, my dear; I deny that there was even the appearance of it—but it so happens—in fact, he knows all about me and John.'

'Ah!—You have one more ring to go through with that blue.—Then all I can say is, I don't understand it. You know, I suppose, that he has the reputation of being on the look-out for a fortune; and that his estate is much embarrassed?'

'I have heard that he is dissipated and extravagant.'

'I don't know about dissipated, though he is doubtless extravagant. People are always apt to believe the worst.'

'But I thought he spent all his time on race-courses.'

'Did you?—Come, I've hit that green at last' (viciously). 'Not all his time, surely, because there are times in the year when there are no races.'

'I'm sure I don't wish to be hard upon him, Lucy; though I thought *you* were very severe with him on the moor, talking about his debts and his poverty.'

'It was evident that you sympathised with him, my dear; and it is a sort of sympathy which is very dangerous. As to him, I saw at once that he had made up his mind to have your forty thousand pounds *down*—or whatever it is. He is come down here to get it, that's certain.'

'My dear Lucy, how can you say such things? I have told you the truth; he is perfectly well aware of my engagement.'

'And how came Mr Herbert Stanhope to be "perfectly aware" of such a delicate circumstance? But perhaps that is a secret?'

'No, indeed; he has been very intimate here—with papa more so than any other neighbour; and—and they have been used to talk quite confidentially.'

'Oh, I thought your grandpapa did not know that you *were* engaged?'

'My dear Lucy, what is the matter with you? You know, as well as I do, that my heart is in John's safe keeping. But, even supposing it were otherwise, nothing would ever induce me to marry any man whose pursuit was racing.'

'Well, I never heard that Mr Stanhope was a blackleg; although I have heard all sorts of malignant things about him. I have known him from my childhood, and he's not, I assure you, such a wretch as you seem to think him.'

'A wretch! Lucy? Indeed, I think nothing of the sort. But with respect to racing—it is a thing of which I confess I have a great horror.'

'How wicked you must think me, then, my dear,' laughed Lucy, 'for I once made a little book on the Derby myself, stood to win eighteen pair of gloves (all with double buttons); and I don't think it very much demoralised me.'

'It does some people,' returned Ellen gravely.

Lucy took her green ball with infinite pains, and hitting fair (which was rather unusual with her) through three hoops before she spoke again:

'Is your uncle William fond of race-courses, Ellen?'

'I think so; at least he used to be so, long ago.'

'Have you any reason to believe that he and Mr Stanhope ever met before, Ellen?'

'None whatever. Why do you ask the question?'

'Because, at luncheon, I noticed Mr Stanhope looking at your uncle more than once in a sort of puzzled manner, as though he were trying to recollect something about him. It may, however, have been only my fancy.—Is not that somebody calling "Lucy?" Yes, it is papa's voice upon the terrace. Dear, dear! just as I was close to the post, and almost 'a Rover.' I daresay he wants me to write something for him before the post leaves; if not, I will be back directly, my dear.'

And off she ran. She did not come back, and Ellen continued to knock the balls about and muse.

'What *could* have been the matter with Lucy, at first so testy and almost cross, and then again in such high good humour? What must she think—what must everybody think of Uncle William and his behaviour? And yet it was not that which had put Lucy out, but something, as it would seem, in her own (Ellen's) conduct. What had she done to annoy her? Did Lucy guess at what had already happened between Mr Stanhope and herself? If so, Lucy must be aware that any attentions he might now pay her must be simply those of respectful friendship. If not, cognizant as she was of her engagement to John, that knowledge should have been sufficient to acquit Ellen in her friend's eyes of any charge of encouraging this man's addresses. But indeed, why should Lucy concern herself about the matter at all? and, above all, why behave so inconsistently with respect to Mr Stanhope? She had abused him to his face in a manner that had been quite embarrassing to her (Ellen); and now she not only refused to hear a word against him, but even suggested imaginary attacks upon his character, for the mere pleasure of controverting them. Then, how she must have watched him at luncheon, to get that idea into her head about him and Uncle William having met before! Was it possible—— But no; while playing in the very croquet-ground that had been laid out to please her by dead Richard Blackburn, and in a spot so pregnant with tender memories, it could surely *not* be possible, and yet it was very strange.'

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THE LAST 'RUSH' IN VICTORIA.

A 'RUSH' is the term applied to a new set of gold-diggings; and a very expressive term it is. It is a rush of men—of mining men, of trading men, and of speculative men—a rush of cattle, of horses, of sheep—a rush of all sorts of animals and all sorts of things suddenly let loose, and coming down pell-mell on to a particular spot of the earth's surface.

Finding myself in Melbourne early in January last, I determined upon a short run into the interior; and availing myself of one of the Victorian railways, I started for Sandhurst, a town about a hundred miles north of Melbourne. My intention was to have taken the rail on to its terminus at Echuca, where it meets the Murray, and there to have embarked on one of the steamers which ply on that river. On making inquiries, however, at Sandhurst, I found that this project was impracticable; at that time of the year, the boats were not running, there not being sufficient water in the river to float them. My first thought was, what to do in order to amuse myself. Strolling, then, outside my hotel, my eye is attracted to a large handbill posted up at Cobb & Co.'s office, who are the great coach-proprietors of Australia. The word 'Rush' is printed in large characters, and is the most prominent feature in the bill, which announces that a six-horse coach proceeds daily to 'the Spring Creek Rush, distant forty-five miles; fare seven shillings and sixpence; through in six hours.' I had no sooner digested the contents of the bill than my mind was made up to book myself by the very next morning's coach.

Meanwhile, I took a walk through Sandhurst. Sandhurst is a pretty good-sized town, with a population of about fifteen thousand inhabitants. Like most towns in Victoria, it is the product of a rush, which took place, I believe, in 1854; and it is calculated that at one time it could boast of between twenty thousand and thirty thousand inhabitants. It is just like any other Australian town. Very wide dusty streets, very imperfectly filled in on either side with buildings—plenty of slop stores—plenty of 'bars' and 'hotels'—great only in the size of the letters which proclaim their names; a public park with anything but green grass, or shady trees, or water in it; a theatre; and two newspapers. The town is laid out as though it were some day to be the metropolis of the world, and the ludicrously low buildings at the corner of the preposterously wide streets seem to proclaim what a farce the notion is, and look as though they were set down there for the sole purpose of keeping up the joke.

Next morning at 7 A.M. the coach came round, and the passengers who had been waiting at the corner of the street dashed at it to secure places. I contrived to obtain a seat behind the driver. The coach, which is best described as a sort of cross between an elongated English stage-coach and a continental *diligence*, was crowded, some half-dozen of the passengers finding their seats on the roof. We are off with as little delay as possible, and with as good a team of horses and as good a driver as you could wish to see—we are jolting and rocking over an Australian by-road, if road that can be called which is in reality little more than a space of ground, generally railed off on either side, and allotted to the passing backward and forward of vehicles. Such at least was our road, and on either side was the low scrub which originates the term 'bush,' with here and there a 'hotel' or a shanty. A line of telegraph is along the side of the road, and every now and then there is a homestead, and a little agricultural land. My travelling companions seem very quiet, in fact they have just the distant silent manners which distinguish our countrymen. Next me is a German, who is the first to talk; and in front is a Dane. Gradually the German and Dane get into conversation, and the one says that he has been many years in the colony and never seen any rush like this one (that is, the Spring Creek rush). 'It reminds one of the old days of 1851,' he says in his enthusiasm. We pass flocks of sheep and herds of goats, and some heavily laden carts and private conveyances, all bound for the same goal as ourselves. The goats,

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the German informs me, are an excellent speculation, for they require but little food, and will sell for from two pounds to two pounds ten shillings per head.

Our first change was at the township of Campaspe, seventeen miles out. We pulled up opposite the *Raglan Hotel*, a low brick building, with a bar and a side-room, built as though it were intended to be the corner of a street of houses. Opposite was the *Campaspe Hotel*, and there were a few little shanties in sight. These and one policeman make up, to all appearance, the township. We have one drunken miner, who gets down at every 'hotel' or shanty at which the coach stops, in order to have a drink. All those who have any experience of coach-travelling will have observed that there is always one drunken man on the coach—the source of diversion to some of the passengers, of annoyance to others, of anxiety to his friends, and of endless trouble to the driver. He always loses his hat, and the coach has to stop while he picks it up. He is never ready to get on the coach in proper time, and yet he is always provokingly present, or 'coming,' or to be heard of, and so there is never the faintest chance of getting rid of him. I never could make out about this one drunken man. Why is he always there?

At mid-day we arrived at a small town called M'Ivor, where we changed coaches, and, waiting for an hour, had a capital dinner at a comfortable and good hotel. Heathcote, as M'Ivor is more properly called, is thirty-two miles from Sandhurst, and is pleasantly situated with hills behind it. From this point we were despatched in two smaller coaches, and, leaving the enclosed straight road, we took to a 'bush-road,' which signifies, being interpreted, no road at all. The character of the 'bush' had materially altered; for now there were nothing but gum-trees, and there was almost an entire absence of underwood. These gum-trees are a very distinctive feature of Australian scenery. Bare, haggard-looking trees, with tall gray-and-white stems, and scant foliage, they look quite desolate as they stand up out of the parched ground—just as though they were on the point of dying for want of water. Driving four or six horses through the bush is no easy matter. It requires great determination and skill in the coachman. He has first to avoid one gum-tree, then another, and often he slips in between two trees, where there is just room for the axles to clear without touching either side. During this portion of the journey, I was inside, and we were all at first kept in a constant state of terror lest the rickety roof should fall in upon us; for there were three or four miners on the top of it, and it swayed about fearfully. I had here an opportunity of seeing more of my fellow-passengers. They proved to be an agreeable set of fellows, and there was an absence of rowdyism about them which was to my mind very remarkable. They were like sober-going English workmen. They chatted, and *chaffed* each other, and their talk was of this and that man, what he had done, and how, &c.; but there was not the swearing, or obscene language, or drunkenness I had expected. The dust was something frightful, nearly blinding one. We passed a township called Costerfield, where quartz mines are at work getting gold and antimony. We also passed numerous 'hotels' and shanties of all kinds, at some of which water was being sold (at twopence, I believe, per glass). At length, at about five o'clock, the first few shanties of the Rush became visible.

In a few minutes we passed a turn, and pulled up before the *Criterion Hotel*. There was the new town—a wide long straight street, with the oddest collection of little shanties and huts on either side of it. There were stores and 'hotels' without number—absurdly diminutive, and with absurdly large names stuck over them. The *Golden Age*, at which I put up, is a specimen. It is a little shanty of canvas and wood. A bar, and a slip off it, and a dining-room behind, make up the whole of the accommodation. Then there are 'concert-halls' and billiard-rooms. Over many of the buildings, flags are waving; and altogether, looking down the street, you have one of the quaintest scenes you can conceive. There are, it is computed, from ten thousand to twelve thousand people at the Rush, which is put down as being about nine weeks 'old;' that is, nine weeks since the *lead* of gold was established. The first coach to the Rush was started on November 25th. At that time there were not four hundred people there. A six-horse daily coach was started on the 2d December, which, for the last month, had been taking up from forty to fifty passengers a day. There is now also a coach running direct from Melbourne, and it is said that all the places on it have been booked for a fortnight to come. While the coaches to the Rush are loaded with passengers, but few return, which would seem to indicate that those at the new diggings do well. Fancy a town of ten thousand inhabitants springing up in ten weeks! And not an unimportant town either; for it can boast of its five banks and its newspaper. I think two have in fact been started. And the Melbourne *Argus* and *Age* have a branch-office there. And it has its 'valuable frontages' for sale, and 'eligible sites' for business. And gentlemen advertise for 'other gentlemen of capital to join' them 'in a remunerative undertaking.' There is of course a telegraph office and a post-office, and a police magistrate; but there is not as yet a paving and a lighting committee. So the 'street' consists of white sand overlaid with dust exactly four inches deep; and as you walk *through* it, you step even more noiselessly than through thin fresh-fallen snow. The huts and shanties are made, some of wood, with galvanised iron roofs, and some of bark; and there are some odd little bark tents, and there are some canvas tents, and some rough huts, made of branches of trees. The bark is taken from the gum-trees round, and seems hard and durable.

They understand well the laying-out of these towns in Australia; and everything is done on a system. As soon as a Rush is established, a government surveyor is sent down, and surveys for a street. Any person who takes out a business-licence, the cost of which is five pounds per annum, is 'entitled to an allotment of ground having a frontage of thirty-six feet, by a depth of one hundred and fifty feet.' He has then to pay the fee to the surveyor, and this makes up the total of his land expenses. As the place increases, these frontages become in some cases very valuable, and are sold and bought freely. Some uncertainty, however, always attaches as to the position of the main street; for the direction of the *lead* of gold

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may alter, and then the street will be sure to follow it.

The miner's rights are thus arranged: Any man who intends mining has to take out a miner's licence, which costs him five shillings. He can then peg out a space of ground of an extent fixed by the legislature. Two men are entitled to a space seventy feet square, where the sinking exceeds fifty feet, as it does at Spring Creek. There are certain regulations to insure the genuine working of the *claims*, in order to prevent their being taken up as mere speculations; for instance, the claim must 'be in full work within forty-eight hours of the time of marking,' or it is deemed an abandoned claim, 'and may be awarded by the warden to any other miner.'

Behind the street, I saw the different sinkings in full operation. The process is very simple. A shaft is sunk, about six feet long, and two or three wide. A simple windlass is set up, and one of the miners goes below, while the other tends the windlass above, drawing up the auriferous earth in a bucket. One of these miners informed me that he had been at the Rush for seven weeks, and had already sunk two shafts unsuccessfully. His present working was, however, proving productive. The utmost quantity of gold produced at the Rush was two ounces to a cartload of earth. One ounce was considered very good, and even half an ounce would pay for working. The chief cause of the expense of working at Spring Creek is owing to the want of water. My informant was paying nine shillings per cartload to the puddlers for carting the earth to the water where it is washed. The water was three miles off, and this, through the heavy sand, would be no trifling distance. Owing to this expense, and in hopes of a supply of water being eventually brought to the Rush, many of the miners were stacking their *wash-dirt*, as the earth is called. I was told that the very utmost two men could work in one day was one cartload of earth, and that gold was fetching three pounds eighteen shillings per ounce.

With the exception of water, which was selling at the rate of twopence a bucket, everything appeared to me to be tolerably cheap. Meat was at fourpence-halfpenny per pound, and bread at ninepence per quartern loaf. Slops were very cheap and plentiful. Notwithstanding the dearth of water, 'drinks' were at sixpence each; and I paid one shilling for each meal I had, which, although the fare was rough, cannot be considered to be extravagant. In fact, it appeared to me that trading had been if anything rather overdone. There seemed to be abundance of competition in every department.

The evening was very quiet. There was a 'Cheap John' selling wares of all kinds, and attracting a crowd around him, and apparently doing a good business while amusing the bystanders with his jokes. Next him was a man selling plums at three pounds for one shilling. Then there was an individual with a table before him, and a pen and ink upon it, and he was calling upon people to sign a petition to the government praying for the establishment of waterworks (water might easily be brought from the river Goulburn, eleven miles distant). 'Now then, gentlemen, sign for the water. Any one not signed for the water? Come along, gentlemen; come along.' Beyond, was a concert-hall, and I could hear an *artiste* singing at the top of her voice; but I could not see inside, for the place was crammed to suffocation, and a few people standing on the tubs outside just to get a peep in. I heard but little foul language, and did not see a single drunken man. There was at this Rush the same entire absence of rowdyism which I had noticed among the diggers coming up on the coach; and the fact that the whole town of twelve thousand people is kept in order by eleven policemen, seems to me to speak volumes for the good behaviour of the people. The demeanour, in fact, of the miners appeared to be that of steady sober-going men, working for their daily bread. How far this has been the case at other rushes, I have it not in my power to say; but I did hear one man observe that these were the quietest diggings he had ever been at. It suggests itself as a plausible hypothesis, that gold-mining in Australia has now been reduced to a sort of science, which was certainly far from being the case in the early days of Australian gold-discovery.

I slept, or rather made believe to sleep, that night on a table in the *Golden Age*, and was not, I own, sorry to get back the next day to the *Shamrock Hotel* at Sandhurst, to wash off the 'rush' dust in a hot bath, and to get a night's rest between clean sheets.

PATTER.

'PATTER' is a verb that has known better days. Chaucer used it to describe the rapid utterance of a speaker, who, 'rising with his subject,' as we say, jaculates a stream of words quick and sharp, as though his crowding thoughts made a rush for his mouth, and elbowed their way out helter-skelter. Now-a-days, the poor verb has come down very low—a poor outcast, turned literally into the street, nearly naked, and shorn of all its meaning. The monotonous drawl of the professional beggar—the glib talk by which the cheap Jack and the showman get their living on the highways, and the cries of the streets—patter is come down to mean only these. 'Clo—clo—O' clo!'—'One a penny, two for tuppence, all hot cross-buns.'

> If you 'll bring your rags untoe my oort,
> I 'll find the money to pay you for 't.

These are patter. The poor word wanders the streets now with its twin-brother—for those who patter with their mouths always patter the pavements on foot.

Saturday night in a country town is a great night for patterers, who pursue their (very literal) calling in the street. If every night were a Saturday night, the patterers, who depend on the voluntary system, would earn more money than many a stipendiary curate. The puzzle is, what becomes of them all the rest of the week, for they are gone from the streets as entirely as last year's flies, though certain as the latter in July to buzz into life again next Saturday.

Threading one's way through the crowd in a long lane of greasy streets, impeded by barrows of nuts and oranges, and stalls of itinerant venders of miscellaneous quackeries, all lit up with flaring paraffine lamps, that give a lurid air to the griminess, the voices of the patterers create an indiscriminate hum, like a great headache. Bit by bit,

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becoming accustomed to the hum, one can presently pick out the voices.

Here is a great hulking blind man—blind, that is, like Zobeidè's calenders, of one eye; the other eye strictly attending to business. His voice is harsh, nasal, and saw-like, as he twangs out, much as if it were the chorus to a comic song: 'Please to lay out a hapney with a poo-wer blind—with a poo-woo-er blind—with a poo-woo-woo—with a poo-wer blind.' His affliction has been so far 'profitable' as to enable him, by the sale of very bad bootlaces, to keep almost out of debt at the *Queen Mab* public-house, where he subsists, when he is at home, mostly on raw spirits.

Then the nutseller breaks in: 'Oh, my lord, here's nuts! only look at 'em! O lord, here's a shovelful for a hapney!'

Another blind man—with a tray of lardy cakes—a sleek and genial blind man, sings his patter to a drawling chant. It is this: 'Please to buy a nice hot cake of a poor Christian blind;' but the waggish boys having for years mocked his drawl, and transposed the words of his appeal, he humours them, and obtains patronage, by singing it wrong too: 'Please to buy a poor blind cake of a nice hot Christian;' and, 'Please to buy a nice Christian cake of a poor hot blind.' It sells his cakes.

The street-doctor always draws. The ready flippancy with which he delivers clinical lectures on anatomy, makes his hearers feel as though he had their insides at his finger-ends. 'There's not a lady or gentleman here present,' says he, 'but is probably in need of medical advice, if they only knew it. And how can ladies and gentlemen know it, if not acquainted with the internal structure of the human frame? And how can they be, unless they make it a study? You feel a shooting pain for an instant in your head, arms, or legs—it's gone—you take no notice—your biliary ducts may be stopped, your veins and arteries choked up with impurities like common sewers—and you go off like the snuff of a candle, all for want of not taking advice when you didn't want it, because it is too late when you do.—This young man'—taking a small boy from audience—'has in his system no less than twenty-seven miles of veins, arteries, nerves, ducts, muscles, fibres, and sinews, as depicted on the canvas to my right. I can see by his hi that his biliary ducts is stopped where I point to in the picture with my stick. He mayn't know it, but that yaller in the corner of the hi tells me in a moment.—Is his parents now present?' A woman in a shawl is shoved to the front.—'Now, mum, I don't tell it you to alarm you, but merely as a person who has got his reputation to keep and his bread to earn; look after that young man. I'm never deceived in what I sea. If you like to take a pennyworth of pills on my recommendation, I shan't be ashamed to see you next Saturday. Bees-wax and honey combined—ground ivy and dandelion root.'

There's the man who sells the wondrous grease-removing, stain-eradicator, in penny tablets, and who likes to get butcher-boys' collars and caps on which to display its wondrous powers. He has a tray-full of his penny cakes on a rickety stand, lighted by four tallow-candles, wrapped round with brown paper, to prevent their guttering in the wind. Notwithstanding he has cleaned some half-a-dozen collars and caps gratis, the small audience shew signs of shuffling away without purchasing. Gazing rather spitefully at his wasting candles, he makes one final but useless appeal to the people, and then says with determination: 'Now then, will you buy, or won't you? Because if you won't, just say so, *and I'll blow my lights out*—if I don't ——' And executing this fearful threat, he performs the happy dispatch to another and perhaps a better sphere of usefulness at the other end of the street.

My favourite patterer is a man with a face of sickly sallow brown, an immense comforter round his neck, and a long-tailed—I may say many-tailed—coat, for it is ragged. He is attended always by a fat baggy woman in a cloak. The man's voice is solemn and deep, the woman's, harsh and creaking, especially when she means it to be most persuasive to the public. They go about with a travelling galvanic battery, and administer artificial 'pins and needles' to the street public. The man mouths the long words with infinite relish as he describes, in a kind of cadence, the benefits he offers for a penny.

'This powerful little machine,' says he, 'entirely free from shock, is a sure cure for toothache, shortness of breath, gout, ague, rheumatism, nervous ability' (*sic*), 'and diseases of the digestive organs.' Then much quicker: 'Relieve the ed, clear the eyes, cause the blood t' circ'late in prop manner. Is there any other party would like to try the slow, mild, and pleasing sensation at won penny?'

When a patient is on the rack, he dilates on his sufferings, and enlarges on his agonies, by way of encouragement to the rest of the public. It is also to be noticed, that if the patient is a boy of ten years old, he describes him to the public as 'the young man;' but if a boy of fourteen, he refers to him as 'the gentleman.'

'The gentleman will take notice' (or 'the young man,' as it may be) 'that the signal for stopping the power of this beautiful little machine is given by the word "Woe!" The gentleman will remember, that at the word "Woe!" the wole of it will be immediately stopped.' (Aside to boy): 'Now you young stoopid, don't you go a-letting go the handles when you've had enough of it, but just say "Woe!" Do you understand?—Very well, then; lay hold.' (Aloud to the public): 'The slow, mild, and pleasing sensation is now passing through the gentleman's system at a pressure of ten degrees, giving the greatest of satisfaction' (turns the button). 'The gentleman is now enjoying the electric fluid at a power of *twenty* degrees—now of THIRTY' (the gentleman is holding his breath with the 'enjoyment,' his teeth clenched, and his eyes staring wildly)—'now of FORTY' (the gentleman's hands clutch the handles very tight, and tremble up and down with the slow, mild, and pleasing sensation, while his feet dance under him). 'The gentleman is now going to enjoy the full power of this invigorative little machine.—Remember the word "Woe!" sir.' But with woe unutterable depicted on his face—with 'Woe!' screeched from a mouth formerly paralysed by pain, and now suddenly opened in panic, the boy drops the handles, and the 'wole' of it is immediately stopped.

Very often, two 'gentlemen' or 'young men' partake together of the 'slow, mild, and pleasing sensation,' under agreement that the one who first cries 'Woe!' is to pay for the woes of both.

The last time I saw the travelling shock-

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merchant, he was assuring a poor drabbled woman, in answer to her inquiry, that his machine was invaluable as a curative for headaches 'when people had been out on the loose.' So she fetched her husband, and treated him to a pennyworth. He bore it meekly, with a resigned and somewhat sodden aspect. When it was over, he said he thought it had done him good; and he went and had twopenny-worth of gin.

ROBERT'S CAPITAL HIT.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

'ABOUT a gold mine, Robert!' I said. 'I don't think I like the idea much. Of course, I am very ignorant about things of the sort; but it *does* seem to me that if there's anything good in the way of gold mines going, it would not be likely to come your way. I hardly think you are what you and Mr Shaw call "big" enough for that kind of thing. Are you, Robert?'

I said it timidly, for this was one of the few points on which it was rather easy to vex Robert, and I did not like vexing him on any. He took it very well, however, and gave my arm an affectionate little squeeze, which was very reassuring, as far as convincing me that he was not annoyed with me went, but which also made me feel that he was what his mother called 'new-fangled' with the scheme, and that I should not find him easy to be persuaded.

'Not in the ordinary way, my dear, certainly,' he answered. 'You are quite right in supposing that really good things of this kind are not thrown in the way of little fish; but this is quite a special thing, and my having a chance of getting a pull out of it is entirely due to Wainwright.'

'Who's Wainwright?' said I.

'Why, don't you know? John's brother-in-law, or, rather, John's sister-in-law's husband.'

'Yes, yes. I remember now. But is he a safe person to have anything to do with, Robert? John and Mrs John don't seem to like him.'

'Did you ever know them seem to like anybody who was not prosperous and important? Did you ever hear John or his wife speak well of anybody who was so unlucky as to have been obliged at any time to ask them to do him a favour? Not that Wainwright ever wanted or got anything from John; but that Mary Anne's first husband, who married her, as Wainwright married her sister, without a sixpence, and was a jolly good-natured fellow, "stood to" Wainwright when he had very hard lines of it; and Mary Anne looks upon every shilling given, lent to, or expended upon any other person, as a direct injury to her. I believe there was some jealousy at the bottom of all this. I believe she took it into her head that poor Williams thought he had married the wrong sister, and Wainwright the right one, and the notion did not improve her temper.'

'I can't wonder at that,' I said, for the *esprit de corps* was aroused in me, and I could think it rather hard, even on Mrs John, that her sister should be preferred to her. 'I don't blame her for being angry at such a thing as that—any woman would be, and ought to be, that's more.'

'Don't be vehement,' said Robert laughing, 'though it's decidedly becoming; and let's take a turn on the common. We need not go in yet; I want to tell you about this. It was all nonsense, all temper on Mary Anne's part; poor Williams had no such stuff in his thoughts; he restricted himself dutifully to making money, and keeping the peace with his wife. But Mary Anne can't bear Wainwright—though it was through him she first knew John—and she snubs him, and neglects her sister. However, Wainwright and I have become great friends lately, and he has got a good deal of business to do for Dorrison, the contractor, speculator—I hardly know what to call him.'

'You mean the man who seems to be a director of everything—extract of meat and patent stoves, ships' signals and tasteless medicines, street railways, humane chimney-sweeping, and gas that does not cost anything, and is warranted not to consume the air or smoke the ceiling.'

'You seem to have followed Mr Dorrison's career pretty closely, Martha. Yes, that's the man. He is wonderfully clever; but his luck surprises me more than his ability. He goes at all sorts of things, and they all succeed, at least as long as he has anything to do with them. Wainwright has tacked himself on to Dorrison's skirts; and though it was rather risky, it has turned out pretty well. There are very pretty pickings for a solicitor with nothing surprising in the way of practice, in the desultory business of a man of that kind. Wainwright is a very good fellow, has a great regard for me, and is inclined to help me, besides, as I believe, because John snubs us both.'

'And how is he helping you in this matter of the gold mine?'

'Thus,' he replied. 'The gold mine in question, which has a very big name, no less than Campo de los Angelos, belongs to an eccentric sort of fellow, a man called Disney, who has seen life enough to fill a century, and gone through adventures enough to stock a circulating library. He is a very queer fellow, quite a character, and, I daresay, anything but a good one—not in the least a gentleman; sometimes with heaps of money, which he spends with absurd recklessness; sometimes in great straits, or, as he elegantly calls it, "up a tree." He was in this last condition when Dorrison got hold of him, through Wainwright, and discovered that the embarrassed Californian was the possessor of the gold mine of Campo de los Angelos, but had mortgaged it, and mismanaged it in all sorts of ways—had, in fact, "bedevilled it," as people say of things which are brought into a mess by pure human stupidity. Thereupon Dorrison proposed to buy the mine, on very advantageous terms for himself, to get up a company to work it, and to free Disney from his present embarrassments. He has been living about in Paris, and Naples, and London, and now he wants to get off to New York, but cannot, for want of money, and so Dorrison has got hold of him. There's no doubt about the value of the mine; and I am convinced it will be a splendid thing; and Wainwright is going to give me a capital chance with it.'

'In what way?' I asked. I confess, I felt very uneasy; and I suppose that feeling made itself audible in the tone of my voice.

'Now, I know you are frightened, little woman,' said Robert kindly, and giving my arm another squeeze, so apparent, that two schoolboys, who were passing by, grinned expressively at one another, indicating derisively that they considered us as 'keeping company.' 'But there's nothing to

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be afraid of. I have never had such a chance as this one. Wainwright has introduced me to Mr Dorrison; he is a curt business-like man, with rather bad manners, but straightforward enough. And I rather think he has taken to me.'

'I should think so, indeed!' I remarked parenthetically.

'He cannot spare Wainwright to look after this affair, there is so much on hand just now in London, and he wants to settle it with Disney as far as he can on the quiet—there are some men, in Dorrison's own line, who would try to cut him out, if they knew how hard up Disney is—and he is going to send me to Paris, to look into the state of his affairs there, ascertain what his debts really are, make the best arrangement I can with his creditors, and get him to conclude the sale of the mine off-hand. Disney's house and furniture in London have just been sold, and his creditors here are getting savage. Wainwright will buy up the debts here, and I hope to do the same in Paris.'

Robert was so much elated, that I do not think he remembered what unpleasant news it was to me that he was going away, to leave me with his mother, in suspense and anxiety. I did not remind him of that aspect of the matter, however. But I did say: 'I cannot think it quite a right thing, Robert, to speculate on the folly and embarrassments of people. If this Mr Disney wasn't in money troubles, Mr Dorrison would have to pay much more for the mine than he will now have to pay. Don't I understand you so?'

'Precisely,' said Robert; 'but it is all quite fair, notwithstanding. I don't deny that it seems hard, but that's all in the way of business. Disney wants to get rid of the mine—must get rid of it, in fact, as the only way out of his difficulties—and it suits Dorrison to buy it at the price; it wouldn't, if it were dearer. Now, if I can manage the affair well, I shall be handsomely paid, and shall have secured Dorrison's interest for the future, to say nothing of my chance when he brings out the company.'

'The company? What company?'

'Why, the Mining Company, to be sure. He will do the thing on a grand scale; and, rely upon it, shares in the Los Angelos Mine will be very hard to get, very soon.'

'But you will get some?' I asked in a tone which, I was conscious, was not jubilant.

'O yes; that is part of the bargain; and, Martha, if it turns out very well, it would be a splendid investment for that five hundred pounds!'

'No, Robert!' I said vehemently. 'You promised me you would not touch that. When we had to give up our house and everything, you promised me you would leave that money in John Hackett's hands, and that no one but myself should draw it out. You told me you would leave it entirely out of account in any plans for the future, that I should have the security of feeling that that money was always there, and so we could not come to very signal grief.'

'It seems to me,' said Robert, 'that you are rather given to expecting that we shall come to signal grief.' He said it, smiling at me, and with the utmost good humour, so that I felt a little ashamed of myself. 'But, if you don't like it, and you feel so strongly about it as all this, the money shall not be touched. I will not ask you to rely on my judgment again, until I have had the chance of proving to you that it is reliable.—But now, about my going to Paris? You won't mind it much, will you, darling?'

'Certainly, I shall not mind it. I know you will not be away longer than you need; and I shall be quite satisfied to make the best of it, if it is to be.'

It may seem very surprising and foolish that we should have regarded a journey to Paris as a matter of any importance, but we were quiet, unfashionable people, perhaps even behind *our* time, which was ten years (which is a century) behind this present epoch, at which Robert and I have just executed a European tour with perfect composure and satisfaction. After we had talked a little more, and Robert had told me he was to have his final instructions on the following day, and to start on the third, we went homewards. My mother-in-law was not so unpleasant, I thought, as she had been all day. Best-parlour parade being over, we dined in the ordinary sitting-room, and she did not contradict or sniff so much as usual. She did indeed announce an impending visit to Mrs John, which was rather dreadful, and for the day of Robert's departure also; but I did not mind it. I was thinking about the gold mine, and Mr Disney, and what queer things 'business' and speculation were, and how strange it was that women should ever really wish to be practically mixed up in such affairs—of how much nicer it was to stay at home comfortably, and be taken care of, and just have enough money to settle all the books every week, and to feel perfect composure at the advent of the tax collectors and landlord's agent, together with other thoughts of a like commonplace, feminine, and unambitious character.

My mother-in-law took the announcement of Robert's intended journey tolerably well, for her. 'Legal business' was a legitimate, if not an expansive explanation of its object; and when she had expressed disapproving astonishment that English lawyers should not find business enough in their own Christian country, and her conviction that no good ever came out of meddling with foreigners—ideas on which Robert offered no comment—she relinquished the subject.

'The great point,' Robert repeated, after he had talked about Mr Disney and Los Angelos as long as he could keep his eyes open, 'is to get the start of every one else. We have it so far; but a chance like this cannot long be kept quiet; and I understand Disney is just the kind of man to blab about his affairs to everybody. It is a good thing he is not in London, or Dorrison's offer would be known all over town, and there would be scores ready to outbid him.'

'Would Mr Disney sell the mine at all to Mr Dorrison, or to anybody, if he were not in difficulties?' I asked.

'To be sure he would. Don't make yourself unhappy with the notion that we are taking advantage of the miseries of a fellow-creature in distress, to get valuable property out of him at an alarming sacrifice—it is nothing of the kind. Disney is one of those reckless, wild, semi-savage, reckless, irrational fellows who seem to be a peculiar product of this age, but perhaps have existed before it, who never keep to anything, and are no sooner embarked in a project, than they want to throw it up, and go into something else. Disney would have been safe to sell the mine at anytime, only

Dorrison would probably not have bought it, and I should never have had this chance.—Have you any further scruples, Martha?'

'Certainly not,' I replied. And, indeed, I had not. I never really suspected that Robert would lend himself to any transaction in the least of an equivocal nature, but I was glad to have it explained to me. It is to be hoped all women are not so stupid and so timid about things of the kind as I am. How I longed to say to Robert that I wished he could get a certain sum for his services, in this matter of the gold mine, a nice sum, to be paid regularly in instalments, the first instalment at once! I always wanted everything to be a certainty, and to be paid at once! I never had any opinion of shares; I had never known them to do anything but go down, just when it was most desirable that they should go up. But I did not venture to say what I felt on this occasion.

About that sum of five hundred pounds which had been alluded to in the course of Robert's confidences to me, I had better be explicit in this place. I have already said that I had had a very small fortune to bring to Robert when he married me, and that he had been unfortunate in the uses to which he had put it. Our marriage had been an unceremonious affair, truth to tell, a very self-willed affair, into the particulars of which I do not choose to enter, because there are eyes in the head of a certain exceedingly precious little individual, very bright, beautiful blue eyes, which may rest upon this simple narrative, and which I should not wish to meet with the record. Not that anything self-willed, disobedient, ever so slightly mutinous or froward, is to be apprehended from the possessor of those bright blue eyes; oh, dear me, are not our children paragons of all perfection, flagrant examples of the avoidance of every pit into which the feet of their parents have stumbled! Nevertheless, I am not going to set down in black and white how Robert and I married without settlements, because I don't intend that any young persons in whose matrimonial prospects I may hereafter have an interest shall do likewise. There are very few Robert Herons going, in this day, to the best of my knowledge and belief. That five hundred pounds, however, had nothing to do with the little fortune I brought Robert, and which he disposed of, to the best of his judgment, but unfortunately, owing to the odious wickedness of the unprincipled people who misrepresented things to him so infamously. This money was a legacy, left me a short time after my marriage, and when we were already in money troubles, by my Uncle Nicholas, my mother's only brother. He did not bequeath to Gerty any legacy; Uncle Nicholas knew about her engagement to the lieutenant of marines, and highly disapproved of it. He did not know that Robert was in pecuniary difficulties, or I do not think he would have left me the five hundred pounds, for he liked moderately prosperous people, and had an honest good-humoured scorn for those who did not 'get on,' in his sense of the word. By the time this money came to me, I was thoroughly frightened, and we had made up our minds that our house must be given up, and the Clapham arrangement entered into. And here I wish to record that Robert had not the least notion of what it cost me to agree to and carry through that arrangement, and that I do not believe any man ever does or can realise the sufferings of women in such matters. The money was not enough to get us out of our difficulties, and yet it was enough to tranquillise my fears, and give us a feeling of help at need, of a stay in the background. Robert left the money in the hands of Mr John Hackett, an old friend of my father's, and explained to him that it was to be kept in trust for me, and considered exclusively mine. 'As much your own as if you had not married me without a settlement,' Robert said smiling; and I felt very much relieved by the arrangement, and very happy about it.

Nothing that had passed about the gold mine made me understand so fully how much Robert's mind was running upon it, and the confidence and ardour with which he had taken it up, as his allusion to this five hundred pounds, his hinting at its employment in the enterprise. I was glad he had abandoned the idea, though I certainly regretted having spoken so sharply about it. He went off into the City the following morning in very good spirits; and I made the few preparations necessary for his journey as cheerfully as I could, under the grim and gloomy superintendence of my mother-in-law, who was not, I could not help thinking, altogether free from a suspicion that there might be a little pleasure in addition to 'business' at the bottom of this trip of Robert's. Thinking this, I ventured to say I hoped Robert would have time to see something of Paris, would, in short, enjoy himself as much as possible. But she did not like that view of the case. Business was business, and pleasure was pleasure, and for her part she did not 'hold with' any Christian Englishman's amusing himself in foreign parts, away from his wife. I will do my mother-in-law the justice to say she stood up for the rights and privileges of women, and was a stanch stickler for the domesticities.

In the evening, I went to meet Robert as usual. The weather was beautiful; the trees in full leaf; a light shower had newly sprinkled the roads, allayed the dust, and brought out all the early summer fragrance. I had often heard how beautiful Paris is in May, and was very glad Robert was to see the fair city. He was, as usual, punctual; and, as usual, we walked away together. All was right: he had had a final interview with Mr Dorrison; had received full instructions, and was sanguine as to the result of the negotiations he was empowered to carry out.

'Disney is a very troublesome fellow, I am sure,' he said. 'I expect to have much trouble in bringing him to the point. People say you never get quite the truth out of any man about his debts, and I suppose he is no exception. He is eccentric too; crotchety and slippery to the last degree. And Dorrison seems to think we shall be very lucky if we do not find him coquetting with us, and then, at the last moment, throwing us over for somebody else.'

'But I thought you said nobody but Mr Dorrison was moving in this business?'

'Nor is any one, to our positive knowledge; but Dorrison thinks, from the shifty tone of Disney's letters, and certain other indications which have come under his observation, that there *is* a party in communication with Disney—no other than that queer old fellow Sloane, who lives at Sydenham, and whom we have met two or three times at John's.'

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'I remember—the deaf man who mutters to himself, and screams at every one else. Is *he* a speculator?'

'Yes; and a successful one, or we should not have met him at John's. If this is the case, he has probably had a hint from Mrs John, who has, I suppose, found out, from some incautiousness of Wainwright's, what game was on the cards. I have often wondered at Wainwright's telling John and his wife about his business as he does, when he must know they do nothing but sneer at him.'

'But,' I said, 'I think that is the very reason. Mr Wainwright is a weak sort of man, who cannot bear to be sneered at, even by people whose contempt ought not to be esteemed an important misfortune; and as he knows they regard him as an idle, loafing sort of person, simply because he is not rich, he is not unnaturally, considering he *is* weak, glad to make the most of any moderately profitable business he may have to do.'

'Very likely you are right; but if so, his weakness may do mischief. At all events, it cannot be helped now, and I have not time to find out anything about it. I hope I shall not find any one in the field; but if I do, I must only outbid him, if the game be worth the candle.'

'What is your first move to be?'

'To find Disney—we have two addresses, and he's sure to be comeatable at either—and to state to the best advantage Dorrison's terms. He will clear off Disney's liabilities, give him a certain sum down, so as to start him off to New York, and agree for the payment of the purchase-money at certain dates, provided the reports which shall be made by the persons whom Dorrison will send out to inspect the Campo de los Angelos be quite satisfactory.'

'But if they are not, what becomes of all the money Mr Dorrison will have paid? Mr Disney is not likely to give it back; and if he does not buy the mine in the long-run, it will all have been spent for nothing.'

'My dear Martha,' said Robert, 'that little calculation of yours is remarkably feminine, and exceedingly wise. But the essence of speculation, and indeed of more regular business, more amenable to routine, is, that you must make up your mind to throw out sprats, if you would catch whales. Nothing venture, nothing have. If the mine of Campo de los Angelos is what Dorrison believes it to be, he will never have made a better investment in his life than the money it will have cost him to do the thing quietly, keeping it away from public competition; and if it does not, why, such small losses are all in the day's work of a man like him.'

'But, if the mine does not turn out as well as Mr Dorrison expects, what about *you*? Of course, I cannot but think chiefly of *you*, Robert. In that case, all your trouble, and your journey to Paris, and going away from me, and—and—everything, will be all no use, won't it? And what does Mr Shaw say to it?'

'Oh, never mind him. Shaw is a very good fellow, and thinks, with reason, that his best place is at the office, looking after the odd six-and-eightpences—very odd they have been up to this time, I am sorry to say. He does not want to interfere in anything of this kind. And as for me, it cannot be a loss to me, for I shall have all my expenses and a liberal fee from Dorrison, if nothing comes of it; and if it turns out well, I shall have made a capital hit.'

Something certain was to come of it, then, at anyrate. This explicit statement elicited from Robert, my spirits rose. I did not tell him so. I felt I *must* provoke him, however long-suffering he might be, by such an avowal; but in my heart I thought a great deal more of the liberal fee, which was a certainty, than of the capital hit which 'might' be made.

Robert went off on his journey the next morning; and after our early dinner, my mother-in-law departed, in the lop-sided brougham—the horse looking more than ever repulsive, in consequence of his having rubbed some hair off his tail, thereby establishing a bare patch to match that on his side; and the coachman more than usually sullen and odious. The day was beautiful, however; and as we lumbered heavily along, I enjoyed the summer weather, followed Robert mentally on his way, and felt extremely glad that one of Mrs Heron's peculiarities was a dislike to talking in a carriage. The visit was not more than ordinarily tedious. Robert's trip to Paris was of course commented upon, and loftily pronounced by Mrs John to be 'very much calculated to unsettle a young professional man;' as if Robert were a naturally dissipated and unprincipled person—not to be trusted away from the wholesome restraints of office-hours and Clapham evenings. But she charitably hoped Robert had made a profitable business connection, as he was employed by a person who required him to go 'abroad' in his service. I replied that I hoped so, that I believed Robert expected it would prove so, but said generally as little as possible—a line of tactics, on my part, which did not please Mrs John, who was insatiably curious, but induced her to remark, spitefully, that it was evident Robert adhered to the masculine belief that women were not to be trusted with business matters, and to the masculine practice of keeping his affairs to himself. I did not contend the point with her. If she chose to regard me in the light of a victim—esteemed unworthy of my husband's confidence, in consequence of the inferiority of my understanding—she might do so. I was perfectly satisfied with knowing better, and knowing also that nothing was less satisfactory to Mrs John than my imperturbable calmness on such occasions. It was rather hard on John that I declined to lose my temper, for Mrs John always lorded it over him frightfully, when she was more or less defeated in her little manœuvres; and he not unfrequently had a bad time of it when my mother-in-law and I had been to Acanthus Lodge, Kingston-on-Thames.

I did not expect to hear from Robert for two days, and I expected that his first letter would contain little more than the announcement of his arrival at Paris. In order to make things as little unpleasant for me as possible, he had promised to write such letters as I could shew to his mother, and to put all the private intelligence about the 'little bit of a venture' on a separate sheet. The first letter came, and merely announced his arrival, and that he had put himself in communication with the person with whom his client's business was to be transacted. This letter had no enclosure, and its vagueness made no impression upon my mother-in-law. It was quite in keeping with Mrs John's theory respecting the degree of confidence

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in matters of business of which I was held by Robert to be intellectually worthy. But the third envelope had a tiny sheet of very thin paper, closely covered with writing, inside the ostensible contents; and I escaped as soon as I could from the breakfast-table to my own room, to peruse this document in peace.

I had not read six lines of it before I saw that Robert was disheartened. He had found Mr Disney more unmanageable, more flighty, more unreasonable than he had expected. He could not get him to settle anything definitely—he would, and he would not. He acknowledged that he must sell the mine, but it had been so badly managed as to have decreased seriously in value, and that he had been going on in so reckless a fashion that he could not hope to set his affairs right at any less cost than the immediate sale.

'All this,' Robert wrote, 'I have told Dorrison, who, by the way, has gone off to Scotland about some tremendously weighty undertaking in iron ship-building in the Clyde—and also that I am sure, from Disney's manner, that some one else has got hold of him, and he is shuffling in this way in order to see which of the two offers is the better. I have very little of the detective faculty, but I have scented so much, at all events; and I strongly suspect that when he kept me waiting an hour for him yesterday at one of his two addresses, he was seeing somebody else on similar business at the other. He is a reckless being, but at the same time slippery and uncertain. However, Wainwright knows all about his liabilities in London, and I am getting to know about them here; and if we can arrange them on decent terms, and get him to take a reasonable sum, and sign the agreement for the sale, all will be well. By one of those accidents, which I daresay are not so very uncommon, if one only knew, I met yesterday, as he stood staring up in wonder at the demolitions and reconstructions here, which are sufficiently astounding to strangers already, but are, they say, the merest faint outline of what is to be done in that way—our old acquaintance Thaddeus Flynn. Don't you remember his being at our wedding, and going to California immediately afterwards? Well, he made a fortune there, and he seems inclined to spend a fair share of it in Paris; than which there is no more convenient sphere for such an operation. The bearing of these particulars is, that Flynn is able to give me important information about the mine of Campo de los Angelos. He knows it well, says it is of immense value, and needs only honest and intelligent management to be a splendid concern—a 'safe fortune,' says Flynn, to every one concerned in it. With this additional motive for believing in my purpose, it is not a little vexatious to be balked and puzzled by Disney's queer, unsatisfactory, shuffling ways, and to feel sure that some one is countermining me. I must have patience and prudence, I suppose, but I confess I am rather tired of this uncertainty already. I am to see him this afternoon, and will report progress. I am quite sure that there is some one in the field, whose tactics are of the same nature as ours, and I am almost sure that some one has got at his information through an inadvertence of Wainwright's.'

Robert's letter worried me a good deal. I found I had been cherishing much more hope in this case than I usually felt in anything speculative. I hated the idea of his being disappointed, after all his toil and anxiety, and was not adequately consoled by the remembrance of the certainly liberal fee, and the presumably valuable connection. I was very dull all day; I could not rouse myself; I could not try to be companionable with my mother-in-law; and when the evening post brought an announcement from Mrs John, that she intended to honour us with her company on the following day, and would have the pleasure of bringing her 'two toddles,' who were two extremely odious spoiled children, to see their dear grandmamma, but begged we would not 'put ourselves out,' or introduce unwholesome pastry at tea—then I felt I could not endure it; I must get away, I must bear the next day's anxiety somewhere away from Clapham.

'I 'm sorry I shall not be able to see Mrs John, ma'am,' I said, when my mother-in-law had read out the note; 'but I am going to Sydenham to-morrow, to see my cousin, Miss Eccles.'

'Indeed!' said Mrs Heron, with a perfect performance of the sniff condemnatory. 'I wonder you did not mention the engagement before. But, I daresay, Mrs John will not mind.'

I felt quite sure she would not, and that the two ladies would have a comfortable talk over me during my absence, so I did not make any apology. The next morning, the weather being still serenely beautiful, I set off, in a chocolate-coloured omnibus, to perform the first stage of my journey to London Bridge, from whence alone, in those days, Sydenham was attainable by railway.

LIQUID FUEL.

At a time when we are threatened with the exhaustion of our coal-fields, and just as the Admiralty is at its wits' end to produce a ship of moderate dimensions capable of continuing under steam for several days together, we are offered a new fuel, in the shape of a liquid which, weight for weight, is said to be nearly three times as efficient as coal. This liquid, or rather semi-fluid oil, is a refuse product arising from the distillation of either tar, shale, coal, or petroleum. It is one of the hydrocarbons—those bodies which are, as a rule, agreeable neither to sight, taste, nor smell, but from which the chemist, with his magic power, extracts the most beautiful colours, the most delicious flavours, and the most fragrant perfumes. Their history may be said to form one of the fairy tales of science; and after having greatly enlarged our conception of the laws governing chemical phenomena, they now appear likely to cause a complete revolution in steam-navigation.

Although it is the discovery of mineral oil in America which has of late years directed public attention towards the employment of petroleum products as fuel, their existence and characteristics have been known for ages, and they are to be found scattered over the whole of the habitable world. As already stated, the particular substance now proposed to be utilised is derivable from coal itself; and there need not, therefore, be wasted in future a single ton of that 'slack,' or small coal, which at present lies heaped around the mouths

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of our coal-pits, and which is even sometimes set on fire, and suffered to burn, in order that it may be got rid of. Whether the liquid in question be derived from coal or from oil, the two processes of preparing it are almost identical. The crude mineral oil and the first product obtained by distilling coal, have the same dark colour and thick consistence. This dark thick liquid is subjected to a distillation which causes it to give off, first of all, an extremely volatile spirit, known as mineral naphtha or turpentine. Continuing the operation, a light oil, suitable for burning in lamps, is next obtained. Several other oils follow in succession, each increasing in specific gravity, until at length there is left in the retort a heavy substance, thick as tar, which requires a very high temperature to vaporise it. This substance is known as 'creosote,' and under various other names; and the advantage of using it as fuel was first pointed out by Captain Selwyn, R.N., and Mr C. J. Richardson, who, in 1865, read papers on the subject before the Royal United Service Institution. Since that time, many improvements have of course been made, both in the fuel itself and in the mode of burning it. The arrangements now generally adopted are the simplest possible, no alteration being required either in the furnace or boiler, so that in the same furnace coal or liquid fuel can be used at will. A hole is made in the front of the furnace, and in this is inserted an injector, formed of two cones, one inside the other, the inner one containing the creosote, and the outer one steam, which acts as a blast, and causes the fuel to enter the furnace in a fine spray. When once set in operation, the boiler is ready to work day and night, as long as the supply of creosote lasts, the only attention required being, to so regulate the admission of fuel and steam as to make the combustion as perfect as possible. There is no smoke produced or unburned carbon deposited, and but little flame or light to be seen, except a faint blue glow of carbonic oxide pervading the furnace.

In burning coal, about twelve pounds of air must be supplied to the furnace for each pound of fuel consumed; but in common practice this cannot be done, and consequently the amount of coal used is greatly in excess of what can be utilised. The result is that a large proportion of the valuable hydrocarbons and gas goes off in the form of smoke, while a considerable amount of heat is wasted, owing to the temperature in the chimney never being less than 600° Fahr. It has been estimated that out of every five tons of coal put on board our steam-ships, one ton at least is lost, either going up the funnel as black smoke, dropping through the bars into the ash-pit as ashes and small coal, or lodging in the tubes and flues as soot. On the other hand, liquid fuel leaves no ashes, requires no stoking, and, if properly burned, is altogether smokeless; while by means of cocks fitted to the injector, it is completely under control.

From experiments made at Woolwich and elsewhere, it appears that one ton of creosote equals in evaporative effect from two to three tons of good coal; so that by adopting it, the steaming powers of any vessel would be considerably increased, in addition to the saving effected by fewer stokers being required. The importance to ships of war of being able to keep at sea for weeks without replenishing their stock of fuel, is too obvious to need pointing out; while in the case of merchant vessels, every ton less of fuel that they have to carry is not merely so much dead-load saved, but its place can be occupied by cargo, thus adding enormously to the profits of a trip. Owing to several explosions having occurred with petroleum oils, it has been stated that to use liquid fuel on board a ship would be to imperil her safety, but this objection can only apply to the lighter kinds of oil. The substance which it is proposed to burn requires to be raised to a temperature of 600° Fahr. before it becomes explosive, and being heavier than sea-water, it could at once be extinguished, if it should catch fire. The price of creosote is at present less than that of coal, but of course, as its advantages come to be recognised, this will increase, though probably not out of proportion to its superiority as a fuel.

The experiments at Woolwich, to which reference has been made, have taken place under the superintendence of Captain Selwyn, to whom the public are much indebted for his disinterested exertions to perfect the practical application of liquid fuel. The first set were made with a boiler belonging to a small steam-launch, and terminated in ample proof being given that they had not been unwisely undertaken by the Admiralty at the request of the chief constructor of the navy. Further experiments have since been made in a marine tubular boiler similar to those fitted in the *Oberon*, and with very satisfactory results. In both cases, the fuel was burned by means of an injector, as previously described. By this method, which is known as the 'Aydon' process, an evaporative effect has been obtained frequently nearly equal, and in some cases exceeding the greatest theoretically possible. This latter result is said to be due to the decomposition of the steam employed, a phenomenon not taken into consideration in the theoretical investigation. Another plan by which the fuel is first converted into gas, and then burned as it issues from a number of apertures in a coil of iron pipe, has been patented by Messrs Dorsett and Blyth, and is being used at Woolwich in a boiler-plate furnace. A similar arrangement has been adopted at Chatham dockyard for heating the 6-inch armour-plates of the *Sultan;* and instead of seven or eight hours being required, as with coal, the plates are found to be in a condition for bending after the lapse of an hour and a half. Owing to this and to the absence of those noxious matters so frequently found in combination with coal, the estimated saving amounts to something like ten shillings per ton of metal treated. Several manufacturers have adopted liquid fuel, and are now

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reaping the benefit of their foresight in the economy effected. The subject is certainly one which demands careful consideration; and if the results stated to have been arrived at are correct, a new era is opened out not only for steam-navigation, but for every mechanical process in which coal is at present employed.

A COUNTY FAMILY.

CHAPTER XXI.—SNAKES IN THE CROQUET-GROUND.

IMAGINE the feelings of domestic circles resident in the Zoological Gardens upon an occasion of one of the Carnivora being let loose, by way of experiment, and permitted to perambulate the grounds like any biped visitors, and you have a very tolerable idea of the apprehensions excited in the Blackburn family by the advent of Mr William. Perhaps we should even have put it stronger. Imagine the feelings of the aforesaid circles after nightfall! Philosophical persons interested in natural history (but dwelling at some distance from the Regent's Park) would in vain protest that there was no real danger—that long confinement and abstinence from old habits of rapine would render the creature harmless. The keepers and their families, who know him best, would have a very different opinion. Perhaps, however, his own particular keeper, though agreeing with his brethren in a general way, would make an exception in this case, just as any Englishman in the Indian army thought that *his* regiment—*his* sepoys—would be true and merciful, though every other became wild-cats. The parallel between Mr W. B. and the loose beast in question would then be complete, since Mrs Blackburn was such a keeper.

Mr Waller, too, who, among other admirable qualities, enjoyed the faculty of persuading himself that everything would turn out as he wanted it to do, had considerable confidence that by tender and yet judicious treatment this poor animal, so long accustomed to the jungle, and perhaps even to human flesh, might be reclaimed—nay, rendered docile, just as was the lion in the poem, by some Una. Mr Stanhope had no such expectation, but possessed that confidence in its good behaviour (at all events towards himself) which is inspired by the possession of a pocket life-preserver heavily loaded. Lucy, for her part, regarded the creature with loathing rather than fear; but Ellen, who had more experience of its nature, feared both for herself and others, and yet could be hardly said to loathe. She had a kind and simple heart, which found it difficult, as all such do, to judge one so nearly allied to her by the same standard which she would have applied to a stranger; a weakness pardonable enough, and yet one which has more to answer for in the encouragement of offensive persons than any other human frailty.

As for Anthony Blackburn, this unlooked-for advent of his unchanged son had been a blow from which he had but just strength to rally, or perhaps even only to appear to rally. He was not one whit afraid of him, but he did not feel himself competent to cope with him alone. He was well pleased, therefore, to have Mr Waller for his guest just now; and if it was not for the same reason that he had invited Mr Stanhope to stay at the Manor-house, it was because for that he had a still stronger motive. A union between this young man and Ellen, to which he had always been favourable, had become now not only desirable in the Squire's eyes, but absolutely imperative. If Stanhope wanted money, as he had heard, then so much the better, since it would make him the more eager, and the less likely to regard impediments. And yet, what a monstrous one was this which had thus unexpectedly arisen, and was certain every day to exhibit some new objectionable feature! Even on this account, not a day was to be lost in throwing these young people together as much as possible; and besides, there was the danger of William's disgrace—the punishment as infamous as the crime — becoming known, and blasting all Ellen's future. Sooner or later, that dread secret was almost sure to ooze out, even if this good-for-nought should not some day, over his cups, himself proclaim his shame; and then how hopeless would it be for any slip of the House of Blackburn to take root in native soil, or be grafted on a neighbour tree!

If William Blackburn had begun his new life as he intended to go on with it, it was indeed a gloomy outlook. His interview with Stanhope had, it is true, counteracted the effect of the wine he had tossed off at luncheon; but that same afternoon he had taken a 'drain' or two of a stronger liquor, and after dinner he had again drunk to excess. He did not join his father and Mr Waller in the smoking-room, but staggered off to have a pipe by himself out of doors, to the great relief of perhaps both the seniors. His condition had been too obvious to be ignored even by the discreet ex-M.P., and he alluded to it in a philosophic and abstracted way between the whiffs of his cigar, as follows:

'It 's a curious thing how any excitement of the mind is fed by wine, like flame by fuel. How many persons would fall into the error of supposing your son William to be downright intoxicated, when, in reality, he is nothing of the sort!'

'I am glad to hear it,' returned the Squire bitterly; 'I thought myself that he was drunk.'

'Not at all, my dear sir: do not distress yourself with any such idea. The sense of the novelty of his position, and the rich social promise of it, are quite sufficient, assisted by ever so little wine, to have thus exhilarated the young man.'

'Young! He is two-and-forty at least,' responded the other gloomily, 'and old enough to know better.' Disparagement of this mild character was very suitable to the state of the poor Squire's feelings, for it did slightly relieve his choler; and, moreover, it was likely to prevent his astute companion from picturing to himself any graver causes for annoyance in his son's conduct.

'Still, my dear Mr Blackburn, the very ease with which Mr William became excited is to a certain extent (although I am the last to defend excess) in his favour. In the first place, remember, this is probably the first occasion on which, since his recent bereavement, he has permitted himself any enjoyment at all; and I daresay some sorrowful feelings would perforce intrude upon him, which he endeavoured by a few glasses of wine to dissipate. A more heartless man would have taken matters more coolly—at least that is my way of reading Mr William's character, and I flatter myself I know something about mankind.'

'Is it, sir?' said the Squire curtly. 'Then I confess I have not discovered all these virtues in him;

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and since you have such an eye for them, I wish to Heaven he was your son instead of mine!'

'Well, we should not look a gift-horse in the mouth,' said Mr Waller gaily; 'and upon my life, Blackburn, for all these little blemishes, of which you make so much, I have half a mind to take you at your word.'

'How do you mean?' inquired the other, looking sharply up.

'Why, I mean that though I cannot become his father, I should have no sort of objection, provided the arrangement prove agreeable to a certain young lady, of whom it does not become me to speak as she deserves—I should, I say, be very well pleased to be Mr William's father-*in-law*.'

'You would permit your daughter,' began the Squire in tones that had almost as much of horror in them as of amazement—'I mean, would you really let her run such a risk?'

Mr Blackburn had an honest liking for Lucy Waller; he had only seen as much of her as a septuagenarian host would be likely to see of his grand-daughter's friend and companion, but what he had seen had pleased him. It was certain that she was a dutiful daughter, and her father's right hand (as he often boasted), and it seemed to the Squire incomprehensible that Mr Waller should be ready to intrust the happiness of such a child to one like his son William. It was true that the Squire intended his own Ellen to marry Mr Stanhope, who was said to be addicted to dissipation, or at least to gambling; but, if Stanhope had been what he knew William Blackburn to be, her grandfather would certainly not have sacrificed her future to such a man, even to promote his most darling scheme. On the other hand, it must be conceded that Mr Waller was really ignorant of William's thorough worthlessness, and took a most liberal view of his surface-faults.

'Risk,' observed he slowly; 'well, that is rather a harsh word. Of course, I must know more of the young man's character and antecedents'—here he shot a glance at the Squire, who shifted his limbs uneasily—'and, above all, must assure myself that such a match would not be distasteful to my sweet Lucy. But there is always more or less of uncertainty—a risk, if you must call it so—in every marriage; that is, unless young folks have been brought up together from the nursery, as Lucy and your late nephew were. Of course, that would have been the match most consonant with my own feelings, but man proposes (as poor Dick did), and Heaven settles things its own way. Our families, it seems, were not to be united by means of that branch—but, still, they may be united. I honestly tell you I have not much to give my daughter *down*, Blackburn—my capital is so locked up in different speculations—but she is not a pauper, and perhaps, if things turn out as I expect them to do, may some day be almost as great an heiress as your own dear Ellen.—I conclude, by-the-bye,' observed the ex-M.P. abruptly, 'that though your purpose should hold to leave Redcombe to your grand-daughter, that your son would be suitably provided for?'

'If he were to marry eligibly—such a young lady as your daughter, for instance,' said the Squire earnestly, 'I would give him—nay, I would settle upon herself—a very considerable sum.'

'That is spoken like yourself, Blackburn, and I am sure you mean what you say, although, of course, our present talk may bear no fruit whatever—we may be building the merest castle in the air; and, at all events, any such event as that we have been contemplating must be yet a great way off. Your son is bewailing a recent calamity; my daughter also is suffering, although not so recently, from a similar bereavement. When speaking, on one occasion, of her sorrow, poor thing, she even made use of the expression "widowed:" a common loss, however'—here Mr Waller, under pretence of taking a fresh cigar, applied himself to composition—'itself sometimes attracts, so great is the power of human sympathy, two bruised and tender hearts towards one another.'

'I noticed that that scapegrace son of mine paid a great deal of attention to your Lucy,' said the Squire thoughtfully. 'She is clever, and has a will of her own; but I honestly tell you, Waller, I doubt whether even she will ever make a silk purse out of'——

'Stop at "purse,"' interrupted Mr Waller quietly; 'I assure you she is a capital hand at making silk purses.'

'If the silk purse is made out of the material in question,' answered the other gravely, 'I promise you it shall be well filled. If I could only see my son respectably settled in life'——

Here a terrible scream, apparently from the garden, broke the silence of the autumn evening; and Mr Waller, with an activity beyond his years, rushed to the open window, and letting himself drop through it by his hands, hurried to the croquet-lawn, while his host made his way thither more circuitously by the front door.

For all the former's protestations to others, and specious arguments with himself, he had his own misgiving concerning his projected son-in-law, and in the instant when that sound broke forth it flashed upon him that some unpardonable rudeness of Mr William Blackburn's had evoked it, perhaps from Lucy herself. To do Mr Waller justice, he would, in such a case, have done his best to wring the neck of that only scion of the House of Blackburn on the spot, and it was with some such intention that he had made such extraordinary speed. There was, however, nobody upon the lawn save Mr William himself, who was lying face downwards among the croquet-hoops, ejaculating 'Snakes, snakes, snakes!' at the top of his voice. The ex-M.P. cast a hasty glance up at the boudoir window, which, to his great relief, was closed, and then approached the sufferer with cautious steps.

'Snakes, snakes, snakes!' reiterated Mr William.

'What is the matter, sir? There are no snakes at Redcombe,' said the Squire, making his appearance from the terrace.

'There *are* snakes, snakes in my boots,' persisted his son.

'Come, come, not in *both* boots, my good friend,' observed Mr Waller persuasively.

But by dint of violent struggles, Mr William got himself free of his boots, and pointed to the empty pair with unaffected horror.

'Do *you* see snakes?' inquired Mr Blackburn of his guest in much amazement.

'Ay, sea-snakes,' persisted his son—'snakes from Formosa, snakes from the well-hole, so tall that you can see their heads at top. Look at their tongues, their long forked tongues! They've come to tell you about it. And yet, so help me, I never did it.'

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'What, in Heaven's name, does all this mean?' inquired the Squire despairingly.

'It means exactly what I told you, Blackburn, that your son's brain is over-excited; he has fallen over one of these hoops, and the shock has put him off his head. He's quiet enough now, you see. But here come the servants: just say it's a fainting-fit, and leave him to me.'

The ladies were fortunately in the drawing-room, which was on the other side of the house, and the music of the piano had drowned the sufferer's cries.

'Don't alarm your mistress, or the young ladies,' were Mr Waller's first words; 'but take Mr William quietly into his own room by the back-way.—You need not go for the doctor, sirrah' (for a groom was already starting towards the village); 'but lend a hand here, as I told you; your young master is overcome by the heat of the weather, that's all.—The case, my dear Blackburn, is quite simple, and I understand it perfectly well.'

'Do as Mr Waller bids you,' said the Squire sharply, for the serving-men hesitated somewhat to lift such a burden up; the damp white face, the chattering teeth, the protruding eyes, were all so instinct with horror.

'Gently, now—gently,' said Mr Waller; 'and you that have his wrists, hold them firm.'

It was well he gave that order, for twice upon his way the patient writhed and struggled like a madman. 'The snakes had wound about his limbs,' he said, 'and had him fast;' but at last they got him to his room, and into bed. Then Mr Waller dismissed the servants, and he and the Squire stood together alone by the bedside. William had fallen into a half sleep, full of starts and mutterings, and his eyes, which had looked as though their lids could never hide them again, were now almost closed.

'The paroxysm is over, my dear sir,' said Mr Waller soothingly; 'and I don't think we shall have any more trouble with him, poor fellow. However, I'll just sit with him a bit, while you go down into the drawing-room, and explain matters to the ladies; it is better not to trust to the servants' silence. You can say that I have some important letters to write, which will account for my absence easily enough. And be sure you keep Mrs Blackburn away from her son; say he is asleep, and must on no account be disturbed, for the fact is, in cases of this kind, the mind is apt to wander, and'——

'Is it *Delirium Tremens?*' inquired the old man huskily.

'Well, yes, it is undoubtedly a touch of D. T.,' said Mr Waller reluctantly. 'It's a very slight attack—but still, you must keep his mother away. The very best of us had better not talk of ourselves, unreservedly, before our mothers. But as for me, I'm a man of the world, and not easily shocked.'

'Nevertheless, it is my place to be here,' said the Squire gravely, 'and not yours.'

'My dear sir, forgive me; but this is madness' —began Mr Waller.

'Nay, forgive *me*,' interrupted his host peremptorily; 'this is my own house, and this is my own son, and I must have my way.'

'Very good, Mr Blackburn; I will do my best then to smooth matters below stairs. If he shews any symptoms of violence, ring for me; but if he continues to sleep on, as I trust he may, all will go well enough.'

'I understand; and I am greatly obliged to you, Waller—deeply obliged.'

'Don't mention it, my dear sir. I am delighted to have been of any use in this little matter. Such things occur every day, I do assure you, in the best families in the land; only it's better not to talk about them. Keep a good heart, my dear friend—and there's the bell within reach—and shall I bring you up the newspaper, or anything? It is weary work to have to sit still and watch, though I'm quite accustomed to it, and don't mind it in the least myself.'

The Squire shook his head to the offer of not only the newspaper, but to the implied renewal of Mr Waller's proposal to take his place by his son's pillow; and the ex-M.P. softly closed the door behind him.

'An obstinate old gentleman,' mused he, as he went down-stairs. 'If he would but have let me nurse that fellow, I should perhaps have known as much as Stanhope.—What the deuce, by-the-bye, could he have meant by Formosa and the well-hole? I must make a note of that. I wonder whether this was his first attack. By its short duration, I should think it was; and yet it was precious sharp while it lasted.—Formosa, eh? This is what comes of sending one's eldest son where French brandy is eighteenpence a bottle. Gad, how he must have soaked!'

CHAPTER XXII.—AFTER LONG MONTHS.

If Mr Waller imagined that, in default of gaining possession of the history of William Blackburn's past, the knowledge of the nature of his indisposition would still afford him some hold upon his young friend, he was fated to be disappointed; since, in the first place, D. T. was a malady not altogether unknown at Redcombe Hall, for the Squire's brother Charles had had more than one bout of it; and secondly, Mr William himself was no more sensitive about the malady in question than if it had been the gout. The very simplicity of this gentleman's character—that is, his coarse and homely habits of vice—made him difficult to deal with for the ex-M.P. (who had been accustomed to influence men in a high state of civilisation, if not of intelligence), and puzzled him, just as one ignorant of the use of the small-sword will sometimes puzzle an accomplished fencer.

When, for instance, a few days after this attack, Mr Waller expressed his pleasure at seeing the young Squire up and about again, the latter replied, with startling frankness: 'Well, I believe what you say for once, Mr Smoothtongue, for, if I had popped off the hooks, it would have spoiled a nice little game of your own, I reckon.'

If Mr Waller had had to consult his own feelings only, he would certainly not have remained, and far less have suffered Lucy to remain, a guest at Redcombe after that speech; but he could no longer afford to indulge his own self-respect, a luxury which, to say truth, he had been accustomed to more or less forego for many years. His affairs were getting into greater embarrassment daily, and no other escape seemed to offer than that he had once looked upon as an eligible course, but which he was now obliged to own to himself was in fact a desperate remedy. He had not the courage

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to speak to his daughter upon the subject; but she well understood his critical position, and could perceive, he hoped, for herself the pressing necessity that compelled him to wish her to become William Blackburn's wife. Her conduct was such as to make him daily reproach himself with the cruelty of a scheme which he adhered to nevertheless; and though she had always done his bidding, it astonished him by its dutifulness. That she should evince the slightest liking for the man who, short as her acquaintance had been with him, had disgraced himself half-a-dozen times in her very presence by intoxication or bad language, and of whose conduct in the house and village there were already so many evil reports that it was scarcely possible but that some had reached her ears, was not to be expected; but it was something, and more than Mr Waller had hoped for, that she did not shrink from the young Squire with abhorrence. She allowed him, if not to pay her court, to be more gracious to her than to others, and rather ignored his clumsy advances than forbade them. These attentions, indeed, now that he understood she was not his niece's humble companion, were not so rude and undisguised as heretofore, but they were such as a young girl of spirit might have naturally enough resented, especially in a suitor whom she regarded with disfavour, and yet she did not resent them. She even listened with patience to Mrs Blackburn's dissertations upon the character of her son, which perforce did not so often take the form of eulogium (as they had done before his arrival), as of apology for his faults; and why should she do this unless she had made up her mind to make excuses for them herself.

Not only did her father argue thus, but Mrs Blackburn also, who was as anxious for the match as he, and much more hopeful of its results; and so these two at least began to believe that in due course of time the thing was likely enough to come to pass. Curiously enough, however, this belief did not seem to be shared by the old Squire, who had so early expressed his approval of the plan, or, if it did, the contemplation of it seemed no longer to afford him pleasure. He had become of late a changed and broken man, and went about like one weighed down by some burden too heavy for him to bear. Some thought that in his old age the strong will which had supported him through half a century of hardships, had at last given way, and that he was fairly cowed by the rude profligate, his son. But the observant ex-M.P. held that there was some other cause which bowed that stalwart frame, and thinned those gray hairs day by day so visibly; for, in the first place, although he manifested a great repugnance to William Blackburn, if not an absolute loathing, yet he shewed no fear of him, but flamed up on occasion against that social offender, so that the culprit shrank before his ire; and, in the second place, William behaved himself with some respect towards his father, for a reason which Mr Waller had not far to seek, and under an influence of which that manager of men was very jealous. He well perceived that it was to Herbert Stanhope that all improvements in the young Squire's behaviour were owing, and envied him the possession of that rod of iron with which he ruled, so advantageously for the general good—if not for his own. As to whether Stanhope was gaining ground in Miss Ellen's good graces or not, Mr Waller could not decide, nor was it indeed of much interest to him to know. The pair were not often, so far as he could observe, or could learn from his daughter, alone; and, indeed, with the exception of the old Squire, who shut himself up more than ever in his little room, in company only with his bottle of strong waters, the inmates of the Manor-house herded together a good deal, now the young Squire was arrived, just as small birds keep close company when a hawk is hovering. *Tête-à-têtes* were not frequent, and still less a solitariness which might be intruded upon by the unwelcome Mr William, whose presence beneath that roof had also a marvellous effect in keeping it free from occasional visitors. Nobody that had not a special reason for it put themselves in the way of meeting the new arrival, who was even in the middle of the day as likely to be in liquor as not. Even Mr Mowbray Moffat avoided the place, as indeed he had good reason to do, for he had experienced the young Squire's insolence. The house, in short, was tabooed, as Anthony Blackburn had prophesied it would be. Lucy never left it, even for the garden, unless accompanied; but Ellen, when her uncle was supposed to be safely disposed of for the morning—and the safest place was the skittle-alley attached to the public-house in the village, where he liked to surround himself with a few choice sycophants—occasionally took long walks alone. Otherwise, if he found the opportunity, he would reproach her in graceless fashion upon the preference shewn to her by her grandfather, and point out to her the infamous injustice of those testamentary intentions of which she could not be ignorant. Her only refuge against such persecution lay in a quarter to which he felt tolerably confident she would not venture, from maidenly reserve, to apply. If the good could only profit by the vices of the wicked, as the wicked advantage themselves by the virtues of the good, merit would not so often as it is be its own reward.

In one of these lonely walks of hers, Ellen found herself where she would not have been had Herbert Stanhope been at his own house, in the pine-wood that skirted the grounds of Curlew Hall. The autumn was far advanced; but in that odorous and sheltered spot, with the sunshine striking down where the clearings were, and the keen wind busy only in the tree-tops, where it made a murmur like some distant sea, it seemed to be summer still. The place had become a favourite haunt of hers of late; in its welcome seclusion, and fresh and fragrant air, she breathed more freely than elsewhere, and shook off the oppression which had settled down on almost all at home, though on herself the least, for in that atmosphere of plots and fears she fed on hope, and lived, in imagination at least, another life than that which hard fate had for the present assigned to her.

She had wandered further than usual, or than she was aware of, almost to the verge of the wood which fringed the hill above the Mosedale Valley, in a line with the embankment of the reservoir, when she suddenly came upon what was very rare in that green solitude, a fellow-creature. A man with his back towards her was sitting under a tree, with a book in his hand; he was probably sketching, for his fingers moved rapidly; but, although artists were not uncommon about Redmoor in the warm weather, it was late in the season for that migratory race. She turned to retrace her steps, but the dry twigs crackled under her tread, and he looked

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round and rose. It was John Denton. She uttered a great cry of joy, and flew towards him—then stopped in wonder. His face was pale and sad, and though he could not have failed to recognise her, he did not stir a step. A strange thought took possession of her: it was not himself at all, but his wraith, come to tell her that all she had been living for was in the grave.

'John, dear John,' cried she trembling, 'why don't you speak to me?'

The tones were sad and hollow enough for any ghost, which answered: 'It is for you to speak, Ellen, not for me; you know all that I would say.'

She moved towards him, stretching out her arms. 'Dear John, what is the matter? What has happened?'

'Nothing unusual,' said he coldly, 'that is, with persons of your class. I daresay, to you it does seem nothing; but with me it is far different.'

'Are you mad, John Denton?'

'Not yet, God help me,' answered he bitterly.

'Then you will remember this, John.' She took from her bosom a little notecase, in which lay a faded sprig of heather: he had plucked it and placed it in her hand on that walk across the hills from Slogan when he had asked her to become his wife.

'I remember that well,' said he, 'only too well. Are you going to give it me back?—as ladies like yourself give back the rings and jewels of their old loves when they take on with a new one.—Oh, Nelly, Nelly! I knew that girls were weak, and that you being what you are, would be more tried and tempted than other girls; but I did not think you would sell yourself for gold, nay, for less than gold, for an old name, and a long pedigree with a fool at the end of it.'

'As true as the blue sky is above us, John, I understand nothing of what you say. Whatever dreadful things you have to tell me, in Heaven's name, speak out. What is it?'

'Is it possible that fourteen months of life among fine folks can make a woman so false as not to know it herself!' answered the other. 'Well, it is not much matter, perhaps; but what I have heard from every mouth at Mosedale is, that Miss Ellen Blackburn (who was once so humble as to think of wedding such a man as I) is plighted to Mr Herbert Stanhope of Curlew Hall.'

'That is a lie, John.'

'A lie! It is one that is more believed than truth; the whole town rings with it.'

'If the whole town had told me the like of you, John, nay, if the whole world had said it, and your lips had not confirmed their words, I would not have believed it. I *have* been tried, indeed—tried by your absence, tried by the lack of that which is my life-blood, the speech, the touch, the look of him I love, but never tempted, John; for in temptation there is some attraction, some delight, and I have never felt one touch of joy but in the thought of you.'

'True heart, forgive me,' exclaimed he, snatching the weeping girl to his breast. 'I am all unworthy of such love, dear girl; but I have been all alone in the world so long, without one word to gladden me, and with ten thousand of late to pierce my heart—and—and you know Mr Stanhope *is* staying at the Manor-house, Nelly. My very work, which was once so dear to me, has become flat and stale; I have been in this very place a score of times, note-book in hand, as now; and yet, see! nothing has been set down in it, because I could think of nothing, except you!'

'Then that is why I have sought this wood so often, John, and loved it; my heart must have known that you were here, and brought me hither. But what brought *you*, dearest?'

'Well, not so much my heart, dear Nelly,' said John, smiling, and tenderly smoothing her brown hair, 'but my business. I have been at work at the embankment yonder for some time; and while my men are at their dinner, I step in here for solitude, and to make certain calculations, the result of which (as to-day) has been often a blank page.'

'I knew you had been employed on the Reservoir, John; I went thither before you came, expressly to be able to picture you there—but I thought you had gone. Lucy—Miss Waller—told me that the affair would not keep you above a day or two.'

'Ay, that's Mr Waller of Mosedale's daughter, I suppose; but her father has misinformed her altogether. You see, Nelly,' and though his arm was round her waist, and his eyes looked lovingly into hers, it was curious how abstracted and business-like his tones became, 'it's a much more serious job than these directors imagine, and it will put out Flywheel immensely; but I can't help that. The whole concern wants looking to. I have been tinkering it up as well as I can; but it's my opinion the mischief is deep seated, and must have a much more effectual remedy, or there will be great risk when the spring comes on. For my part, I mean to state as much in my Report. But the fact is, the Company have very little cash, and don't want to be involved in expenses; and Flywheel is their engineer you see, not I. Nothing can be more penny wise and pound foolish (not to mention the danger), as it seems to me.—But there, why am I wasting precious moments, talking of these dry business matters, when the dearest girl in the world is waiting to hear me say for the fiftieth time how much I love her! And I do say it, and seal it, my own darling.'

'I like to hear you talk of your calling, John, and to see you so interested in it. I am prouder of it and of you than any one can possibly be of the things you were decrying just now, such as birth and blood. Nay, it is men like you who alone make birth and blood of any value, for who could be proud of ancestors who have done nothing?'

'A very logical view, my dear Nelly,' said the young engineer, his own cheek flushed with something of pride; 'but not one generally entertained, and especially by your charming sex. Now, I wonder what the forefathers of this Mr Herbert Stanhope, for instance, have done to make the race so much esteemed?'

'You always were jealous of Mr Stanhope, John,' returned Ellen smiling; 'and I have a great mind to punish you by praising him. He has his faults, and I fear his vices, but I can tell you, that I, in common with all at Redcombe Manor, have every day much cause to be indebted to him.'

'To him? How so?'

'Because he is the only person who has any influence over Uncle William.—You know my uncle is come back, I suppose?'

'I have heard that,' said Denton gravely. 'He

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is not improved, I am afraid, if half I hear about him is to be credited.'

'He is not what one would wish him to be, John,' sighed Ellen; 'very far from it. He frightens us all sometimes—even his mother herself; he is so strange and violent. Aunt Bess is dead, poor thing; and oh, it's a sad story!'

'But he is going to repair that loss, as I understand, eh, Nelly? A widowed life does not suit him.'

'What do you mean, John?'

'Why, is he not going to marry Miss Waller? That is what they say at Mosedale.'

'Lucy marry Uncle William!' exclaimed Ellen. 'Why, what will they not say at Mosedale about marriages? O no, John; I am quite sure that is not true.'

'Well, it's odd she and her father should stay at the Manor so long, when their own house is close by; although, indeed, for that matter, Mr Stanhope does the same. Mr Waller was so good as to offer me hospitality, only he said matters of urgent importance prevented his being at home just now.'

'Yes; Lucy said you were to be asked to be their guest; but grandfather pressed them to stay on with us.'

'Indeed,' said Denton coldly. He was naturally incensed with the old people, and had not even inquired after them. 'Then you don't think the young lady is going to be your aunt-in-law?'

'Most certainly not, John. She does not like Uncle William nor his ways at all. Oh, they are such bad ways!'

'What do you mean, Nelly? Is he rude and brutal? Why do you suffer such things? Why do you remain under the same roof with such a fellow, when I have one to offer you?—not so fine a place as Redcombe, I daresay, but still fit for even a lady like you.'

'Oh, it isn't that, John. You know how gladly I would come to you—marry you, my own darling, but'——

'But what?' answered the young man softly. 'Why not be mine at once, dear Nelly? Have you not done enough, suffered enough, for duty's sake? I will not speak of my own wretchedness; but yet I suffer also. Is an old man in his dotage'——

'Hush, John, hush! I cannot listen to such words. You know how good grandfather has been to me all my life; and you must not ask me to desert him now, when he needs me more than ever—much more. I think it would kill him if I left him now. He has much, very much to trouble him. He is so changed of late, you would not know him. I am his only comfort, poor old man. Have patience with me, my own love.'

She nestled in his bosom, and pleaded with such tearful eloquence, that he could not gainsay her. 'I will try to have patience, Nelly, for yet a little longer: it cannot be very long, surely.'

'Patience and faith, darling. Promise me you will have no more doubts. I am yours till death, and no other's.'

'I do believe that, dearest.'

'God bless you for those words, John! How thankful I am to have heard you utter them. But I must go now.—No, you must not come with me, nor be seen with me. You know I promised not to meet you; and then, if Uncle William only guessed—— What's that?'

She started from his arms in terror; but there was no sound but the soughing of the wind above them.

'You are afraid of this William Blackburn,' said Denton gravely. 'I must stop that.'

'No, no, John; I am not afraid; at least, not on my own account; but something dreadful always seems impending. Do not detain me longer. And remember, dear, have faith.'

She was gone in a moment, threading the wood with a swift and noiseless step; and the echo of her latest words seemed to be taken up by the tree-tops, which whispered above his head: 'Have faith—have faith.'

THE RED BREAST OF THE ROBIN.

AN IRISH LEGEND.

Of all the merry little birds that live up in the tree,
And carol from the sycamore and chestnut,
The prettiest little gentleman that dearest is to me,
Is the one in coat of brown and scarlet waistcoat.
It's cockit little Robin!
And his head he keeps a-bobbin'.
Of all the other pretty fowls I'd choose him;
For he sings so sweetly still,
Through his tiny slender bill,
With a little patch of red upon his bosom.

When the frost is in the air, and the snow upon the ground,
To other little birdies so bewilderin',
Picking up the crumbs near the window he is found,
Singing Christmas stories to the children:
Of how two tender babes
Were left in woodland glades,
By a cruel man who took 'em there to lose 'em;
But Bobby saw the crime;
(He was watching all the time!)
And he blushed a perfect crimson on his bosom.

When the changing leaves of autumn around us thickly fall,
And everything seems sorrowful and saddening,
Robin may be heard on the corner of a wall
Singing what is solacing and gladdening.
And sure, from what I've heard,
He's God's own little bird,
And sings to those in grief just to amuse 'em;
But once he sat forlorn
On a cruel Crown of Thorn,
And the blood it stained his pretty little bosom.

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MOSCO'S AUTOMATON.

I HAVE got a hard and heavy head; it 's like wood. I don't think I ever think; and don't know as I ever did, except about nothing; and I often set doing that for hours at a time.

'You blockhead!' father he ses to me (which is a shipwright), 'you 're only fit to cut up into a figure-head, you great, hungry, hulking, wooden-headed lubber you!'—for he had put me to lots of trades, and it was no use; everybody said I had no head-piece—no, not for going errands, nor giving away handbills even. It 's no good dunning things into my head, for the only thing I ever could remember is meal-times. Nothing I eat hurts me, and nothing don't seem to do me any good. Nothing makes me laugh nor puts me out of temper. The only thing ever I see makes me feel like laughing is meals, and then I 've got something better to do; and the only thing makes me feel like getting out of temper is getting out of bed of mornings to chop wood; but when you *ars* out of bed, you may as well chop wood as do anything else, for aught I know. The snail gets to his bed as quick as the swallow, and don't get near so tired.

Well, there was a conjurer chap came into our town—a brisk lively sort of chap that could talk like a pump, in a regular stream. He see me loafing about, and give me an order to see his show, providing I would go up on the platform to hold some things for him. I went up, and did what he told me. It seemed to amuse the people very much, for they laughed themselves nearly into fits, and said: 'Did ever you see a man keep his countenance like him?' and, 'It 's just as if he was cut out of wood.' Now, unless a man sees something to laugh at, he has got no call to laugh—and that 's why I didn't.

After it was over, the conjurer chap come to me, and ses: 'I never see your living equal. You must be used to the public, not to mind them any more than as if you was a stone idol?'

'I never see the public before,' I ses.

'You didn't?' ses he.

'No,' I ses.

'Well, look here,' he goes on, 'I don't mind standing you half-a-crown if you 'll tell me what you was a-thinking of when the public was screaming with laughing at you.'

'Victuals,' I makes answer.

'Come and have some along with me,' he replies, 'for I think I can put you in the way of getting them regular.'

So I did.

Next day, he goes to see my father.

'Your son has a wonderful talent, sir.'

'Hang his talent,' ses my father: 'it 's a pity he can't use it on any other tool than a knife and fork!'

'A natural gift, sir, for not laughing at anything, such as I never see before out of the reserved seats. The question is, could he be depended upon always to keep his countenance as he did last night?'

'I never see him smile in my life,' father makes reply, 'nor get angered, nor put out; in fact, I never see him take notice of anything. There 's no mistake he can keep his countenance, which is a good deal more than his countenance 'll ever do for him.'

'I don't know so much about that,' the conjurer ses, 'for I 'm open to give him two pound a week and his board, if he 'll sign articles with me for twelve months.'

'And what is he to do?' ses my father.

'Nothing—except to be looked at, and that won't hurt him, I suppose?'

'Well,' father ses to me, 'is it a bargain?'

'I don't care,' I ses. So I joined the show.

The public is an obstinate lot, for when you laugh, they won't; but if you set your face against laughing, or if you 've got no call to laugh, through not seeing anything to laugh at, they will laugh like mad—leastways, so I 've found it.

Signor Mosco was the conjurer's name, or, at anyrate, the one he went by in public. He was called a pretty good hand, but I couldn't see much in what he did. I knew where the bullets went to when he made-believe to ram them into a pistol with a barrel like an ear-trumpet. I stuffed the

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gold watches in the half-quartern loaves, and ironed out the ladies' and gentlemen's pocket-handkerchiefs, while he was pretending to burn them. It's surprising what little things amuse the public. I used to tell 'em so, when Signor Mosco had done one of his best tricks, but they only grinned, and said: 'Lord, how he does keep his countenance!' and, 'What a nerve he must have, to be sure!' There was the hat-trick. The tins, and the feathers, and things look a good deal when they are all thrown about, but they took up no room scarcely when I'd put 'em together, ready for use. And as to rolling two rabbits into one, what was there to surprise *me*, knowing all along very well what was become of the second rabbit, when I shouldn't have took on very much even if he *had* rolled 'em into one, except it was at dinner-time. There was the decapitated head and the basket-trick, and the magic flowers, and the woman setting on nothing, which was called Mecca. Well, I see the looking-glasses and the false bottoms, let alone the legs of the decapitated head; and, consequently, I couldn't see anything in any of it.

There was only one part of the entire performance that ever I *could* see anything in, and that was, as the bills put it: 'The Marvellous Mechanical Man or Wooden Automaton, on whose construction no less than twenty-five years have been expended, to bring it to its present perfection as the greatest wonder of the age.'

I will tell you about it.

First of all, there was a large box, or pedestal, for the figure to stand on, and containing the works, which was carried off the stage, and into the centre of the reserved seats. It had a winch, to turn with a handle like a bed-post key, to wind up the man, and when wound up made a noise like an engine getting up steam, which was the works running down. Then the man was brought down off the stage, carried upright by four strong fellows. His feet were fastened to a round wooden stand, like children's soldiers stand on, in which was a worm for the great screw on the top of the pedestal. When brought down, he was hoisted up on the pedestal, and turned round and round until screwed on. There were a great many tubes, and wires, and levers connecting the figure with the box, and sticking out round it, which looked very curious, and, besides, shewed the working parts. But a worse finished man no one ever see at a tobacconist's shop-door, which made it the more singular his doing what he did. About his neck and the back of his head the paint was wore off, shewing the bare wood; and the same with the point of his nose, which was splintered; and likewise his hands, which were glued and cracked. Signor Mosco used to explain this had occurred in packing, and that he would repair the injuries. But it seemed as if it always did occur in packing, for the injuries never were repaired. Then, as to his complexion, it would have been a disgrace to any house-painter. It was red and whitewash, varnished, and done so badly, that it looked as if you could see the grain of the wood through the paint. I've often asked Signor Mosco why he didn't paint his automaton better, but he only grinned, and said: 'How precious green *you* are, ain't you?'

Everybody who see the man used to say: 'How stupid of Signor Mosco, after making such a clever figure, not to have spent a pound or two in finishing it properly, instead of leaving it such a clumsy wooden scarecrow.'

The newspapers, too, used to speak most disrespectful of the man; like this which I've cut out:

'Signor Mosco revisited our town with his interesting exhibition last week. His remarkably skilful feats of pretidigitation were the admiration of large and fashionable audiences. To the other attractions of his entertainment, the professor of the quick-fingered art has now added what he is pleased to term The Marvellous Mechanical Man. The performances of this automaton are particularly clever, but it belies its name. It might with more correctness be termed a figure, for it is so roughly constructed as to bear no more resemblance to humanity than the effigies which are carried through our streets on the 5th November. We cannot help thinking that if Signor Mosco would devote a little more pains to the finish of his wooden effigy, and to concealing some of the cords and levers by which the life-like motions are too obviously conveyed to the limbs, the illusion would be rendered more complete.'

So far from being angry at reading such notices, Signor Mosco always used to chuckle and slap me on the back, and want to know why I didn't laugh too. I ses, very naturally: 'Because I don't see anything to laugh at.' 'Well,' says he, 'you *are* a cure, you are, and the biggest I ever see.'

But that figure only got worse, and more shabby and rickety, the more that was said about it, until at last, whenever the men used to carry the automaton to his pedestal, one of its arms would drop off. The professor always said it was an unforeseen accident, and apologised for it. But it was an unforeseen accident that used regularly to occur every evening, and get apologised for. And what was another singular thing, the worse the figure was, and the more rickety he got, the more clever people thought his performance was.

Well, when the Mechanical Man was screwed down on the pedestal for his performance, Signor Mosco would commence with a short lecture on the powers of the lever, the screw, and the pulley, and the spiral spring. He would then go and wind up the machine, with the handle like a bed-wrench. It made a great clatter, and took a long while to wind, owing to the power of the spring. When he had done, the whole concern began to go 'Cr-r-r-r-r,' and kept on going so all the time, whilst the people could see the works going round through one side of the pedestal, which was of glass. The professor would then strike sharply with his wand, and pull a cord that worked the levers of the automaton's head. 'Wake, Francisco!' ses he; and Francisco, which was the wooden figure, begins to move his head, very slow, first from right to left, then from left to right. Then Signor Mosco pulls another string, and Francisco opens his eyes, very gradually, or quick, according as the string is pulled. Then it would be: 'Raise the right arm, and salute the company;' which the figure would do, rather stiff and jerky, but still he did it. That stiffness and jerkiness of the movements (and they were all like that) was what people seemed disposed to grumble at. 'We want to see 'em a little more airy and graceful,' the public ses. 'Ladies and gentlemen,' ses the Signor, 'what can you expect from machinery?'—which was very true. 'But to

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shew you the command I have over the automaton when at a distance from it, I will now return to the stage, after simply pressing a spring in the figure's back, and, sitting before the index-board connected with the figure, I will enable you to put its abilities to the test.' He sat at a small table in front of the stage, where there was a board like a draught-board, but covered all over with knobs. People were then to question the automaton. The figure did numbers and counting, by slowly jerking up its right hand as many times as was wanted. 'Yes' and 'No' he did with his head, by bending it for 'Yes,' and shaking it for 'No;' and this way he would tell fortunes and ages quite equal to a learned pig or an educated pony. Indeed, there was no end to the questions he could answer, and they were very often right, which was a wonder for machinery. Francisco used to finish up by whirling his arms round like the wooden sailors do on weather-cocks, and he would keep on till the professor touched a button and stopped the works, when his arms would remain sticking straight up, until a string was pulled to let them down, and even then they would still keep on swinging backwards and forwards for a bit. There were some people wanted the automaton to do more, but the Signor said it couldn't be done, not by machinery.

In due time, as we went round the provinces, we come back again to the town where my father lived. I was against going there at all. I told Signor Mosco so; and I didn't want him to shew the Mechanical Man there, as I told him they weren't good judges of machinery in that place. But he wouldn't listen, and so the automaton was done there the first night. We had got about halfway through his performance, and the professor had gone on to the stage, whilst Francisco was answering questions. There is mostly a crowd of people round the figure at such times, but to-night there was a wiry old man pressing his way close up to the wooden effigy, and looking into its eyes.

'Now, sir, *will* you keep your hands off that figure, if you please—do you hear me?' Signor Mosco ses.

'Mother!' the old man bawls out to his wife, taking no notice—only laughing fit to split—'mother! come here, I tell ye—I'm blowed if they haven't been and made a figure-head of our Bill!'

I couldn't see anything to laugh at, for it was two pound a week and victuals out of my pocket, let alone the exposure.

THE LOWER RAILWAY WORLD.

Of late years, the railway system has been sufficiently before our eyes, and its magnates are as household words; while many writers have, more or less vividly, depicted the driver or guard—but who is to tell of the cleaner or the labourer? No one, it seems; as the most popular sketch ever made of a driver coolly speaks of him as cleaning his engine immediately after his trip, a solecism which shocks all railway people, and asserts as a fact that which—were it possible to clean a hot engine—the driver would rather die than do.

Cleaners, be it understood, are not labourers, nor are labourers cleaners. On all railways, there are employed, in excess of almost every other working class—excepting at the great factory stations where the engines are made and repaired—a body of men and boys, whose duties are, exclusively to clean the engines, and prepare them for their trips. These duties rise from mere washing and rubbing to some of considerable importance. At the present day, when the organisation of each railway staff has grown complete, care is exercised in the selection of these youths; but some years ago, it was not so; any one was supposed to be fitted for a cleaner; and it was not uncommon to see men considerably advanced in years working by the side of young blue-eyed boys, and at much the same wages; while as for characters!—well, good behaviour in their duties could gain them one, but the majority did not bring such things with them. This is all changed now; and a recommendation is now as essential to obtain for a candidate the unsavoury post of cleaner, as for the more immediately eligible appointment of porter. The reader least conversant with railway matters will hardly need to be told that no translation from one department to another exists, and that cleaners are not taken to become porters, or *vice versâ*. Cleaners generally commence, if they join as boys, at one shilling per day, and rise by slow steps to half-a-crown per day, at which they stop, unless they are appointed 'lighters-up' or 'tubesmen,' when they receive a little more. The lighter-up is the most advanced cleaner, and his duties are somewhat onerous; the working of the trains is arranged by a rota of engines, which the lighter-up has to study; it is his duty to see that, during the night, the engines, as they arrive from their trips, are placed in order as they will be wanted, and that steam is got up in them in regular succession.

Occasionally, an engine will blow up; and as this usually takes place in or about the shed, the lighters-up or cleaners are commonly the sufferers. Without dwelling on the enormous power of steam, I may mention here that some of these explosions have been attended with the most singular effects. I have seen the clothes of a cleaner which had been blown from his back—I cannot explain how—but blown they certainly were by the bursting of an engine; and his smock-frock or 'slop,' as railway men call it, hung on the buffer of an adjoining locomotive, as neatly as though the unfortunate owner had hung it there himself. He, poor fellow, had lost his head, which, quite severed from his body, ran for many yards along the bricked floor of the shed. There is, or was recently, in one of the largest engine-sheds in England, one of a pair of braces which were blown off the wearer's shoulders, and lodged on the beams in the lofty roof: there it hung for a long time, and there, possibly, it hangs now. The poor fellow was killed—scalded to death: he did not die at the moment; but when my informants went to pick him up, he was almost naked, and the sheets of flesh came off in their hands 'like pancakes,' as they described it.

In spite of the rough lot the cleaners are of, their low pay, and very harsh discipline, strangers of a much higher grade than would be expected are often found offering themselves to join them. These are generally youngsters who have an

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enthusiastic fondness for engines and machinery in general, and who hope to get into the engineering world by this humble channel—some such irresistible longing, doubtless, as that which makes boys with good homes want to go to sea. I have known young gentlemen of excellent position and good acquirements offer themselves as cleaners; but I never knew one who persevered after he had seen his future comrades fairly at work.

Foreigners occasionally will come, with introductions from some one who is probably pestered by their applications, and so adopts this as the surest mode of getting rid of them. They never join. Poor fellows, they would have a sorry time of it on our railways. This reminds me that I have never seen any notice taken of the very curious fact that Irishmen do not take to railway-work. On one of the very largest railways in England, I do not think there is at this moment an Irish driver or fireman; and for many years, at its chief working-station, there was scarcely a solitary one among the mechanics, labourers, or cleaners. A few tried it, but though they were very steady fellows indeed, they did not remain. As Irishmen are always first where sheer hard work is to be done, I wonder how it is they do not take to this kind of railway labour. Perhaps it is not always their fault.

The fascination which engines and their human satellites exercise over some minds is very great; and while speaking on the subject, I am reminded of a young man who haunted for years one of our chief termini: he was the son of a leading west-end confectioner, so that his early training had in no way disposed him to an engineering life; but he was the most remarkable accumulation of statistics in connection therewith I ever knew. The line employed several hundreds of engines, and he not only knew the names of all of them, but when they were made, and who had made them; when each one had last been supplied with a new set of tubes at the factory—this last, of course, only referred to the engines employed on the main line, which he had an opportunity of seeing, and would miss when they were laid up for repair—and how this had had the pressure on its safety-valve increased, and this had been diminished. He had such a retentive memory for these and kindred facts, that I have seen the foreman of the works appeal to him for information, which was never lacking. His penchant was so well known, that he had special permission for access to the works.

'Firebox boys' are rudimentary cleaners, and an unpleasant time they have of it; they hope, however, to have 'side-work' in time. 'Wheels' are not popular among cleaners, being always dirty work, with no show when finished; but all gradations must be gone through before the cleaner can be a tubesman—next in honour to the lighter-up. The tubesmen alluded to are those whose duty it is to see that every tube is clear before the engine is got ready for its trip. This is done by thrusting a long rod through each one, and is very tiresome work, as chinkers will often get into the holes. The importance of this must be obvious, as, without complete draught, there could be no such fire as would serve an engine.

Among so motley a collection as the cleaners were, sharp discipline was of course necessary, but this was sometimes abused; and I have known a contractor dismiss a man on the spot, who, on a bitterly cold and wet day, warmed his hands for a few moments at the furnace. Such harshness as this would not probably be exercised where the men were engaged by the company; but where a contractor had the work in his hands, he would grudge every moment that was taken from labour. This system, however—that of contracts—is not nearly so prevalent in the railway world as it was of yore.

When railways were new, the vast majority of the drivers and firemen were north-countrymen, and for a long time this element prevailed; but from the gradual growing up of cleaners who come to be firemen, and then drivers, the proportion of northern men gets smaller every day, the cleaners always coming from the districts through which the railway runs. No man is now allowed to pass as fireman until he can sign his name to the rules; and it is very much to the credit of the cleaners that they will often attend night-schools, to glean what bit of learning they can, and to enable them to make the desired signature. This rule is in direct opposition to the opinion of the late Mr Brunel, who held that reading and writing helped to unfit a man for engine-driving; that an animal trained to drive his engine, and whose mind was not cultivated enough to enable him to think about anything else, made the best and safest servant.

Labourers are those who assist fitters; those who assist smiths are called strikers, and are a grade above the others; they sometimes go out as firemen, but are not supposed to be, as a rule, so good as the cleaners. Of a batch of six labourers who were 'made' at one time on a certain line, five were killed, injured, or were unable to stand the work. This last cause thins the ranks terribly. From the continual exposure to wet and cold, especially when we remember that the men are always standing on a warm plate of iron, the trial of the first year of a fireman's life is excessively severe.

Injuries are very frequent among the labourers, as they are so much among and under the engines and trucks. In most sheds, a small glass case is fastened in a conspicuous place against the wall—such a case as we see stuffed birds in—and this contains a tourniquet or bandage for stopping the bleeding from an artery. There is no lock to the case; but, when wanted, the glass is broken, and the tourniquet taken out. A stretcher, too, is always at hand, and not seldom, unfortunately, used. From the immense weight of the vehicles handled, very slight pushes, as they seem, are fatal; and I have seen a young man killed, deluged, indeed, with blood from his head, by the apparently leisurely rolling together of two trucks; while another man, whom you would have thought had scarcely been touched, was squeezed so dreadfully in the waist as to force up instantly the food he had swallowed an hour before, and was then carried off, to linger best part of a year in the hospital. My readers would scarcely care for a catalogue of accidents; yet I cannot forbear mentioning one, as a case in point. A cleaner was at work on an engine in steam, just giving a last touch to the framing, when the locomotive moved—pushed on, doubtless, by another engine striking it behind. To the eye, the movement was scarcely perceptible; but the top and sole leather of the man's boot came

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together, the toes within being crushed to nothing, we may say. The poor fellow died.

One can easily suppose that the work of a labourer is heavy and dirty. He has to carry the various detached portions of the machinery from the shed to the shops, when required for repairing, and back again; the fitter gravely and majestically preceding him, the majority of mechanics thinking it much beneath them to assist in the carriage of material. But such duties are not hard in themselves. The most disagreeable part of the labourer's work is getting an engine on the line. When a locomotive runs off the rails, although no serious accident may ensue, it blocks at least one line, and must be replaced as quickly as possible. This, of course, has to be done in the open air, and without the usual appliances for lifting an engine. It has to be lifted up by screw-jacks, and gradually turned in the direction of the rails; and in some loose soils the tremendous weight of the engine presses the screw-jack into the earth, instead of the latter lifting the engine. In this case, they have to accumulate blocks of timber under the jack until the maximum of pressure is overmatched, and no longer acts; as much as six feet below the surface having been reached in an extreme case. The labourer's pay, I ought to have said, is somewhat better than that of the cleaner, as he is always supposed to be a grown man; and he usually starts at half-a-crown a day—not, however, an excessive rate for the London district—and he gets no increase or promotion beyond two or three pence, unless taken as fireman.

As every one must know, the greatest offence either of these classes can commit, or indeed any other railway servant, is to come to their work intoxicated. This is always severely and yet justly dealt with; in fact, there is seldom any other penalty for this offence than dismissal.

A COUNTY FAMILY.

CHAPTER XXIII.—LUCY'S OPINION IS CONSULTED.

Ellen Blackburn had not exaggerated the case when she said that in her her grandfather now found his only comfort. His face was never seen to smile unless she was looking up at it. He had no consciousness (as Mr Waller had with regard to Lucy) that in favouring Mr Stanhope's suit he was urging her to run a great hazard. He knew no more of that gentleman's pecuniary affairs than that he had not an income sufficient to live at Curlew Hall in a manner suitable to his station, while of his character and disposition he thought very highly, and in many respects no less than they deserved. He scarcely deemed that he was asking of Ellen any sacrifice of feeling. He had almost forgotten the existence of John Denton altogether, and that other and intermediate state of life in which he had met with him was fading fast from his remembrance. The state of affairs of half a century ago seemed in the old man's mind to join with the present almost without a break. He had been always the Squire, and the heir of Redcombe Manor, but for a certain interval, which waned and waned in his waning mind until it was almost imperceptible. But there was one occurrence during that interregnum which he did not forget, and, indeed, of which he would in any case have been put in daily remembrance by the misconduct of the original offender—namely, the crime and punishment of his only son.

So long as any record of them had existed, the Blackburns had almost all been a dissolute and vicious race; but, however they might have sinned against the Gospel, they had none of them broken the Laws. They had had no temptation to do so. Old Anthony did not understand that want of principle in a rich man is almost certain, in a very poor one, to shew itself in crime. True, he himself had not much principle (in any high sense at least), and yet he had lain long years among the pots of Poverty, and come out unsoiled at last. But then he had a substitute for principle in his indomitable pride. Nine-tenths of the Blackburns before him had had something of this pride (though very few of them any real self-respect), but in him it had taken root and flourished prodigiously. He had sat under it, as under his own fig-tree, throughout his exile, and it had served him in good stead in many a wind of bitterness; and though his son William (savage as he was) had hewed its branches and hacked its trunk, it still lived after a fashion, and ever and anon put forth a bud or two. It had borne the shock of William's return, and had been propped up and even drawn some strength and vigour from the thought that Herbert Stanhope would marry Ellen, and their children's children perpetuate the good Blackburn blood, if not the name; but now there was a canker at its very core. 'The old Squire is breaking up at last,' was become a common saying about Redcombe. Those who looked deeper thought there was no physical cause, but attributed the alteration in him to the shock he had received from his son's recent illness, the nature of which was by this time as well known for ten miles round the Manor as the shape of the Redcombe weathercock. It must be uncommonly unsatisfactory, they thought, to have one's only son come home after ten years' absence (the most moderate doubled the actual period) to take his proper position in the county—with *delirium tremens*.

And certainly a change in the old man, both mental and bodily, had occurred exactly at that date. He had formerly taken a great deal of exercise—striding about his fields a wonder to his labourers (whose salutations he acknowledged without a word), or revisiting alone such of the ancient landmarks as still stood; but now he confined his rambles to the garden, or to that solitary part of the shrubbery called 'the Wilderness,' where he would walk to and fro for hours, leaning on his grand-daughter's arm. Few words were interchanged between them. She was afraid to encourage him to speak, lest he should make Mr Stanhope his topic; but this, of late, he had only done on one occasion. After a long silence, he had exclaimed suddenly: 'I wish you had been married, Nelly, darling, before this man had come back.'

She of course knew who was meant. He never mentioned his son William, now, by name. 'Nay,

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grandfather,' said she tenderly; 'but then you would not have had my arm to lean upon. It is much better as it is. I am in no haste to wed.'

'A good child—always a good child,' returned he, patting her hand. 'If the chance does come, if it is not too late, Nelly, take it—take it; never mind an old man like me. Yes, I am too old—much too old. Why did not I die on Slogan, as your poor father did, whom you never knew? Why did he die at all, and why does this other one live? Do you remember the hill Slogan, Nelly?'

'Yes, grandfather, indeed I do. All the people at work upon it like bees, and the sea and the ships below. I can see the upper level, where I used to take you your dinner, as plainly now as though it were really before my eyes.'

'So can I, so can I, Nelly; though I can't always do it. I can't see so far, some days, for the mist. I mean,' added he hastily, 'for the mist in my eyes, for my brain is clear as ever—clear as ever.—Where was I?'

'We were talking of Slogan and the upper level, grandfather.'

'Yes, yes.—That was where we first saw him, Nelly. An excellent young gentleman. He gave me sherry out of his pocket-flask; and somehow I never get such sherry now. Nothing is so good as it used to be.'

'There are many things, grandfather, belonging to those old days, though they were hard ones, that one misses now—the noble prospects from the hills, and the glorious breezes from the sea, and'——

'The sea? Ay.' He looked round cautiously, and spoke low: 'Formosa is in the sea, is it not, Nelly?'

'Certainly, grandfather—it is an island. But—what is the matter?'

'Nothing. I am not so young as I was, and I am tired. I must sit down a bit—that's all; I feel faint. If I have said anything foolish, it was that, Nelly—the being so faint. Don't say a word about it to anybody, but I think it would do me good if I could only get to Slogan, and feel the air.'

'I would that we had never left it, grandfather,' exclaimed Ellen with involuntary bitterness. But the whole scene about the Moor Cottage was lying before her, with John Denton—honest sunbeam—in the midst.

'Not left it; that's nonsense, Nelly. Do you suppose he would have married you if we had stopped at that place? Never. As for me, though I am not happy, Nelly, not so happy as when I made the sparks fly with the big hammer, I am glad to be here, glad to have lived to make my will. It is a great and good thing that a dead man should be able to speak from out the grave, as I shall soon speak, lying in yonder churchyard, saying: "All to this woman, and none—or only a little, to that man." That is how I have left it, Nelly; Stanhope knows.'

This was a subject upon which the Squire's mind was always clear, and one that he would often descant upon, much to Ellen's embarrassment.

'Let us talk of something else, grandfather. Do not speak of that. It is much better not to do so.'

'Better not to do so,' muttered the old man; 'and yet, when I see her, and see him looking at her, I think I ought to speak. Poor Lucy!'

Ellen had paid small attention to these words; she was accustomed now only too often to find the old Squire rambling and inconsequent in his talk, although this rarely occurred unless they were alone together. In other company, he seemed to her (and the sight was very pitiful) to keep strict watch over himself, and check by sudden silence his tendency to wander. In her faithful presence only he was at his ease. When William was by, his father never spoke, except occasionally in tones of stern reproof; but his sunken eyes watched and followed his son's motions ceaselessly, as one who has a stick in his hand watches an adder.

To Lucy's wonder, the old Squire asked her to take Ellen's place one day, and give him her arm in his usual garden-walk.

'I want you to speak to me, dear young lady,' he began in tremulous tones, 'as though I were your father's father, as indeed I am old enough to be. I want to know'—— Here he stopped, and seemed to be casting about for some fitting word which would not come.

'To know what, dear Mr Blackburn?' said she gently. 'Let us sit down, for you seem fatigued, I think.'

'Yes, yes; I am very tired—always tired now. But that will not be for long. I want to ask you—for you are a good girl, like my own Nelly, and your opinion is worth having—let me see, let me put it as I should do, and if not, you will make allowance, I know. I cannot talk like my good friend Waller, with every word as it ought to be, and in the right place; but if *he* was to ask you: "How do you like that man who has come here of late?" what would you say, now, what would you say?'

'How do I like Mr William Blackburn, sir?'

'Yes, yes; who else? There he is yonder upon the terrace. A fine man—a man that will have money, perhaps. Hush, hush! There, I knew I should offend you.'

'No, sir; I am not offended.'

'Good girl, good girl! I always liked you, Lucy, always.—Now, how do you like that man?'

'O sir, that is a question—forgive me—which I cannot answer if his father puts it.'

'But if your father had put it?—Come, *your* father?'

'He never *has* put it, sir. But if he did, it would be my duty'——

'No, no; I don't ask what would be your duty—the truth, the truth!'

'Well, sir, your son is rough and rude; not kindly, as you are, in his speech and ways. Maybe it is his misfortune, not his fault; but being as he is, I do not like him.'

'Yes, yes; but there must be more than that, perhaps worse. Pray, tell me, for I am old, and may misjudge things; and I want to know.'

'Well, sir, his manner to his mother displeases me, and to Ellen likewise.'

'And to yourself? Do his ways to you—which I have often watched—displease you?'

'Sir, you press me somewhat unfairly; but, if I must needs tell the truth, they do.'

'One question more, Lucy, and I have done—only one more. So much depends upon your answering it; take time. Do you think'—he clasped his hands together and looked into her face appealingly—'that he is hopelessly wicked and depraved—capable of any cruelty—any crime?'

'O sir, I think no such thing. I cannot reply to such a question.'

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'I see, I see,' moaned the old man. 'If he were ever so rich, and promised to improve, and though your father urged you to believe him—even then?'

'Sir, once for all, I could never *love* William Blackburn.'

'I knew it, I knew it!' cried the old man, wringing his hands. 'I ought to have spoken to him long ago, and I *will* speak to him to-day.'

'Not about me, Mr Blackburn!' exclaimed the young girl earnestly. 'I do beg of you not to do that. Nothing he can say, nothing he can do, will alter matters between us two.'

'Nor should they, my dear girl, nor should they,' answered the old Squire. 'He shall never trouble you more. He shall go away whence he came. I am master still in my own house, and I will not have him here.'

'I should be very sorry, Mr Blackburn, very sorry, to be the means, however innocent, of any rupture between you and your son. Please to spare me the pain of having thus requited your hospitality. You asked me in strict confidence, remember, to answer you certain questions, and I have answered them in confidence likewise.'

'You shall not marry him, Lucy, never fear. Your father shall have the money, all the same. It's all money, money, now-a-days; in my time—but there, that was long ago—folks married for love.'

Lucy was scarlet. It was terrible to hear her father's scheme thus openly spoken of by this doting old man. If *he* knew, must not all the world know, and cry shame upon her! Tears of anger, of wounded pride, ran fast down her cheeks.

'Don't cry, girl,' resumed the old man in a firm and altered voice; 'that man yonder shall never have you in his power. I will see to that. I am glad you have spoken; I had but very little hope, and it is dead without much pain. I am stronger for knowing the truth—stronger to cope with him—stronger to overcome him. He shall see.'

The old man rose from his seat with a vigour he had not shewn for months, and straightened his huge frame as of old. There was no tremor in his limbs now as he moved slowly down the winding walk towards the terrace, though he moved alone, for Lucy remained upon the garden-bench with her face hidden in her hands. When he reached the level sward of the croquet-ground he stopped for an instant, but only to take breath, then walked straight up to his son, who was leaning on the terrace balustrade smoking a short pipe, and tapped him on the back.

'I want you, sir, for a few minutes' conversation in my room;' then strode on without waiting for a reply.

Mr William Blackburn shrugged his shoulders, tapped his pipe against the stone, to empty it of its contents, and muttering to himself: 'I wonder what the old fool is up to now,' followed the Squire into his sanctuary.

CHAPTER XXIV.—WILLIAM'S CHANCE.

When his son entered the room, Anthony Blackburn was already seated in the high-backed black armchair, which was his usual place; his eyes were fixed upon something on the wall, which was not a picture, although it was set in a frame, and on this he seemed to gaze, as if unconscious of his son's presence.

'Well, father, what is it?' Mr William's tone was sharp and sullen, and had the effect which was intended—of awakening the old man from his reflections.

'I want to say a few words to you, William,' said the old man, in tones that were strangely different from those in which he had last spoken; no longer stern, but hesitating, and grave, and sad. 'Sit down; no, not here, but yonder.' William took the chair indicated, more remote from his father than the one he had selected, and sat down on it with a hang-dog look.

'Do you know what I have been looking at for the last minute or two?'

'Yes,' growled the other; 'Family Tree.'

This interesting record of the House of Blackburn ornamented one side of the fireplace, as dead Ferdinand's hunting-map did the other, and had certain marks of red ink upon it, such as are seen in wreck-charts to indicate 'Totally lost.' These marks were placed opposite to the names of those of the Squire's forefathers who had served the ancient and honourable office of high sheriff. In no other respect, so far as public affairs were concerned, had one Blackburn ever differed from another. The country at large, nor even the county, had not been wiser or better for any one of them. Yet, like any other old tree, which, though without fruit or foliage, has stood for centuries, it was respected by many folks for its mere pertinacity of vegetable life; while the Squire himself regarded it much as the African regards his fetich; he worshipped it with a veneration that amounted to awe, and without even asking himself a reason for the faith that was in him.

'Three hundred and fifty years,' he murmured, 'have we lived at Redcombe, father and son, father and son!'

'And very right too,' was Mr William's practical reply. 'It would have been a pity and a shame ever to let a girl in, when there was a male heir.'

'A girl. Ah! that reminds me,' said the old man with a deep sigh. 'I tried to-day, William—I did give you that chance—whether an honest girl—one who would not have pained me if she could have helped it, I know—had any one good word to say for you, or of you. I thought to myself, if *she* can see any good in him, the terrible thought I have got into my old head cannot surely be true. I would rather have believed myself to be in my dotage—much rather. But she thinks of you like the rest—like all the rest.'

'I don't know who you mean by all the rest, sir,' answered William angrily; 'but there are people in this house who know very well upon which side their bread is buttered. There's Miss Ellen, for one'——

'Hush, hush, sir!' interrupted Anthony, with dignity; 'I will not have a word said against Ellen. She has no fault except that she is not a man—my grandson instead of my grand-daughter.'

'Well, that change is not likely to happen, is it?' inquired William.

'There's your mother likes you, to be sure,' continued the old man, taking no notice of this playful rejoinder. 'That would be something, if she were not your mother.'

'The old cuss has lost his last wits,' thought William to himself. 'If Ellen was his grandson, and his wife were not my mother! He has become a drivelling idiot.'

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'And yet, God knows, I would give forty thousand pounds, ay, and house and land, and all I have in the world, not to believe it of you.—Don't come nearer, sir; keep where you are.'

At the mention of so large a sum, William had involuntarily hitched his chair a little nearer to his father. Notwithstanding his doubts of the old man's mental capacity, he shrewdly and justly suspected that the figures of the sum mentioned as being at the Squire's disposal were tolerably correct, and he felt himself irresistibly attracted towards the possessor of such a sum of ready money, and inclined to conciliate him at any cost. Even the most sullen of misanthropes will endeavour to make himself agreeable if the temptation is strong enough. But the tone of his father's speech was far more forbidding even than the words themselves; and his manner had a certain loathing and shrinking in it, which (though he knew he was no favourite) he could not at all explain, and which frightened him a little, notwithstanding that he once more murmured to himself: 'He is out of his wits, that's all.'

'What could the old fool be driving at? and why did he keep him at a distance thus, as though his touch, and even his nearness, carried contagion?'

Anthony's eyes had returned to the Blackburn pedigree, and it was full a minute before he spoke again.

'If I ask you one question, William, will you answer me truly—just the truth, and no more? These men here, your forefathers as well as mine, were men of their word. It used to be said, though they had their faults: "As sure as a Blackburn's word;" and perhaps this one virtue may remain in you yet, notwithstanding—— But no; that is impossible;' and the white head and beard shook slowly from side to side.

'What is it you mean, sir?' interposed William with simulated indignation. 'I tell no more lies than my neighbours. If you come to that, you are not so particular about truth-telling yourself, it strikes me, since Mr Waller is such a friend of yours. You don't suppose that soft-spoken gentleman never tells a lie, do you? And Lawyer Moffat, too, he's another; and there's plenty more I could tell off on my fingers, if'——

'How did Bess really die, William?'

The effect of this sudden and most unexpected question was curious enough. Not only did he to whom it was put remain silent, with his lips apart and his face of an ashen paleness, but the questioner also turned as ghostly as himself. In the case of the former, this was explicable; for the old Squire had never before evinced the slightest interest in his daughter-in-law's supposed fate, any more than he had in her while she was alive; and as for other folks, William had easily silenced their inquiries as to detail with a few sullen words. Nobody cares to press a bad-natured man upon a distasteful matter, as the widower had taken care to shew this was to him; and when his mother had been inclined to be curious, he had treated her successfully, much as he had treated the jail chaplain: 'Don't ask me about poor Bess, mother; the subject is too distressing to me. Her end was peace, and let that content you.' Which it did, and the more so, since the nature of the reply convinced her how much there was of good in the character of her darling son, though many doubted it, because, forsooth, it did not always crop out upon the surface.

Thus Mr William, who, according to his promise at that harsh meeting, had transmitted to his wife the considerable sum of money paid to him by Richardson, had begun to consider the existence of Bess as an obstacle surmounted, a matter that was not to trouble him more; and this sudden reference to her from so unexpected a quarter embarrassed him exceedingly. What could it matter to his father how she died? and especially how could it so matter that the mere anxiety for the reply should change his face, so that it seemed more like that of a dead man—but for that same shrinking, loathing look which had come out afresh and more marked even than before—than that of the once ruddy Squire? He felt more alarmed and more at a loss for an answer than if the old man had asked him: 'Is your wife really dead?' Of course he had crudely contrived the story of her death, before he had ventured home. She had died of consumption (with which she had long been supposed to be threatened), and he had nursed her for many a long day and night. Not much of detail could be expected of such an end, and little, as we have said, had been asked for. But now, not only had inquiry thus unexpectedly arisen, but one which seemed to discredit his own statement.

'How did Bess really die, William?'

Absolutely nothing occurred to his conscience-stricken mind, at the moment, except procrastination; for evidently his father was in possession of some important fact, and the want of accord with it in his reply might be fraught with danger to his dearest hopes. He was as much in love with Lucy Waller as his coarse and selfish nature permitted him to be, and he was not going to own to any one that Bess was living, until he was absolutely obliged.

'Well, it is a very distressing story, father.'

'I ask, how did she die? If her end was such as you told your mother, there must have been a certificate of death; let me have *that*. But no; you are not to be trusted. I will write for it to Formosa myself.'

'You would give yourself a needless trouble, sir,' replied William Blackburn slowly. He saw the danger looming large and near before him, and since there was a lie that lay ready to his tongue by which it might be evaded, he did not hesitate a moment to make use of it. 'No such certificate exists; and since you press me so unmercifully—though I had hoped to spare myself so sad a story—I must needs tell you why my poor wife was never buried.'

The window was closed, and there was a fire on that late autumn day in the little room, yet the old man shivered, and seemed to shrink within himself.

'One moment, sir,' said he in trembling tones. 'You talk of sparing yourself; I am a very old and broken man; spare *me*. I do not know for certain what you are about to say. But if—if you are conscious in your mind—of something (and your face seems to tell me so) which it is better for your father not to hear—some act that no eyes save those of the All-seeing have witnessed, and which should make you hide yourself from the sight of man for ever, do not tell me the lie which your lips are about to frame. If you have any touch of feeling left for him that begat you, do not speak. I shall understand (Heaven help me!) your

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silence well enough. Go in peace, if God has peace to give you, and never darken these doors again. You shall have money without stint; but go; steal off at once; the money shall be sent wherever you appoint; but as you value your worthless life, dare not to pollute your mother's loving lips with a kiss of farewell.'

The old Squire looked furtively up with haggard eyes, and beheld on his son's face a look of the most genuine and unfeigned amazement.

'What!' continued he with a strange tremulous joy, which seemed to pervade his very limbs as well as his speech, 'is it possible that I deceive myself, that I have been racked and tortured for so long by a baseless suspicion? Speak, William, speak; and if you are innocent, if you have not done this deed, I swear I will forget all else you have done amiss, and only remember that you are my only son.'

Perhaps there are no men so base, but that beneficent Fortune now and again affords them some opportunity of starting afresh in the race of life, less weighted than could reasonably be expected, by the transgressions of their Past. The unseaworthy and wretched bark on which they have been aboard so long, nears the land so close that it does but require one stride to be ashore and safe. They have had experience enough (as one would think) of the stormy sea, now raised on the froth of the wave, now sunk in its gloomy trough, and it needs but a moment's courage, one quick decisive step, to reach *terra firma;* and yet how seldom they take it! Such a chance now presented itself to William Blackburn, and he deliberately declined to avail himself of it. It had become possible for him, in a quite unexpected and not-to-be-hoped-for fashion, to be reconciled with his father; to have all old scores wiped out, no matter how heavy they might be (it was impossible, looking on his father's face, to doubt it), provided only that he should make a clean breast of it, and tell the truth. But the condition was too hard. It seemed so much easier to use the materials of the lie which he had, as it were, by him.

'I can make no sort of guess, father,' said he coldly, 'of the nature of the particular suspicion which you harbour against me just at present. You have been suspicious of me all my life, and more or less, as now, without cause. As to silence respecting my wife's death, I have no reason to keep silence except that which I have already mentioned, the desire to spare myself, but more particularly my mother, a painful narration. Poor Bess came to her end, not indeed by consumption, but after a much sadder fashion. Her death was the result of accident—poor soul, she was drowned.'

There was a long pause, and a silence unbroken save by the autumn wind moaning at the casement, and a cinder dropping from the fire.

'At sea?' asked the old man in a hollow voice, in which there was still the distant echo of a hope.

'No, sir, not at sea. When walking in the dusk about Formosa, she fell down a steep and terrible place they call the well-hole'——

Anthony Blackburn rose with a piercing cry, and tottered to the window-corner, as though to put as great a space as possible between him and his son.

'You lie, you lie!' cried he; 'she did *not* fall. You pushed her down. I heard it from your own lips the other night, when you were raving. You told the truth then; yes, you did—you did. Murderer! murderer!'

The window was violently thrown open from the outside, and Herbert Stanhope strode over the sill.

'What is the matter, Mr Blackburn? Has this fellow dared to strike you?'

Old Anthony had sunk upon the ground, his shoulders only supported by the angle of the wall. His limbs hung strangely loose and still, and his lip was drawn upon one side; but still he made shift to speak. 'No, *no; he* has not smitten me; it is Heaven that has smitten me.—Keep near me, Stanhope—keep quite close—and send him away out of my sight for ever.'

INSECT PLAGUES OF THE UPPER AMAZONS.

None but those who have travelled on the Upper Amazons can have any idea of the number and voracity of the insect torments which work their wicked will on the bodies of the unfortunates exposed to their attacks; and as the 'sancudos,' as those insects commonly known to Europeans as 'mosquitoes' are here called (the term mosquito being applied to a small sand-fly, of which we shall speak hereafter), form by far the most important section, and indeed, as a common topic of conversation, fill the place of the weather in England, we will allot them the first place on the list.

In the 'Pueblos' villages, round which the forest is cleared away for some distance, the sancudos are generally pretty quiet during the day, except where darkness prevails: there they are ever busy; and there is a device much practised by the inhabitants for getting rid of them from the houses, which we will here relate. The window-frames—at least in those favoured establishments which possess windows—are covered with fine gauze, instead of glass; now, just before sundown, all the sancudos inside a house fly towards the light: taking advantage of this peculiarity, each inhabitant, at the approach of night, shuts up his house, and prevents the entrance of light, except through one window. On the inside of the gauze, stretched over the frames, all, or nearly all, the sancudos in the house will now collect; and, on the window being opened, fly out immediately. The moment the sun sinks below the horizon, the window is closed; and, by the practice of this precaution, and the assistance of good mosquito curtains, one may sometimes enjoy a comfortable night's rest. But let the window be left open five minutes only after sundown, and misery will attend you, for your house will be full; each sancudo that departed, having seemingly returned with all his kinsfolk and acquaintance. The triumphant note of a sancudo who has made his way under your curtains is, to our mind, more annoying than even his bite; and should you have been careless in getting into bed, and been accompanied by two or three of these blood-suckers, we will defy you to sleep until you have exterminated them. You lie still, and hear them buzzing round you; presently one approaches, and you make sure you have him nicely settled on your cheek; you give yourself an awful slap in the face; but—you don't kill the sancudo; on the contrary, you only hear him hum more merrily than ever. He knows very well you were not asleep, and is only amusing himself. When you are really at rest, he will have your blood. Though you may repeat the slapping

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process ever so often, you will never kill one; and the only way to insure peace is to get up, strike a light (every one takes a candle and matches to bed with him), and hunt them regularly down, taking care not to set the 'mosquitero' on fire in so doing.

In the forest and on the river, the sancudos are always busy day and night. When we first came up the river, I have known men get into the vessel's tops, and there cover themselves with sacks, notwithstanding the heat, rather than remain below exposed to their attacks. They punish women and children new to the country tremendously, frequently making them look as if they had small-pox.

Fortunately, they cannot stand a current of air, and so, when under weigh, we were comparatively free from them; but when at anchor, especially at feeding-time, they were something awful. A finer illustration of 'dinner under difficulties,' than was sometimes presented by our mess, could scarcely be imagined. A spectacle of men, their coats tied tightly round their wrists, and their trousers round their ankles, walking after the manner of a caged wild beast, a plate in one hand, a fork in the other, would probably have suggested the idea of escaped lunatics to an observer at a short distance to whom the cause would be invisible: and this is no exaggeration. We used to try all manner of devices to get rid of them, but without lasting effect. Creosote will certainly keep them off; but the remedy is as bad as the disease. Whitewash will drive them away; but when dry, its power ceases; and the only thing to do is either to cover all exposed parts of the body with black pigment *à la mode Indienne*, or else, as these Yankees say, to 'grin and bear it.'

Scarcely less troublesome than the sancudos are the mosquitoes, or sand-flies, although they have the negative merit of biting only by day. They are minute creatures, not much larger than a pin's head, they resemble much in shape the Cimex genus, and prefer the backs of the hands to any other spot for their attacks. But, unlike the sancudo, who, when undisturbed, gorges himself until unable to fly, and becomes an easy prey to your avenging finger, the mosquito never seems to take too much to prevent his easy escape on the slightest appearance of danger, being evidently just as wide awake when full as when empty; wherever he has sucked, he leaves a little black mark, from the blood coagulating in the puncture, and you find your hands occasionally presenting a most curious mottled appearance, from the attacks of these little wretches. Everywhere in long grass lurks the 'moquim,' a little red insect, so small as to be almost imperceptible, but which fastens on the legs, causing the most intolerable itching. The plan we adopted was, on our return from shooting-excursions, to wash all the lower parts of the body with 'Cachaça' (cane spirit); and this used to answer admirably.

There is a fly which burrows in the skin and deposits an egg, both in human beings and animals. This produces a maggot, similar in shape to that of the common blow-fly, but much larger. Of course, inflammation in the part, followed by suppuration and discharge or extraction of the foreign body, take place. Although the maggot is probably analogous to the Guinea-worm, it differs from it in being always discharged entire, whereas the Guinea-worm requires very careful and gradual extraction.

Then there are 'chigos,' which burrow mostly in the soles of the feet. You feel an intense itching, and on examination, find a little thing like a pea just under the epidermis; this is the bag containing the young chigos, which must be carefully picked out with the point of a knife, and the cavity left filled with tobacco-ash. It is said that if the bag is broken, and the young chigos escape, serious consequences will result. This, however, we do not believe, as we have broken many in the act of extracting them from our own feet; but always using plenty of tobacco-ash, we never experienced any inconvenience. Huge spiders abound, whose very appearance inspires a wholesome dread of a nearer acquaintance, but which are harmless enough if let alone. In fact, on board our steamers, almost every cabin was tenanted by one large spider, whose presence was tolerated on account of his being a deadly foe to cockroaches, which abominable creatures used to swarm on board. Sometimes he would not be visible for a fortnight or more at a time; but he would leave tokens that he was 'all there,' in the shape of the empty husks of cockroaches, from which he had carefully abstracted the interior. These spiders have the power of springing upon their prey from a distance, and some of them are so large and powerful as to kill and devour small birds.

In passing through the narrow forest-paths, it is necessary to be on the look-out for the wood-ticks, which are very difficult to get rid of, if once firmly attached; also for the huge black ants, an inch and a half in length, with stings like a hornet's; and the saüba ant, without sting, but armed with nippers like a pair of surgical bone-forceps, which are running about everywhere. One may sometimes chance upon a column of the dreaded 'fire-ants,' marching in regular military order; and if you do, the only thing is to bolt at once, for neither man nor beast may withstand the fire-ant and live. Occasionally one remarks the slender form of a tree-snake gliding away, or the deadly 'tucu-riju' basking in a sunny spot; while from out the mossy roots of the great trees, quaint little horned frogs peer at you, and startled lizards patter away over the dead leaves. When at length you stop to rest, take care to examine your camping-ground, lest you find that centipede or scorpion may fancy the same locality.

Frequently on board our steamer, both centipedes and scorpions would be killed, introduced, no doubt, in the wood used for fuel. One day, as we were watching the hands taking wood from canoes alongside, from one of the logs pitched on board was dislodged a scorpion, which fell on the naked left arm of a man keeping tally at the gangway. Astonished by his sudden flight through the air, the animal remained perfectly still. The man never moved a muscle, and quietly raising his right hand, flipped it away with his fingers and thumb. It was very neatly and coolly done; and he thus escaped a sting, which he no doubt would have received had he tried to brush it hastily away. Ants are a horrid plague, both afloat and ashore. It is amusing to see a host of small ants carrying off the body of a defunct cockroach, giving one the idea of mice departing with a dead elephant. But they are a great nuisance. They will not, however, walk over cotton wool; and anything

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placed on or enclosed by it is safe from them. The saüba ants are, we think, the greatest depredators of any. They form regular communities, where each individual, workers, soldiers, &c., has his own especial line of duty, and are great excavators. Mr Bates, in his work the *Naturalist on the Amazon*, has given a very capital description of these ants; but we fancy he has omitted to mention the extremely pungent aromatic smell they, or at least their nests possess. These ants are extremely destructive to cacao plantations, stripping the trees of their leaves; they will carry away a large basket of grain in a single night, should any of them come across it. A migration takes place sometimes from the parent stock, some of the ants becoming winged, and flying off. Few, however, escape the Indians, who are always on the watch for these migrations, and by whom these winged ants are considered rather a *bonne bouche*. They catch and stuff them into bottles, occasionally lightening the work by pulling the wings off one, and devouring him alive. We never had the courage to taste one, although we have partaken of many strange dishes. 'Monkey' and 'parrot' are both good, 'tapir' and 'manatee' not bad, and peccary A1; but we never ate a saüba ant; nor could we ever taste a drink much affected by the Indians, and called 'massato,' of which there is generally a large jar standing in the corner of every Indian dwelling. They always offer it to visitors; but their mode of so doing is not inviting, as it consists in a black or rather copper coloured paw being thrust into the aforesaid jar, which contains a sort of pulp, and bringing up a handful, which is squeezed into a calabash, and placed at your disposal. This pulp is, however, produced by means which, from unwillingness to disturb the stomachs of our readers, we refrain from relating. Those ants which escape the Indians fall a prey to flocks of hawks and other birds, which make their appearance as soon as ever a migration commences.

The Upper Amazons are little known to Englishmen, and in this article we have endeavoured to describe a few, and but a few, of the annoyances to which the resident thereon is subject, and which certainly do not augment the charms of a life otherwise by no means luxurious. It will probably surprise many to hear that one gets very tired of turtle. But such is the fact, when it forms the basis of every meal; although (and for this hint we believe ourselves entitled to gastronomic gratitude) a young turtle, roasted in its upper shell, is one of the greatest delicacies of an Amazonian dinner, and might be introduced to civilised palates with much advantage. *Probatum est.*

ROBERT'S CAPITAL HIT.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.

If there be such a thing in England as a cheerful waiting-room, which I do not believe, it certainly was not to be found at the London Bridge Railway Station ten years ago. It is almost that time since I have seen the dingy apartment, with the deplorable, high-silled windows; the shabby floor-clothed floors; the ingeniously uncomfortable benches; the heavy, dust-laden tables; the leather-bound Testaments; the dumpy bottle of stale, undrinkable water; the muggy glass; and the out-of-date time-table, which rendered a sojourn in the precincts of the London Bridge Railway a penitential exercise. Everything may be changed now, for aught I know, and the general first-class waiting-room may be as handsome, cheerful, refined, and habitable an apartment as those assigned to a similar purpose on the other side of the Channel, where the railways belong to the government, and the government best secures its own interests by consulting the convenience and the tastes of the people. I only know that waiting-room was a fearsome place on that fine summer forenoon, when I, finding I had missed a train for Sydenham, and should have an hour to wait for the next, seated myself despondently on one of the benches, on the surface of whose leather covering dust and grease contended for the supremacy, and made up my mind, ruefully, that this was almost as bad as putting up with Mrs John at Acanthus Villa.

A woman, whose face wore an expression of chronic discontent and fatigue, and two tired children, were in the dreary waiting-room; the former leaning her head forlornly in an angle of the wall; while the latter kicked the panels under the high-silled windows, and drummed upon the dirty lower panes, which they could hardly reach. I had bought a morning paper, but I did not feel inclined to read it. I am not a sufficiently large-minded woman to find solace for private trouble in public affairs, and my own small sphere occupies me to the exclusion of nobler themes. If the philosopher who defined the difference between the male and female intellect as integral, consisting in the incapacity of women to entertain abstract ideas, had known me, I am sure he might have cited me triumphantly in support of his theory. I remember one day when we were talking on this very subject of speculations, Robert said to me: 'Martha, my dear, you are a true woman, as to your brain; you have no faculty of generalisation.' And I replied: 'I daresay not. I have not the least notion what you mean; but I don't want to have the notion or the faculty either.' I found out afterwards what he meant, and I know he is right. If Robert were an officer in the army, I know I could not understand or care about war or peace, except as his safety and welfare should be concerned in them; and so it would be in every other case; so it was in this particular case. The Campo de los Angelos, with all its public and private interests, resolved itself for me into Robert's being mortified or pleased by the result of his undertaking and journey. Of all the unheroic, unambitious, narrow-minded women in the world, I do believe I am the most unheroic, unambitious, and narrow-minded.

No, I could not read the morning paper; and I took to gazing listlessly out at the large, intricate, dirty, comfortless station, where trains were arriving, departing, or standing about, having their doors slurred with water, and their windows

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pulled violently up, to be imperfectly rubbed with dirty cloths. The time passed heavily, and I had just ascertained that only a quarter of an hour of waiting had gone over, when I saw a man, whose appearance seemed familiar to me, coming along the platform from a train which had stopped at some distance, and approaching the waiting-room. In a few moments he had reached the threshold, followed by a porter, to whom he was speaking, and carrying a black bag. This person was Mr Sloane, of whom Robert had spoken, whom we had met occasionally at Acanthus Lodge; and the porter seemed to know him, and his infirmity, for he roared his replies to the questions which were put to him.

'You 're sure you haven't seen him?'

'Yes, sir, quite sure,' shouted the porter.

By this time they were both in the room, and Mr Sloane had placed his black bag on the huge dusty table. He sat down with his back to the window at which I was standing.

'Very extraordinary,' he said, in a voice almost as loud as that in which the porter had spoken, and which, together with his frowning and forbidding appearance, sent the children to their mother's side, whence they directed alarmed looks at the large gentleman who made himself so very much at home—'very extraordinary. I never knew him to be late before—never.'

'Perhaps the message did not reach him soon enough, sir,' the porter said, and evidently wished to get away, for he looked fussily out of window, as if he saw a train coming.

'Nonsense, nonsense,' and Mr Sloane roared more loudly than before. 'The message was in plenty of time. However, I must wait. Do you look sharp out there; you'll be on the platform, I suppose?'

'Yes, sir,' answered the man.

'I can't stand about there; and if he isn't watched, he may go away without seeing me. Look out for him. I'll wait a quarter of an hour or so; and if you see him, send him in here.'

He gave the man a shilling; and turning sulkily to the table, undid the spring fastening of his bag, and took out several papers tied together with red tape. The porter passed the window the next moment with one of his fellows, nodding his head and jerking his thumb in the direction of the unconscious Mr Sloane, who was mumbling and growling over his papers like a discontented bear. He had not seen me, and I had no wish to attract his attention. He would probably think it a great nuisance to have to talk to me during our common durance, and I found it always very fatiguing to talk to him, for he was uninteresting, deaf, rude, and irritable. He had just come up from Sydenham, I supposed, and had made an appointment with some individual, who had not kept it, to meet him at the station. I continued my unobservant look-out upon the platform, and Mr Sloane sat with his back to me, but not far from me, as I stood, still growling over his papers, while the tired children continued to watch him with round, alarmed eyes.

Presently I heard him scrabbling among the papers still in his bag, and muttering: 'Now, where the deuce is it? Where can I have put it? I certainly had it this morning, and I did not take it out in the train. Let me see. Did I?—No, certainly not.' Then he clicked his tongue against his teeth, with that sound unrenderable in words which signifies vexation, and searched through the papers again. I turned half round, and watched the search, but he did not notice me. He grew more and more angry and impatient; turned his bag up with the open mouth downwards; shook all its contents out upon the table; turned them over unavailingly—muttering all the time, sometimes inaudibly, but at others so that I could catch his words: 'There; if I've come without that, he might as well have staid away as not. What the deuce *have* I done with it? If I could even remember the address.—Hôtel de l'Univers, was it? Hôtel de Rouen? Hôtel de Calais? Hôtel de something or other. *What* was it?' Now he was franticly searching his pockets, of which—as he was wrapped up as if in mid-winter on this fine forenoon in May—he had several; and presently he pulled out a white silk muffler, and with it a letter, which fell to the ground, and on which he pounced with a grunt of satisfaction, muttering: 'How the deuce did it get there?'

'Your train, ma'am,' said the porter to whom Mr Sloane had given the shilling, 'just starting. —Come along, little uns;' and he good-naturedly took the smaller child in his arms, while the mother led the other away, who went with a backward glance at the gruff old gentleman, with whom I now found myself alone.

He unfolded the letter, which was written on large business-like paper, and spreading it out on the table, set his elbows on either side of it, and holding his head between his hands, began to mutter and mumble more continuously and loudly than before. My position was not pleasant; he was evidently skimming the letter in order to find out some particular passage—probably the name of the hotel he had been trying to recall. I could distinctly hear what he said where I stood, and I could not change my position without attracting his attention, which I particularly wished to avoid. I was thinking that I must do this unpleasant thing, however, when Mr Sloane said, quite aloud: 'Hôtel d'Espagne! That 's it, of course. That 's where Dorrison's man found him!' and proceeded to make a memorandum in his pocket-book. The words so startled me, that I turned quite round, and then and there proved myself incapable of entertaining, or at least of acting on the abstract idea of honour, for I felt instinctively that if I listened to this deaf gentleman's communing with himself, I should learn something which it might be of importance to Robert to know, and it never occurred to me not to listen. Indeed—so confused are the feminine 'moral ideas'—I had a notion that there was something 'providential' in the circumstances. At anyrate, I stood quite still, and sideways, at a few feet from Mr Sloane, who presently began to read the letter before him in an audible voice, and almost consecutively. The earlier passages of the letter were of no importance; but soon I heard this: 'Disney is playing an artful game; but I daresay as much for the fun as for the profit of it. But to prolong this kind of fun does not suit us, so I have determined to bring the matter to a conclusion. I have not happened to meet Dorrison's man, though I know he is in Paris; indeed, Disney has said as much, and almost acknowledged the game he is playing; so I suppose he has given him a rendezvous somewhere else. Of course, if it were worth our while,

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we could ascertain that very easily, but it is not. I am resolved now to use the five hundred pounds assigned debt, which Colvill prepared as a last resource, in case Disney was unmanageable, or Dorrison's man was treading too closely on our heels. Fortunately, the method of procedure here, in matters of the kind, is very summary; and *I know*, as a fact, that it would not be possible for Disney to lay his hands on five hundred pounds. Indeed, living the life he does, I am surprised he has five pounds in his pocket. I have just now given instructions to Fayolle's people. The five hundred pounds debt to Roberts and Smith is safely assigned to them, as you are aware, and they will take immediate action. Disney will find himself in a very short time lodged at Clichy; and the man who brings him the ready money to get him out will be the successful candidate for Campo de los Angelos. It is fortunate there is such an effectual screw ready to be put on, for he really is the most tiresome fellow, the most slippery customer, I ever had to deal with. But we have him now. Yesterday, he was so cool upon our bargain, had so much the air of a man who was going to slip through my fingers, I made up my mind this must be done at once. Fayolle's people will act to-morrow, so don't let any time be lost on your side. Let me have a draft on Lafitte for five hundred and fifty pounds by the tenth. I will report progress to-morrow.' Then came a pause, and some mumbled sentences which I did not catch. I had listened with painful intensity, I had heard with perfect distinctness, but my mind was not clear enough to take note, in any practical sense, of its own impressions. I knew I should not forget a word that I had heard, though some portions of the letter came back to me with more force than the others. I knew my memory was quite trustworthy, but there might be more for me to hear. After a little, I should be able to collect my thoughts, and decide on what was to be done. I remained motionless, and still intently listening; but Mr Sloane thrust the letter, with a final impatient grunt, into his bag, snapped the lock, and rose. I turned my face to the window, and leaned my forehead against the glass. It would have been unfortunate that he should recognise me just then, as he probably knew who was 'Dorrison's man,' whom his correspondent was so very certain about outwitting. Mr Sloane was walking heavily to the door, when the porter again made his appearance, and said: 'Mr Colvill's a comin' in, sir;' and in the next breath: 'Your train now, ma'am.'

Mr Sloane hurried out, and I caught sight of a slight dark man, whom he met a few paces from the door of the waiting-room, and with whom he walked away.

'Your train, ma'am,' repeated the waiter.

'Thank you,' I answered; 'I have changed my mind; I am not going.'

The man looked a little surprised, but I suppose railway porters see a good many eccentric and foolish people in the course of their lives; and this one said nothing to indicate that to have waited nearly an hour for a particular train, in such an uninviting place, and then change one's mind about travelling by it, was not the most orderly and rational of proceedings. I left the station and crossed over to the enclosed passage, which led, in arcade fashion, in those days, to the Tooley Street side, but which no longer exists. In that passage there were queer little shops, where the railway passenger could rush in and purchase fruit, cakes, confectionery, dolls, writing-desks, railway-rugs, spectacles, paper-knives, slippers, and other useful commodities. I entered the cake-shop near the entrance, bought some pastry, which gave me an excuse for asking for a seat; and then, opening my pocket-book on the counter, I wrote down every word of the letter I had heard read out by Mr Sloane. I had no doubt of the entire correctness with which I reproduced it; the sentences arranged themselves in my memory with unerring exactness: '*Disney will find himself in a very short time lodged at Clichy; and the man who brings him the ready money to get him out will be the successful candidate for Campo de los Angelos.*'

I tried to recall what it was I had heard Robert telling John about the summary action of French law in cases of debt, and how creditors in England could assign their debtors' obligations to French holders, and so bring them under the action of the law; but I had no very clear notion of it all. It did not matter, however. No doubt, the writer of that letter knew what he was about, and my business was to act on the information I had obtained.

I had Robert's letter with me, and now read it carefully again. The other formed a startling commentary upon it. Mr Dorrison was not in town, so that I could not go to him, tell him what I had found out, and leave him to circumvent the designs of the other party. I retraced my steps to the London Bridge Railway Station, and entering the continental department, ascertained the hour at which the mail-train for Paris, *vid* Dover and Calais, would be despatched. Six o'clock P.M. It was now half-past eleven. There was time enough, but none to spare, for what I had to do.

Mr John Hackett had his place of business, and also his place of abode, at No. 300 Lincoln's Inn Fields. He was the quietest and most business-like of men, and held Lincoln's Inn, out of whose precincts he rarely stirred, in reverence and admiration worthy of Tim Linkinwater. He had been an old friend of my parents, and took a kindly interest in myself and Gerty. He had not approved of my marriage, not on particular, but on general grounds. He did not see the good of it. Let people keep to themselves, and spend their little or much money, as the case might be, on themselves—that was his doctrine. He was very consistent; he had never married, or been suspected of the remotest notion of paying attention to any woman in his life. I don't know what his exact connection with the legal profession was; I believe he had some, though not 'a lawyer,' in the precise sense of the term; but, whatever his business was, he stuck to it pertinaciously, never went out, or had company at home, and cherished nothing except his cat and his cough. I believe to have lost either would have grieved him sorely.

The first thing I had to do was to see Mr John Hackett. That was easy; but I was not so sure about what was to come after, and had plenty of time to become very uncertain and uncomfortable about it, before a dreadful jingling, jolting 'four-wheeler' deposited me at his door. What a fool I was not to have gone in a Hansom, but I am as inconsistent as most women. I had made up my mind to do rather a daring thing, but I had not the

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courage to get into a Hansom by myself! It is ten years ago, you must remember.

Mr Hackett was at home, and could see me; and in a short time I found myself in his private office—a gloomy room, with a very oppressive smell of parchment and mouldy ink about it—and explaining to him, while he maintained profound silence, that I had come to ask him for my five hundred pounds. I am sure my stammering speech and confused countenance would have justified Mr Hackett in suspecting me of the most nefarious designs in making this application. If he had thought I wanted the money in order to run away from Robert, and endow a gay Lothario with all my worldly goods, I should not have blamed him. This suspicion did not present itself to him, but I saw at once that which did.

'It is very odd that you should come in this way, and ask me for this sum, without giving me any notice,' said Mr Hackett severely.

'I know it is,' I replied; 'but Mr Heron told me he had explained to you that I had the right to claim it, of my own accord, at any time, and I am sure you will not make any difficulty about letting me have it. It is of immense importance to me, to Mr Heron, that there should not be an hour's delay.'

'Soh!' said Mr Hackett slowly; 'this is to follow the rest, I suppose. Well, well, it is of a piece with the folly of all you women. I thought the nest-egg would not be left long.'

How angry I felt with him! Afterwards, when Robert explained that Mr Hackett, who did not know any of the circumstances, had taken a perfectly correct and sensible view of the case, and had been very right and very kind in deploring his inability to prevent my committing what it was impossible for him to regard otherwise than as an act of arrant folly, I pretended to be convinced, but I was not. More want of generalisation, I suppose, another instance of inability to take in 'abstract ideas!'

'I cannot explain myself fully, Mr Hackett,' I said; 'and of course I cannot make you give me the money, if you won't; I can only assure you that if you do not give it to me, you will do me an irreparable injury.'

'Don't excite yourself,' said Mr Hackett; 'you shall have the money—not with my free will, remember; and I hope you will never regret having insisted upon it. I hold your husband's letter of instructions: you are quite right about that; but I am sorry to have to act on it. I hoped your husband would have had more wisdom and self-control.'

'My husband has plenty of wisdom and plenty of self-control,' I answered sharply; 'but the money is wanted for a matter in which the need could not have been foreseen.'

'Ay, ay, I know—the old story. No one ever foresees. However, it's no business of mine.'

'You shall know all about it afterwards, Mr Hackett,' I said imploringly; 'only believe me now, that I want the money for a good purpose. Indeed, it shall be replaced in your hands in a few days.'

He shook his head, but said nothing; then turned his chair round to his desk, and opened a long drawer, from whence he took a cheque-book and a slip of paper with a stamp upon it. Slowly and deliberately he made out the cheque. I watched the writing of every letter of it. Then he wrote something on the oblong slip of stamped paper, and telling me that it was a receipt for five hundred pounds, directed me to sign it. I did so, and he then handed me the precious cheque.

'Shall I send and get it cashed for you?' he asked me.

'No, thank you,' I said eagerly; 'I am going to the neighbourhood of the Bank, and will cash it myself.'

'Take care where you put it,' he said; 'and look sharp after your purse as you come out of the Bank.'

'Good-bye, Mr Hackett, and a thousand thanks.'

'Good-bye, Mrs Heron: you are a very foolish woman, and I hope you may not yet be very sorry for this day's work.'

He came with me to the cab, for all that, and shook hands with me when I was seated in it; and said: 'Tell Heron I should be glad to see him.'

'I will, when he returns from Paris.'

The cab moved on, and I left Mr Hackett, looking surprised. It had not occurred to me that he did not know Robert was away. He must have wondered more than ever what I wanted with the money.

It was just one o'clock when I reached the Bank of England. I cashed my precious cheque, taking the money in five notes of a hundred pounds each; and having fastened my purse securely into the bosom of my dress, I drove once more to the London Bridge Railway Station, and found a train, in which I took my place, just about to start for Sydenham.

My cousin, Mrs Eccles, lived close to the station at Sydenham, in a small house, with the prettiest of gardens and the greenest of palings. She was a widow, neither young nor handsome, but both clever and sensible, and I enjoyed her society very much. I did not see her often, because nothing would induce her to encounter the best-parlour *régime* of Clapham, and my mother-in-law regarded her as an eccentric person, a dubious companion for a well-regulated young woman. If Mrs Heron did not 'hold with' speculators, she held still less with clever women. She did not see the good of it, for her part—literary women never made good wives, or housekeepers, and they had much better leave 'such things'—by which my mother-in-law meant the writing of books—to men, who had sense. One of the trials, then, that had attended my removal to Clapham, and the relinquishment of our own happy little house, was the decrease in my opportunities of seeing my cousin. Mrs Eccles was writing in her tiny drawing-room, and was surprised and pleased to see me. I told her at once what had happened, and was much reassured by her composed acquiescence in my own plan of proceeding.

'Yes, of course,' she said. 'You must go to Paris by to-night's mail, and take the money to your husband. Whether this Mr Disney is in Clichy or out of it, this will secure Mr Heron's success; and equally, of course, your mother-in-law, and that detestable British matron, Mrs John Heron, must not know anything about it.'

'That was my chief difficulty—I felt it ought to be avoided, if possible: I could not explain things to them; and if they thought I had merely gone off to Paris, to join Robert, for a freak! oh, my goodness, I am sure I don't know what they

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would say of me, or when I should hear the end of it!'

'I should think not, indeed. No, they must not know. You must do this little bit of business quietly—just going to Paris to-night, and coming back by the mail to-morrow night. When you have put the money and the information into your husband's hands, you have nothing more to do in the matter; leave him to make use of them.'

'I understand all that,' I replied; 'but the difficulty is to account for my absence. My mother-in-law will be so surprised and alarmed, if I don't return. I came down to ask you how I should explain my going, for I did not see how I could by any ingenuity conceal it.'

Mrs Eccles thought for a moment, then said briskly: 'She would never think of coming here to look for you, would she, if you told her you would remain with me for a couple of days?'

'No, I don't think she would; but I am sure she would make my staying here, during Robert's absence, a cause of offence, and harp upon it for many a day.'

'Never mind that; something must be encountered in a case like this; and it is better you should be blamed for staying here, than subjected to the frightful accusation of being a clever woman, who is doing a sensible thing to help her husband in a difficulty. You'll get over the one—but the other? Think of the inconsistency, my dear! It would never do. You must write a note from here—Mrs Heron will get it to-night, just when she will be expecting you home—and in that note you must tell a fib or two. You must say I have prevailed upon you to remain here for a couple of days, and that you will return to Clapham on Saturday afternoon.'

'Well—but—if she should ever find it out?'

('Moral ideas' again.)

'I don't think she will; but if she ever does, lay the blame on Robert. My belief is you will succeed in managing this affair, and your share in it will never be suspected; and Robert's capital hit will elevate him in the opinion of his mother—success always does elevate people in every one's opinion, you know; and all will go on much better for the future.'

'You will have to lend me the money for my travelling expenses,' I said; 'I have only ten shillings, beside my five hundred pounds.'

'I'll do that,' replied my cousin; 'and also I will lend you a little bag and a brush and comb; and those, with a collar and a couple of pocket-handkerchiefs, will be all the luggage there can be any occasion for you to take with you. And now, you are going to lie down and rest, until your dinner is ready, and to put all care and anxiety off your mind, for I will undertake that you shall be at London Bridge in time for the mail-train to Dover.'

She was a very cheering, helpful sort of woman; a capital person to have with one in any trouble, or when one was nervous or undecided. There was no indecision about *her*. I wrote the note, which I made as vague as possible, with a cowardly kind of notion that thereby I reduced the magnitude of the fibs which I had to resort to. There was clearly no alternative but to keep my mother-in-law in ignorance of my audacious act in taking the last money I possessed to Robert, on such an errand. I had a good rest, though I could not sleep, and a good dinner, during which Mrs Eccles talked to me in her cheery, bright, encouraging way, and made fun of my first appearance in the character of an unprotected female. She kept her word in every particular. She came with me to London Bridge; she bought my ticket, and selected a corner seat for me in a comfortable carriage; and as the train moved out of the station, I saw her bright, plain, sensible face to the last, and felt as if she were still patting me on the back.

I shall never forget Robert's face when he came to the door of the carriage in which I sat, at the *porte-cochère* of the Hôtel de Calais, and saw who was the 'lady' who had requested to see him; and I shall never forget what he said to me, when he had heard my story, told with the utmost incoherence and nervousness, for I broke down the moment I saw him, and felt that I need not be strong-minded any longer. But I made him understand it somehow, and put the money into his hands. What he said was very precious to me, and might have been dangerous, as provocative of self-conceit, had I not had the counterpoise of my mother-in-law and Mrs John to any risk of my thinking myself ready-witted. I asked him only one thing, in return for what he was pleased to call a service of incalculable importance: it was, that he would never tell any one, if he succeeded, that I had had any part in the transaction. He promised; and I think he has kept his word pretty well. But Mr Dorrison asked to be introduced to me not long after, when everything had succeeded, and took an early opportunity of presenting me with some beautiful ornaments; and has ever since evinced a livelier interest in me than is to be quite accounted for by the business relations between him and Robert.

I had a long rest, while Robert hurried away to see what had befallen Mr Disney. In some hours he returned, and told me his adventures. They are easily summed up, in the words of Mr Sloane's discomfited correspondent, who narrowly escaped being thrown out of window the next day by the enraged colonial—in the words which Robert quoted from my notes of the letter: '*The man who brought him the money to get him out of Clichy is the successful candidate for Campo de los Angelos.*' The bargain was concluded that very day, and the triumphant result telegraphed to Dorrison. Then Robert and I drove about Paris for a while, and dined in a wonderful room, so full of velvet and flowers, and gilding and looking-glasses, that I could hardly eat my dinner for bewilderment. It was on that occasion that we sketched out the scheme of a future visit to Paris; and I am afraid we were as much pleased and amused as a pair of naughty children at the escapade I had effected, and the little secret he and I and my cousin, Mrs Eccles, possessed in common. He put me into the train, and we parted quite gaily, laughing at the idea of my having made a journey which would have been talked about for a month at Clapham, with perfect ease. He did not mean to lose sight of Mr Disney until the final signing and sealing had been done. His last words to me were: 'I wonder if our dear old house at Hampstead is to be had?' And then I knew that Robert thought the turn in the long lane of our troubles had been reached, and this 'little bit of a venture' was to be the broad way out of them.

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When I made my appearance at Clapham I was very coldly received, and my conciliatory attempts were received with a long series of sniffs. I was not afraid of questions; Mrs Eccles was a person concerning whom my mother-in-law would not condescend even to be curious.

Robert came home a few days after, and called on Mr Hackett within a few hours of his return. My five hundred pounds were safely lodged in his cautious keeping again; and I suppose Robert made a satisfactory apology for me, as, when I next saw Mr John Hackett, he told me he had believed me to be a much more foolish woman than I had turned out to be, and he congratulated Robert on having made a less fatal blunder in his marriage than almost any man of his acquaintance.

Campo de los Angelos was a brilliant success, and did prove to be the turning-point in our fortunes. 'The very clever way in which Robert managed a critical and difficult affair for Mr Dorrison, and the confidential and profitable relations resulting therefrom,' is a favourite theme with my mother-in-law, who likes us almost as well as she likes John and Mrs John, now that we have a finer house than Acanthus Lodge, and Heron and Shaw are no longer 'rising' young men, but in an assured and prosperous position. She is not, however, altogether inconsistent; she still declares, on occasion, that she does not 'hold with' speculations; though in that mine affair, somewhere in America, a place with a name which she would not pronounce if she could, regarding it as Spanish and impious, Robert had certainly made a Capital Hit.

THE CLOUD-MOUNTAINS.

When the day was slowly fading,
And the storm was hushed to rest,
I marked a lofty mountain chain
Against the glowing west.

High towered its mighty summits,
Half bathed in azure mist;
Its sides were clad with dazzling snow,
Its peaks by sunlight kissed;

And at its feet there slumbered
The southern English scene—
The violet-scented hedgerows,
The meadow's emerald sheen.

But by the Scottish blood that beats
Within my alien breast,
Ne'er rose behind so tame a scene
So fair a mountain crest;

And as with yearning eyes I gazed
On each enhaloed height,
The budding English woodland
All faded from my sight.

The mountain sky was o'er my head,
Aflame with sunset glare;
And with wild joy I drank again
The misty mountain air;

And where the sunny slope had smiled,
There frowned the rugged steep;
And where the rivulet had gleamed,
I saw the cascade leap;

And dearer than the violet breath
In dewy English vale,
The sweet familiar heather-scent
Was borne upon the gale;

And gladsome, to my Scottish ears,
As mother's lullaby,
I heard the music of the hills,
The torrent's melody;

And high above the foaming flood,
Beyond the heath-clad plain,
Still rose against the western sky
The same fair mountain chain.

Fair as the golden dreams that come
With morning's earliest ray,
The vision shone, and then as swift,
Alas! it passed away.

Paler and fainter to my eyes,
The mighty mountains grew,
Till, mingling with the air itself,
They faded into blue.

And with them faded, too, the spell
That bound me heart and brain;
The deep ravine was gone—I saw
The southern fields again.

O say not it was but a cloud,
Reared by the storm-wind's art;
It was a vision sent in love,
To cheer my drooping heart.

For lighter far, since that bright eve,
The days have gone and come,
For that sweet glimpse, bestowed by Heaven,
Of beauty and of home.

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HUMAN HAIR—REAL AND FALSE.

THE dark-haired races of mankind, according to Dr Prichard, inhabit the greater portion of the habitable globe. The black-haired Celts and Cymri were driven out by the fair-haired followers of the Norwegian sea-kings, and later by the Danes of the same type. Dr Wynter points out, that, at the present moment, the fairest-haired inhabitants of the earth are to be found north of the parallel 48 degrees. This line cuts off England, Belgium, the whole of Northern Germany, and the greater portion of Russia. Race determines the colour of the hair more than latitude or temperature; hence, brown hair has of course resulted from the admixture of the dark and light haired races. This colour is very predominant in England. Dr Beddoes examined the hair of 726 women, and of those he found that 22 had red hair; 95, fair hair; 240, brown; 336, dark brown; and only 33 had black hair. In one case, a weight of 22,000 grains has been supported by a single hair.

We have heard of a scientific barber who always enlightened his customers by informing them that 'the 'uman 'air is an 'ollow tube.' He was right. Each hair is a cylindrical tube $\frac{1}{350}$th part of an inch in diameter; and colour depends upon the fluid which fills it. The colouring matter is drawn directly from the blood. Golden hair owes its brightness to an excess of sulphur and oxygen; and black, to a great deal of carbon, and little sulphur and oxygen. Gray hair is, of course, owing to an absence of the colouring matter. In albinos, the hair is perfectly white. Marie Antoinette's hair turned gray in the night preceding her execution. Dr Wynter supposes that the blood sends some fluid among the pigment of the hair which at once changes its colour. The same author remarks, that in some, though very rare instances, persons have been born with patches of white hair; and there is at present in the Museum of Natural History at Paris a portrait of a piebald negro, in which the hair of the head presents very much the party-coloured appearance of the wigs exposed in the shop-windows, half-black and half-white, as specimens of the power of the various hair-dyes.

Respecting the hair standing on end from fright or other causes, the earliest instance is that mentioned by Job (iv. 15): 'Then a spirit passed before my face; *the hair of my flesh stood up*,' &c. Virgil, Seneca, and Shakspeare all allude to this. Dr Washbourne says this is owing to the outer layers of the hair-follicle being derived from the corinum or 'true' skin containing muscular fibres; these fibres, by the stimulus of mental emotion, contract, thereby causing the protrusion of the follicle, and consequent erection of the hair. The so-called 'goose-skin' is caused by similar contractility. Some physiologists think that curly hair is produced from a flattening of one side of the hair more than the other.

The apertures of the skin in which the hair grows are so constructed that, after a head has become bald, all the oils and pomades that have ever been advertised are powerless to revive the growth of the hair. An eminent German counted the number of hairs in heads of four different colours: in a blonde one, he found 140,400 hairs; in a brown, 109,440; in a black, 102,962; and in a red one, 88,740.

The Assyrians were very particular about their hair; and the beard was curled and plaited, as any one may observe in the Nineveh marbles in the British Museum. In that collection, an auburn wig, found in the Temple of Isis, at Thebes, is preserved: it must have been in the tomb upwards of two thousand years. The Egyptian kings had gold thread interwoven with their beards. This nation shaved their heads and chins, and wore wigs and *artificial beards*. The beard of a god is represented in their sculptures as being turned up at the end. The Egyptian women, as appears by figures of Isis, cut it square round the neck; but that strange *coiffure* which is seen upon Egyptian figures, on coins of Juba and the Parthian kings, Count Caylus thinks to be a peruke of wool. Curling hair was used by both sexes among the Phrygians and Sybarites; the Armenians wore their hair twisted in the form of a mitre; the

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Persians, long, flowing, and curled; and the Arabians, cut upon the crown of the head.

The Jewish women kept their hair long, and also the men. Absalom's hair is said to have weighed two hundred shekels. Josephus tells us that Solomon, on grand occasions, was preceded by forty pages with their hair powdered with gold-dust. It is on record that Mausolus, king of Caria, to whose manes Artemisia erected the celebrated tomb, had a number of wigs manufactured, and then ordered all his subjects to be shaved, in order to compel them to buy his perukes at any price, to recruit his exhausted treasury.

The Greeks were very chaste in the arrangement of their hair; both sexes gathered it up into a kind of knot on the crown of the head, which was often ornamented with a grasshopper. They used hair-dye, for we read that the sculptor Miron, aged seventy, fell in love with Laïs; and, after he had been repulsed, had his white locks dyed black, and asked again; but she replied: 'How can I grant thee to-day what I refused to thy father yesterday?' Ælian describes the tresses of Atalanta as being golden or tawny (ξανθός). Evelyn says the Greeks shaved the heads of their children, leaving locks on each side, which they afterwards consecrated to their divinities.

The Romans were more elaborate than the Greeks about their hair. As the slaves were invariably cropped, the Roman gentlemen cultivated long hair. The Emperor Commodus powdered his with gold-dust. Martial says:

> A beau is one who, with the nicest care,
> In parted locks divides his curling hair;
> One who with balm and cinnamon smells sweet,
> Whose humming lips some Spanish air repeat.

They used a liquid for turning the hair black, prepared from leeches which had been left to putrefy for sixty days. But a dye that changed dark hair to fair was the most fashionable; it was made of a soap composed of goats' fat and ashes. Martial calls it Malliac balls, from Mallium in Germany. Ovid reproaches his mistress for having destroyed her hair by the use of injurious dyes. Ladies even cut off their hair, if dark, to replace it with a flaxen wig. When a man attained his majority, he shaved off his beard, and presented it at the temple of one of the gods. Nero presented his to Jupiter Capitolinus. Shaving continued in fashion until the time of Hadrian, who let his beard grow, to cover imperfections in his chin. Galen tells us that, in his time, women suffered much from headaches, contracted by standing bareheaded in the sun, to obtain this golden tint, which others attempted by the use of saffron. St Gregory Nazianzen, extolling his sister, says: 'She has no *yellow hair* tied in knots and arranged in curls.' The Romans began to cut the hair about 454 A.U.C., when Ticinus Mænas introduced barbers from Sicily. Many busts and statues in the Vatican and elsewhere have actually marble wigs upon them.

Diodorus Siculus says that the Britons, who had red hair, washed it in water boiled with lime to make it redder. The ancient Gauls had a like custom of washing the hair with a lixivium made of chalk, in order to make it redder. At the beginning of the French monarchy, the people chose their kings by the length of their hair. The Venetian ladies dyed their hair a gold colour by a preparation consisting of two pounds of alum, six ounces of black sulphur, and four ounces of honey distilled in water.

Long hair was a distinguishing feature with the Danes. In an ancient Danish poem, *The Death-song of Lodbroc*, we have mention made of 'the lover of the *lady beauteous in his locks*.' The hair of King Canute hung in rich profusion over his shoulders.

In the Anglo-Saxon illuminations of Prudentius, the hair appears to be cut short; but long hair was fashionable in the time of Edward the Confessor—persons not noble being obliged, as in France, to cut it round upon the middle of the forehead. In Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, the beard and hair are frequently painted *blue*. Strutt, remarking upon this, says: 'In some instances, which are not so common, the hair is represented of a bright *red* colour, and in others it is of a *green* and *orange* hue. I have no doubt existing in my own mind that arts of some kind were practised at this period to colour the hair; but whether it was done by tinging or dyeing it with liquids prepared for that purpose, according to the ancient eastern custom, or by powder of different hues cast into it, agreeably to the modern practice, I shall not presume to determine.' When monks were shorn, the first lock was cut off by the king or some great person. Gifts to the church were often confirmed by laying hairs of the head upon the altar.

Time has very little effect upon hair. The auburn locks of the Countess D'Albini, wife of the founder of Wymondham Abbey, were found to be as fine and glossy as if just taken from the head of a living person, when her tomb was opened seven hundred years after her burial. Fabyan, in his *Cronicle*, says: 'At this time [William I.], prists used bushed and braided heads, long-tailed gounes, and blasyn clothes, shinying and golden girdles, and rode with gilt spurs, using of divers other enormities.' The Norman ladies coloured their hair to give it a yellow tint. In the twelfth century, the hair was parted from the front of the forehead to the crown. Astrologers speak of fit days for combing the hair, so that it is probable our ancestors did not perform that operation daily. In the reigns of Henry III. (1216) and Edward I. (1272), the hair was worn very bushy at the sides, and arrayed in large curls. Chaucer says the locks of the young squire were curled as if laid in a press. The same author thus describes Emelie in the *Knightes Tale:*

> Hire yelwe heer was browdid in a tresse
> Behynde hire back, a yerde long, I gesse.

The ladies in the thirteenth century gathered up the hair into a net or caul of gold thread, replacing the gracefully arranged *couvre-chef* of the previous century. 'Alexis of Piemount' has the following receipt 'to make heare as yelow as golde:' 'Take the ryne or the scrappynges of rubarbe, and stiepe it in white wyne or in clear lye; and after you have washed your head with it, you shall weate your heares with a sponge or some other cloth, and lette them drye by the fyre, or in the sunne. After this, weate them and drye them agayne; for the oftener you dooe it, the fairer they will be, without hurting your head anyethying at all.'

In the fourteenth century, the hair was parted

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on the forehead, and confined at each side of the face, usually in plaits; a gorget or wimple covered the neck, and was drawn up over the chin, strained up each side of the face, and generally fastened across the forehead, which was encircled with a fillet, ornamented with jewels. Over the head a veil was drawn, which fell down upon the shoulders. In the latter part of the century, cauls or close caps were worn, made of network, in which the hair was confined round the face. The fronts were frilled in various patterns. Some of the cauls were of gold and silver network ornamented with jewels at the intersection.

Soon after the commencement of the fifteenth century, the side cauls of the crespine head-dress were always of large size; frequently the outer edges were elevated above the forehead, so as to form horns; hence these head-dresses were called *horned*. About 1470, the wired or butterfly head-dress began to be much in fashion, especially among ladies of rank. The hair was strained into a richly ornamented cap, over which a veil of fine materials was extended, making altogether a very preposterous affair. At the end of the century, a kind of bonnet was used. Its leading characteristics were long frontlets or lappets, which formed an angle over the forehead, and hung down at each side. The steeple head-dress, with a long veil hanging down behind, was also in fashion in this century. A French moralist said: 'One manner of spoiling and abusing one's vestments is as to the form, which, as regards women, I consider in four parts. The first is the head, which used to be horned, but is now mitred in these parts of France. . . . . And now these mitres are in the shape of chimneys. . . . . And the more beautiful and younger the wearer, the higher chimneys they carry.' In the sixteenth century, ladies wore kennel-shaped bonnets; afterwards, small circular caps; and then a kind of close linen cap, projecting forward at each side of the face, often with a jewelled fillet over the forehead, and a lappet dependent behind. At the end of the century, the hair was brushed back from the temples, and the French hood had the lappet at the back thrown forward over the top of the head; and broad-brimmed hats were worn, which were much used among the Puritans in the seventeenth century. A calash or hood was also used.

Mr Rimmell, in his *Book of Perfumes*, says that there are three styles principally adopted by a Chinese lady for dressing her hair, which styles indicate whether she is a maid, wife, or widow. From her infancy to her marriage, a young girl wears the back part of her hair braided into a tail, and the remainder combed over her forehead, and cut into the shape of a crescent. On her wedding-day, her head is decorated with a crown covered with tinsel-paper; and on the next day her hair is dressed for the first time in the well-known *teapot* style. On holidays, she ornaments it with flowers. When she becomes a widow, she shaves part of her head, and binds round it a fillet, fastened with numerous bodkins, which are sometimes very costly. The men shave their heads, keeping only on the summit a long tuft of hair, of which they are very proud, although it was originally a mark of their subjection to the Tartars.

The Abyssinian ladies and gentlemen put a great deal of rancid butter on their heads. The Bedouin Arabs of Mount Sinai have their hair plaited and so arranged as to resemble a horn placed on the forehead. The Fejee Islanders dye their hair blue, red, and yellow, in patches; and the natives of the Duke of York's Island smear it with grease, and then sprinkle it with coloured powders. In the Britannia Islands, people take a good deal of trouble to make their black hair look white.

Poor Louis VII., at the instigation of his bishops, shaved his hair and beard; but Eleanor, his consort, so disliked his appearance, that she soon afterwards obtained a divorce. In the reign of Henry VIII., the women, as well as the men, are in portraits represented with very little hair; but the latter made up for it in the length of their beards. In the twenty-fifth *Coventry Mystery*, we read: 'With syde lokkys I schrewe their *here* to thy coleer hanging down.'

In Medwall's *Interlude of Nature*, Pride, one of the characters, says:

> I love it well to have syde [broad] hair
> Half a foot beneath mine ear,
> For ever more I stand in fear
> That thy neck should take cold.
> I knit it up all the night,
> And the daytime comb it down right,
> And then it crispeth, and shineth as bright
> As any pyrled gold.

Fairholt, in his *History of Costume*, engraves a portrait of Sir Thomas Meauty (*temp.* James I.), representing that gentleman wearing a love-lock reaching to his elbow. The Puritans denounced long hair with great virulence. Dr Hall, in 1643, says: 'Some men have long locks at their eares, as if they had foure eares, or were prick-eared; some have a little long lock only before, hanging downe to their noses, like the taile of a weasall; every man being made a foole at the barber's pleasure, or making a foole of the barber for having to make him such a foole.' The same writer wrote a book on the *Loathsomenesse of Long Haire*, in 1654. Fletcher, in his *Purple Island*, thus alludes to love-locks:

> A long love-lock on his left shoulder plight,
> Like to a woman's hair, well shewed a woman's sprite.

A song printed in 1641, entitled *The Character of a Roundhead*, thus commences:

> What creature 's this, with his short hairs,
> His little band, and huge long ears,
> That this new faith hath founded?
> The Puritans were never such,
> The Saints themselves had ne'er so much:
> Oh, such a knave 's a Roundhead!

In Southerne's play, *The Disappointment*, the Roundheads are described as

> The zealous of the land,
> With little hair, and little or no band.

Brides were always married with the hair dishevelled. In Middleton's *Roaring Girl* (1611), we read:

> Untie your folded thoughts,
> And let them dangle *loose as a bride's hair*.

Shakspeare, in *The Merchant of Venice*, says: 'Her sunny locks hang on her temples like the golden fleece.' He only mentions black hair twice throughout his entire plays. Every one who walks through any large collection of works of the old masters, the National Gallery, for example, must have noticed the remarkable absence of black heads.

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Before noticing *wigs*, we must say a word on the ladies' head-dresses of the eighteenth century. About 1760, the fair sex wore them towering about three feet above their heads. Hairdressers considered that when thus decked they would *keep* for three weeks; but insects soon bred in the flour and pomatum with which they were bedaubed, and receipts for killing them are given in the newspapers of the period. For fear of disarranging these ponderous head-dresses, ladies frequently slept in chairs, instead of going to bed. The managers of theatres complained that those seated behind could not see the performance by reason of the large head-dresses in front; and in a caricature called 'A new Opera-glass for 1777,' a gentleman is represented looking through one of the great curls by the side of a lady's head, using it for an opera-glass:

> Behold how Jemmy treats the fair,
> And makes a telescope of hair!
> How will this suit high-headed lasses,
> If curls are turned to optic glasses!

The head-dresses were happily reduced about 1790, and soon declined altogether.

Louis XIII. wore his hair very long, and wigs were invented to allow his courtiers who were not so favoured by nature to follow the fashion of the king. In the reign of Louis XIV., perukes were made of vast size, and even children wore them. Full-bottomed wigs were invented by the French barber Duviller, for the purpose of concealing an elevation in the shoulder of the Dauphin. The earliest notice of periwigs occurs in the privy purse expenses of Henry VIII., where we find, under December 1529, an entry of twenty shillings 'for a *perwyke* for Sexton, the king's fool.' By the middle of the century, their use became frequent. Enormous periwigs were worn *temp.* Charles II.

Pepys, November 3, 1663, says: 'By-and-bye comes Chapman, the perriwigg-maker, and upon my liking it [the wig], without more ado I went up, and then he cut off my haire, which went a little to my heart at present to part with it; but, it being over, and my perriwigg on, I paid him L.3, and away went he with my own haire to make up another of; and I by-and-bye went abroad, after I had caused all my maids to look upon it, and they concluded it do become me, though Jane was mightily troubled for my parting with my own haire, and so was Besse.' Five days after, the same dear old gossip appeared at church in his wig, but he says it did not create a sensation, as he feared it would.

Up to 1714, wigs were made of the natural colour of the hair, but after that date they were bleached; but as they looked after a time a dirty gray, *hair-powder* came into use, to make them look white; that is, it was then applied to wigs, but had been in use long before, being, as some think, introduced by Marie de' Medici; at anyrate, it is mentioned by L'Etoile in 1593.

In a satire on the ladies in the *Musarum Delicie* (1655), they are thus addressed:

> At the devill's shoppe you buy
> A dresse of powdered hayre,
> On which your feathers flaunt and fly,
> But I'de wish you have a care
> Lest Lucifer's selfe, who is not prouder,
> Do one day dresse up your hayre with a powder.

A writer in the *Monthly Magazine* (1806) says, that Charles James Fox, *c.* 1770, actually used *blue* hair-powder—'he had his chapeau bras, his red-heeled shoes, and his *blue hair-powder*.'

Pitt taxed hair-powder in 1795, and its use soon declined. Pigtails succeeded, and were generally worn in the army, but in 1808 were ordered to be cut off altogether, to the great delight of the military world.

More than one hundred tons of hair are annually taken at Paris. A great deal of this comes from Brittany, where the girls cover the head with a white cap, and the absence of their beautiful black ringlets is not noticed. Mr Francis Trollope, in his *Summer in Brittany*, tells us what he saw at a fair in Collenée. 'What surprised me more than all were the operations of the dealers in hair. There seemed to be no difficulty in finding possessors of beautiful heads of hair perfectly willing to sell. We saw several girls sheared, one after the other, like sheep, and as many more standing ready for the shears, with their caps in their hands, and their long hair combed out and hanging to their waists. By the side of the dealer was placed a large basket, into which every successive crop of hair, tied up into a wisp by itself, was thrown. No doubt the reason of the indifference to their tresses, on the part of the fair Bretonnes, is to be found in the invariable "mode" which covers every head, from childhood upwards, with close caps, which entirely prevents any part of the hair from being seen, and, of course, as totally conceals the want of it. The money given for the hair is about twenty sous, or else a gaudy cotton handkerchief. They net immense profits by their trip through the country.'

In the Exhibition of 1862, Messrs Hovenden exhibited a head of hair six feet long, from the head of an English lady.

Another source of false hair is the combings of the ladies of Paris. The *chiffonier* picks out the hair from the heaps in the gutters as he goes his rounds, and this is sold to the hair-merchant.

Dr Wynter thinks that a good deal of false hair is obtained by the gravediggers from the corpses, as a kind of hair called 'churchyard hair' is well known to the merchants. Golden hair now sells for about fifteen shillings the ounce.

A GREAT JEWEL-ROBBERY.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

Some years ago, people used to prophesy that in consequence of the Californian gold discovery the precious metal would be precious no longer, but fall to a par with, if not below, silver in value. But in spite of the golden treasures of California, supplemented by those of Australia, a sovereign is still worth its twenty shillings; and the reports of progress in Sutherlandshire are not sufficiently promising to make the favoured of us mortals who indulge in such luxuries to exchange our golden ornaments for their present value before it deteriorates. But, as a dealer in precious stones, I have often thought of what would be the consequence should some tremendous deposit of diamonds be laid bare; for we are not bound to suppose that these precious crystals of carbon are everywhere so sparsely scattered over the earth's surface as to render the quest one of patience and difficulty. Imagine, for instance, some pebbly mountain

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stream, whose pebbles were all Koh-i-noors, Stars of the South, and Great Pitt Diamonds! What consternation amongst the holders of family heir-looms, whose glittering clusters have been handed down from generation to generation, and valued at so many thousands sterling—what horror to find that, by the glut in the market, those thousands sank to hundreds, to tens, to units at last, or merely the value of the cutting! That lady who described the wearing of diamonds as an exquisite pleasure, but too painful, from the risks incurred, would be then able to wear her precious jewels in peace.

There is a strange, and too often a fearful history attached to every great gem of price, many of which, while flashing on the brow of beauty, or in some regal or imperial ornament, are dimmed to the thoughtful mind by the tears shed over them, or by the blood in which they have too often been bathed. Robbery and murder have ever been mingled with the stories of precious gems; and as a peaceful man, living in these highly civilised times, I have more than once felt my life to be far from safe as soon as it was known that in the little black leathern case I carried, or even in the scrap of tissue-paper in my waistcoat pocket, I held so many valuable diamonds, rubies, or sapphires.

One gets used to it in time; but at first there is a strong feeling that every person who looks at you, or says a word about the weather, is bent upon murder and robbery. You live a solitary life during your travels. You get in the farthest corners of carriages. You would not ride alone in a first-class coupé, with some strange traveller, upon any consideration, even if that strange traveller were a feeble old woman, since you would certainly suppose her to be a ruffian in disguise. Elegantly dressed ladies become swindlers' accomplices; clerical gentlemen, the swindlers themselves; and distrust of everything and everybody becomes the bane of your existence. Your wine or tea seems to be drugged, your food poisoned; and once, at an hotel where I was staying, I had serious thoughts about giving the proprietor into custody for supplying me with medicated soap.

I will not mention the name of the Bond Street firm with which I was some years ago connected, but let it suffice that their name was well known, and that the manufacture of more than one regal diadem had been intrusted to their skilled workmen. I was with them some twelve or fourteen years, and it was during that period that the incident I am about to relate occurred. As a matter of course, the strictest injunctions respecting care, caution, and watchfulness are issued to all the employés, especially to those whose daily business brings them into contact with the public; and being always in the show-rooms myself, I was one of those in whom the elders of the firm placed confidence. The consequence was, that being tolerably thoughtful, sharp of eye, and a good judge of gems, I rose to occupy one of the most responsible positions, and to me were always intrusted those rather delicate, critical, and caution-demanding embassies, where customers wished for jewels to be sent to their houses for inspection.

In course of time, a little feeling of jealousy sprang up; but it did not trouble me, for, either from extra care, or from good fortune, I had not in any single case been the cause of loss to my employers—a state of satisfaction hardly to be enjoyed by either of my brother-assistants, so many, so ingenious, and so carefully contrived were, in those days, the plans for defrauding the great jewellers. I do not know that any very great improvement has taken place of late years; but my experience is with the past, and I relate accordingly. In fact, so many were the tricks, that when a visitor came to the show-rooms, the first question we had to ask was: 'Is this a lady or a sharper?'

Very often the swindlers, or thieves, were easy to detect; for though dressed in the extreme of fashion, and arriving perhaps in a brougham, there would be some slip of the tongue—some vulgarism—which would betray them. Frequently, a misplaced *h*, or a wrongly applied verb, has raised suspicions, which defeated a carefully planned swindle, and sent the disappointed ones to lament their ill success, or often to jail. But with all care, the jewellers' enemies are so many, and their losses so heavy, that, in spite of enormous profits, the balance-sheets at the end of the year are not so satisfactory as is supposed for those who follow this artistic business. Now a well-dressed couple would come and look at some rings, turn them over for half an hour, and then leave, declaring that there was nothing to suit; when perhaps before, more often after, their departure, one or two valuable gems have been missed—taken no one could tell how. Twice over, assistants allowed jewels to be taken into the next room, at some hotel, to shew a sick lady, and came back ruefully to announce the sick, as well as the sound, lady had disappeared. Times out of number, ring, chain, or bracelet has been snatched from counter or table; once such a thing happened when I was in waiting, but a presented pistol stopped the marauder before he reached the door—a door already bolted by the porter; and my friend was committed for trial, and afterwards transported. One select company of visitors purchased goods to the amount of nine hundred pounds, when the gentleman of the party wrote a cheque on the spot for the amount—Drummonds of Charing Cross being his bankers—but as I objected to the jewels being taken away until the cheque was honoured, I was courteously told to send them to Morley's Hotel, and half sorry to be compelled to shew the distrust, I bowed the distinguished customers out.

'Here, Johnson,' I said to one of our men, 'run down at once to Drummonds, and present this cheque; take a cab.'

In half an hour Johnson was back with the cheque branded with the words 'No effects.'

I received an invitation to dine with the head of our firm after that, and returned home at night wearing a very handsome gold watch. 'A reward for your shrewdness,' said the old gentleman, clapping me on the shoulder. 'You'll be in the firm yet, Willis, that you will.'

'I hope I may,' I thought, as I went home that night; but the happy consummation never arrived, since I was but mortal, and, like other men, liable to be deceived; though, upon maturer consideration, I don't think I was very well used.

I was seated one day busily examining some stones which were to be reset for the Countess of Maraschino, when the principal came softly in.

'Lock those up, Willis,' he said, 'and go and attend to those parties in the front show-room. Thomas is with them, and I don't half like their looks.'

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I hurried into the show-room to relieve Mr Thomas of his task, which he gave up with a very bad grace, and proceeded to listen to the demands of a tall lady and gentleman in black, both of whom wore respirators, and spoke in low husky voices. The gentleman looked very pale and ill, and the lady was very closely veiled as to the upper part of her face; but upon my approach she threw up her fall, and displayed the bright bold eyes of a very handsome woman.

'Don't look suspicious,' I thought, as I evaded the glance directed at me; for our rule is not to look at eyes, but hands—or rather fingers, which sometimes turn out to be light. In this case, though, the lady's were *bien gantée*, and the gentleman's thin, white, and soft—an invalid's hands, in fact, and I proceeded to listen to their demands.

'Well, Lilla, what's it to be?' said the gentleman.

'I thought you had decided, love,' was the reply. 'Something simple, and not too expensive now, whatever we may decide upon hereafter. Why not keep to what you said—a bracelet, or a cross?'

'Well, shew me some bracelets,' the gentleman said. 'We do not want anything of high price, but something pretty, light, and suited for a young lady of eighteen, about to be married.'

I proceeded to open case after case of bracelets of all prices, from ten to five hundred guineas each; but though they were fastidious and hard to please, I was bound to confess that the lady's taste was excellent, and that the gentleman was no mean connoisseur in gems.

'I rather like that,' said the gentleman at last, selecting a very pretty but slight bracelet, set with a sapphire, surrounded by pearls. 'What is the price?'

'That is sixty guineas,' I said.

'Yes, it's pretty enough,' said the lady; 'but not sufficiently good.'

'You mean not valuable enough,' said the gentleman; 'but you know the old proverb about the gift-horse. Lucille will not study the value, depend upon it; and, besides, I don't see anything I like half so well.'

'Have it then, dear,' was the reply; and then, directly after, 'Ah, what a sweet cross!' exclaimed the lady, looking at an enamel and gold ornament lying in a case—and which I immediately opened—for I must confess I had almost forgotten our principal's suspicions.

'It is a sweet little thing!' exclaimed the lady, examining the cross; 'such a fine pearl, too, in the centre. I should like it.'

'What, to give to Lucille?' said the gentleman smiling.

'No; of course not. I fancied it myself.'

'My dear Lilla, this is not a linendraper's shop,' said the gentleman with a shrug, and then there was a smile and a whisper between them.

'What is the price of the cross?' said the gentleman at last.

'Fifty guineas,' I said.

'It seems a good deal for so small an ornament,' said the gentleman, turning and re-turning the cross; but I explained that the size of the pearls increased its value; and after a little hesitation, he decided to take it, when I saw that he was rewarded by a quiet pressure of the hand from his companion, whose eyes then met mine almost mirthfully for a moment.

'You're a nice creature, I expect,' muttered I to myself; 'coax him out of everything you fancy, and then laugh in your sleeve.' But my eyes were wanted to guard the valuable assortment of jewellery displayed, and they were back the next instant to business.

'Where can I send these, sir?' I inquired.

'Ah! we'll take them,' said the lady; 'we will not trouble you to send.'

I explained that it would be no trouble, but they held to their determination; and upon payment being requested, the gentleman drew out a cheque-book, asked for pen and ink, and wrote a cheque for one hundred and ten guineas upon a small city bank.

Now it was that my lips became a little tighter, and I felt that the principal had had some cause for his suspicions; and thoroughly on my guard, I took the cheque, and explained that it was a rule of the establishment that goods should not be delivered until after a cheque had been presented.

'Ah, quite right, quite right,' said the gentleman quietly, and without displaying the slightest annoyance. 'I can easily suppose that you are obliged to be careful.'

But the lady looked angry, and returned my bow very distantly, as I ushered them out, having promised to send the purchases on to the fashionable hotel—Moore's, in Brook Street—at which they were staying.

'All a farce, but well carried out,' I said to the principal as he came up to me, and I shewed him the cheque and the card given me, bearing the name 'Mr H. Elliston Ross,' and in pencil, 'Moore's Hotel.' 'But we'll send the cheque all the same.—Here, Johnson.'

The principal shrugged his shoulders; and as Johnson came up to where I was carefully running over the various items of jewellery, to see that nothing had been stolen, I gave him the cheque, and he went cityward.

To my great satisfaction, all was right; not a jewel missing, and the purchased cases lying by me. Suddenly, a cold chill shot through me. Had they contrived to abstract the contents? I tore the little morocco boxes open; but, no—all was correct. Cross and bracelet lay upon their white velvet beds; and so far, everything was perfectly satisfactory. If they were swindlers, we had escaped; and I began to wonder whether I should get another invitation to dinner, a chain for my watch, and be told that I was a step nearer to the junior partnership.

To our intense astonishment, though, at an hour's end, Johnson returned smiling.

'All right, sir,' he said.

'Why, you don't mean'——

'All right, sir,' he said. 'Cheque cashed in an instant: hundred and fifteen pounds, ten shillings.'

It is almost needless to add that the two little cases were sent immediately to the hotel, and a discussion followed respecting unnecessary suspicion, and how very often it happened that swindlers passed unnoticed, while honest people were suspected.

CHAPTER II.

A month passed, when one cold January day I was in the show-room, and the same lady made

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her appearance alone. She still wore her respirator, but looked very pale, haggard, and troubled. The bold look seemed to have gone from her eyes; and as I recalled my thoughts, I felt that I had misjudged her, for she began to speak tenderly of her husband, Mr Ross, who was lying very ill at the hotel.

'I have brought back the cross to be repaired,' she said, drawing the little morocco case from her rich sable muff. 'The ring was too slight, and it broke from my necklet the second time it was worn. I had a narrow escape of losing it; but Mr Ross found it himself upon the lawn, trodden into the grass. I thought I would leave it until we came up again. Of course, you can repair it?'

I expressed my sorrow, and promised to have it seen to at once.

'You need not hurry for a few days. Mr Ross is in town to consult Sir Ealing Dean, and I fear he will send us to Madeira. This climate is killing my poor husband.'

The distant hauteur was all gone; and in a ladylike, courteous manner, our customer bowed to my few sympathetic remarks, and hints of its being an unusually trying season, &c.

'Our friend was delighted with the little bracelet, a gift which Mr Ross wishes to supplement with something a little more valuable. Perhaps I could be allowed to select a few things for you to submit to his choice at the hotel? I know his taste now pretty well, and it will save trouble.'

'Anything you like to select shall be sent, ma'am,' I said; and I then proceeded to open and display to their best advantage some very valuable bracelets, which were one and all rejected.

'Yes,' she said sadly, 'they are very handsome; but Mr Ross would not like them, I am sure, and it is useless to take things on that he would not approve. His taste was always good; and as his health fails, it seems to have acquired an indescribable tone that I cannot explain, except that it is artistic, and dreamy.'

I brought out some plain but good pearl and diamond ornaments in suites, one suite in particular taking her attention.

'Yes; I like that. You might send that.'

'It is a suite made to order; but it could be made again in a very short time,' I said.

'That would not do,' she said, 'unless it could be supplied in a fortnight.'

'I think we could get over that difficulty,' I said with a smile; and then bracelets, rings, chains, and watches—certainly the most chaste and elegant we had—were selected and put aside.

'It is only fair to say,' said the lady smiling—at least, I could see that she was smiling, in spite of her respirator—'that Mr Ross will not purchase many of these elegant ornaments. I know he would like a watch and chain, and a ring. Perhaps, too, if he admired them, one of those pearl suites; but I thought it better to speak, as since his illness he has become, not irritable—but—but—perhaps a little hard to please, and I should be sorry if he rejected everything you brought.'

So much delicacy was displayed in these remarks, that I could only courteously assure her that we should only be too happy to attend again and again upon Mr Ross, till we had hit upon something he admired; and upon promising to send the selected goods on the next morning at eleven, our visitor rose to go.

'I would ask you to send this afternoon,' said the lady, on rising, 'but I don't think Mr Ross quite well enough. He saw our physician this morning, and the interviews are always very trying to his nerves.'

I placed the little cross in the workmen's hands for repair; and the next morning, punctually at eleven, I was at Moore's Hotel, accompanied by a porter with a goodly assortment of jewellery.

A few words with the manager set me quite at ease, though my inquiries were a mere matter of form. Mr Elliston Ross lived in Yorkshire, owned coal mines, and was in town to visit the court physician, Sir Ealing Dean; had been there once before for the same reason: perfect gentleman; his lady quite an angel—waited on him night and day.

I was shewn into the room where Mrs Ross was seated—this time without her respirator. She rose with a sad smile, and motioned me to a seat; while putting on her respirator, she went into the next room, remaining absent a few minutes; and then returning, requested me to bring in my cases for Mr Ross to see.

I had left the porter down-stairs; so, taking up the two small leathern boxes, I followed Mrs Ross into a slightly shaded room, where, looking deathly pale, the gentleman who had visited our place of business lay upon a couch reading the *Times*. He was attired in a blue cloth dressing-gown, and had a small table drawn up to his side, on which were a bottle, glass, and a caraffe which seemed to contain barley-water. He too wore a respirator; but he removed it for a few moments to take a little of the barley-water, and then carefully replaced it, coughing hollowly the while.

'Sorry to bring you into a sick-room,' he said courteously. 'Sorry, in fact, to bring you here at all, for I would much rather have chosen the trifle or two I wanted at your shop. I trust you have not brought many things, though?'

'Only a few that Mrs Ross thought you—that your lady chose, sir,' I said.

He nodded, and then listlessly examined first one and then another ornament, as I opened them out, but always with a dissatisfied air.

'Don't you like those, dear?' said Mrs Ross, in rather disappointed tones, as I displayed in the best lights the pearl suite.

'No; not at all,' said the invalid. 'Too plain; almost vulgar.'

'Might I be allowed to suggest,' I said earnestly, 'that to see pearls to advantage, they must be worn. It is a well-known fact that pearls are gems which shew to as great advantage upon a dark as upon a fair complexion; and if your lady'——

I paused here, and glanced towards Mrs Ross, who smiled graciously, and then clasped the bracelets round her shapely wrist, the necklace over her fine throat, and placed the tiara in her hair—looking almost regal as she stood before us.

'You see the difference,' I said, drawing back.

'Yes, yes,' said the invalid impatiently; 'they look well enough on her; but they are for quite a girl.—Take them off, Lilla.'

Mrs Ross obeyed, and the ornaments were replaced in the case; when I proceeded to display the other jewels, but apparently to find no favour.

'Here, Lilla, give me a glass of sherry.—

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Confound this thing, it almost chokes me.' He tore off the respirator, and hurled it to the other end of the room.

'For my sake, dear,' I heard her whisper to him, as, stepping lightly across the room, she picked up the respirator, and brought it back.

'Well, there; get out the sherry, then,' he said pettishly, as he took back the instrument.

'No, no, dear; Sir Ealing said'——

'Confound Sir Ealing! If I am to die, let me die comfortably, and not be tortured to death. Get out the sherry, I say—the port too.'

I saw a tear trickle down Mrs Ross's cheek as she fetched a couple of decanters from a sideboard where they stood with glasses.

'Haven't you some cake, or did you send it down?' he said impatiently.

'I have it here, dear,' said Mrs Ross softly; and she placed a portion of a small pound-cake upon the table.

'Give me a glass of sherry,' he said impatiently. —'No, not that glass—the other.—Mr—I don't know your name—try that sherry.' He sipped a little. 'You'll find it very good.'

'I thank you,' I said quietly; 'but I never take wine in business hours.'

'Won't you try the port, then?' he said.

'I would much rather not,' I replied.

'A little cake?' suggested the lady. 'We are simple country people, and not much acquainted with London etiquette. Pray, excuse us if we trespass.'

I bowed, and declined, when Mrs Ross readjusted her husband's respirator, leaning over him the while.

'Now, let me see that bracelet,' said Mr Ross, pointing to one upon the table.—'But are these all you have brought?'

'Yes, sir,' I said; 'but I can easily bring a fresh selection'—though I had brought over two thousand pounds' worth.

'Hem, yes,' he said; 'of course!—Do you like that bracelet, Lilla?'

'Yes,' said Mrs Ross; 'I picked it out particularly yesterday. That emerald is so beautiful.'

'Put it on,' he said curtly; and she clasped it upon her arm.

'How much?' he said shortly.

'Thirty-five guineas,' I replied.

'Dear,' he said—'very dear. The bracelet we bought at the shop was far more handsome at the same money.'

'No, love; it was sixty guineas,' said Mrs Ross.

'Ah! was it? I forgot,' he said carelessly. 'Well, lay that aside: I don't want you to come for nothing.'

I hastened to assure him that it was the wish of the firm to satisfy their patrons, as well as to sell their jewellery, and that we should only be too happy to bring or send on a fresh selection for his choice.

He assented almost rudely, and turned over the various rings, asking the prices of nearly every article I had brought, when, suddenly throwing himself impatiently back, he exclaimed: 'Good heavens, Lilla, this room is insufferable; throw some of that vinegar about.'

Mrs Ross smiled faintly; and taking a flexible tube from the mantelpiece, she pressed it, so that in a fine shower a finely scented aromatic vinegar diffused a refreshing perfume through the room.

'That's better,' he exclaimed.—'Now, shew me those pearls again. How much did you say they were?'

'Four hundred guineas the suite,' I said, hastening to lay them before him.

'There, take them away!' he exclaimed. 'I can't afford four hundred guineas: four hundred shillings more likely. That confounded doctor is ruining me. Let me look at the watches; or, stay, let me look at the pearls again.—No; never mind. I won't have them unless you will take half the money.'

I smiled and shook my head. 'We are not dealers of that sort, sir,' I ventured to say.

'I don't know—I don't know. I believe you jewellers get most terrible profits. Shew me the watches.'

I was hastening to place the half-dozen I had with me in his hands, when he exclaimed again: 'Insufferable! Have you any more of that vinegar, Lilla?'

Mrs Ross nodded; and taking a cut-glass bottle from her pocket, she placed it with a handkerchief by his side.

'No, no,' he said, giving me back the watches. Sprinkle the room with another of those tubes.—Now, you! I'll have that little plain watch. I'm getting tired of this. Let me have a chain to match—a fine one, mind—the thinnest you have—and that will do for to-day.'

As I selected four or five chains, after putting the watch aside, Mrs Ross took up another tube, unscrewed it, and then appeared to be taking especial notice of the chains which I bore across to the invalid.

'Those are sweetly pretty,' she exclaimed. 'I don't remember noticing them so much yesterday.'

As she spoke, she stood close to my side, when the invalid exclaimed impatiently: 'There, pray, be quick dear;' and at one and the same moment, he poured out the contents of his bottle upon his handkerchief, and I felt a fine spray of a peculiar odour playing right in my nostrils.

I started back, gasping and astounded, when, leaping from the couch, the invalid exclaimed: 'Good heavens, sir, you are unwell;' and he covered my face and nose with the wet handkerchief, forcing me backwards into a chair.

I believe that I struggled, but only feebly; for a strange, delicious, enervating languor was stealing over me; I saw things mistily, but still with an understanding mind, seeing, though unable to move hand or foot, that the invalid was bending over me, while Mrs Ross was hastily placing the various articles of jewellery in her pocket.

I saw all that, but in a dreamy untroubled way, for it seemed then to be not of the slightest consequence—not to concern me. Then I have some recollection of an intensely cold sensation as of water being poured upon my face, while my next impression is of hearing a closing door and the click of a lock.

How long I remained in that condition, I never knew; but by degrees I woke to a feeling of deadly nausea: my head swam, my temples throbbed, and everything I gazed upon was seen through a mist of dancing motes. But by degrees thoughts of the present began to take the place of the dreamy imaginings of the past. I started up and looked around, to find that I was still in the

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inner room; but the jewels—the cases—where was the invalid—where Mrs Ross? Was it true, or was it some strange vision? It was impossible that I could have been duped like that.

I ran to the door—fastened. The other door—locked on the outside. I darted across to the bell, but in doing so, caught my foot in the long table-cover, tripped and fell, dragging the cloth on to the carpet, and revealing the whole of the jewel-cases beneath the table, just as they had been hastily flung.

I could not help it then, for my brain was confused, and stooping down, I took the cases one by one, and opened them, in the fond hope that I had been deceived, and that I should find the jewels safe; but, save one ring, which had escaped their notice, everything had been taken.

I sat on the carpet for a few minutes holding my throbbing head, and trying to recall the scene, but almost in vain, for it seemed as if a portion of my existence had been wiped completely away. I was shewing jewellery at one moment, the next it seemed that I was seated by the empty cases. I tried to clear my faculties, but in vain; and I should think quite half an hour had elapsed before, thoroughly awakened to the fact that I had been robbed, I rang the bell.

I had nearly arrived at the extent of my loss two or three times, but only to have, as it were, a veil drawn over my senses, just as if a relapse were coming on; and then mentally blind, I could do nothing but rock myself to and fro, trying to get rid of the remains of the strange stupor in which I had been plunged.

Before the waiter could ascend, I rang again.

'Where are Mr and Mrs Ross?' I inquired.

'Went out in a brougham some time ago, sir; and your lunch is ready.'

'My lunch!' I exclaimed.

'Yes, sir; the lunch they ordered for you.'

'Oh, thank you!' I said quietly; 'I'll ring again. Send my porter up in five minutes' time.'

The waiter did not seem surprised that the door was fastened on the outside—it had not struck him then; but as soon as he had gone, I hastily repacked the empty morocco cases, and as soon as possible made my way back into Bond Street, and met the principal.

'We were just getting uneasy, Mr Willis, and going to send after you. What have they taken?'

'Everything, sir,' I said almost fiercely.

'What!' he exclaimed.

I told all I knew, while he listened with blank amazement.

Then followed a visit to Great Scotland Yard, and to Moore's, to find that Mr and Mrs Ross had not returned; while so impressed was the manager with his visitors' respectability, that he laughed at the idea of there having been any swindling transaction. They were most respectable people, he said; paid their bill last time without a murmur; their portmanteaus and boxes up-stairs were all in their rooms; and it was all a mistake—'or something worse,' he added with a dark look at me.

That it was 'something worse,' was very soon evident, from the tubes and bottles, and a wine-glass containing a few drops of a limpid fluid, found to corroborate my story. But though the instruments of the deception, even to a couple of respirators, lined with wet sponge, were found, the depredators had made their escape, and were never found; though I verily believe that if I had watched the lady-swindlers in the various police courts, sooner or later I should have encountered the interesting Mrs Ross.

I need hardly add, that after so heavy a loss, the firm never seemed to take thoroughly to heart the ideas of a junior partnership with respect to myself; while as to my brother assistants, they laughed in their sleeves at my downfall; though, after all, I cannot see that I was much to blame, this not being by any means the first Great Jewel-robbery.

THE RING AND THE BOOK.

Mr Browning has been before the world for some five-and-thirty years, and it is not too much to say that the world as yet does not know him. We do not speak of popularity such as attends the verses of the immortal Tupper, but of the measured and judicious approval of the educated public. And yet Mr Browning has not been left to pine away in unnoticed obscurity, nor has he been the victim of savage and indiscriminate abuse. He has received notices from time to time in the leading reviews, not fierce onslaughts such as those which in the good old days of the *Edinburgh* sent Keats despairing to an early tomb, but fair and reasonable criticism, whether conveying praise or blame. Nor is it alone that he has held on his way, as all true genius must, conscious of something within him, an individuality which he must make acceptable if possible, but certainly must not surrender. Mr Tennyson has done this also, and passed through the sneers and sarcasms of twenty years ago, to the glories of an established position and the laureate's crown. The

> Argosies of magic sails,
> Pilots of the purple twilight dropping down with costly bales,

and similar stumbling-blocks to unsympathising reviewers, have been forgotten in the sublimity of *Guinivere* and the pathos of *Enoch Arden*. The truth appears to be, with respect to Mr Browning, that his poetry possesses merits which, though certain of ultimate appreciation, yet are not in accordance with the poetical taste and fashion of the age, and therefore are slow of recognition; and partly also that he has a certain perverse attachment for whatever is obscure, subtle, and remote from ordinary experience in the characters which he conceives, and the situations through which he conducts them.

Now, obscurity, whether in conception or expression, is a blemish, and a just hindrance to popularity. When a preacher complains that he is unappreciated, because his sermons fly above the heads of his hearers, we generally suspect that it is not so much the heads as the hearts that are missed, not the superfluity of intellect, but the lack of interest which formed the defect of his preaching. It is easy to say something original and striking when the subject is so remote from human interest that no one has cared to tread the same path before us, but then there is this little compensatory drawback, that an equal indifference may be accorded to what we have said or written. No theme was too mean, trite, or common-place for Shakspeare's genius. He ventured boldly upon the most obvious motives and the most ordinary situations. Love, ambition, avarice,

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jealousy, and fraud were the homely materials with which he laboured, and he has met with his reward. It is neither surprising nor unjust that curious psychological studies like *Paracelsus* and *Sordello* should fail in obtaining similar recognition, even though in their development they manifested an equal power of thought and breadth of sympathy. So far, therefore, as Mr Browning's want of general appreciation is due to this cause, there is nothing to be said against it. We cannot regard that man as so great an artist whose powers can only be stimulated into action by some forced, subtle, and almost unreal conception of character and incident, as he who can shed over ordinary life the elevating rays of true artistic treatment. But, so far as Mr Browning suffers from his want of accordance with the poetical taste of the century, we can only hail him as a martyr, and a martyr in a cause where one was sorely needed.

If we except Scott, and still more Coleridge in England, and Goethe in Germany, we have since the beginning of the century been in the hands of the subjective school of poets. Poets, that is, who view the universe of men and things through a medium supplied by their own idiosyncrasies, and whose poetry comes to us savouring strongly of the mind and heart of the individual poet. Against this style of poetry Mr Browning's works supply a welcome and long desired reaction. More productive than Coleridge, and far surpassing Scott in delicacy of touch and finished treatment, we find him free from Mr Ruskin's 'pathetic fallacy,' which attempts to depict external nature by investing it with human characters, and then painting it according to the tone of the artist's mind. In scenery, he gives us things as he sees them; and in dramatic poetry, which he chiefly loves, he thinks out his characters to the very heart's core, and then makes them speak for themselves, without coming forward like a chorus to explain the situation or scatter moral reflections over the drama. But it is in the work now before us that Mr Browning's genius reaches the culminating point. Henceforth, his place in the very first rank of English poets must be conceded without a murmur or a doubt. He has added a new lustre to English literature, and enriched our language with a possession for ever. In Count Guido, Caponsacchi, and especially in Pompilia, we have distinct creations, characters which stand forth in clearness and completeness like Macbeth, Hamlet, or Cordelia. Pompilia is exquisite in her beauty, her unconscious grandeur and nobility of soul, her simplicity, and withal her dignity, maintained alike amid great sufferings and petty persecutions more lowering than sublime trials. We cannot point to a creation worthy of being compared with her in the whole range of English literature. For the choice of subject we have nothing but condemnation. It is Mr Browning's luck. But granting this, there is no mark of great and lofty poetry wanting in the elaboration of this noble masterpiece. There is no departure from the true concrete artistic treatment in any line of the whole poem; no putting aside the poet for the didactic teacher; no thrusting forward of the author's individuality to speak for the characters, or to interpret them to his readers.

Repulsive though it be, however, we must set some abstract of the story before our readers, or it will be impossible to convey to them by quotation any real idea of the beauty of the poem. It is based on the trial at Rome, some two hundred years ago, of one Count Guido Franceschini, for the murder of his wife Pompilia, and her foster-parents Pietro and Violante. Guido justifies his deed on the ground of the shameless profligacy of his wife with one Caponsacchi, a priest in whose company she had fled to Rome, the husband overtaking them while resting at an inn at the last stage. Nor was this his only grievance, for his wife had been palmed off upon him as the child of Pietro and Violante, and the cheat afterwards disclosed, with the view of defrauding him of the dowry. The wife's friends admit the original fraud, in which the wife was an ignorant and unconscious innocent; and charge the husband with ill-treatment of his wife, too gross to be described, including incentives to unfaithfulness with Caponsacchi, so that, in despair, she was driven to commit herself to the priest's protection, with the most saint-like purity of act and intention on either side throughout. The law courts compromise, suspend Caponsacchi, send him to retirement, and Pompilia to a convent—whence, after a few weeks, she is removed to the villa of her foster-parents, gives birth to a boy, and is attacked and murdered by Guido and his associates—surviving only long enough to tell her tale. All this the poet finds recorded in an old book full of Latin pleadings. His aim is to set the story before us instinct with renewed life. We have the arguments of the husband's partisans among the gossips of the Roman bourgeoisie, then those of the wife's, and finally the epigrammatic comments of the gilded saloons—the contrast being worked out with consummate skill between the uncompromising partisanship of the two former classes, and the pseudo-philosophy of the last—with their affected superiority to passionate emotion, and their scepticism of the possibility of discovering a black and white, a right and wrong side in any quarrel. Then come the statements of the principal actors—Caponsacchi, Pompilia on her death-bed, and Guido after torture, the pleadings of the advocates, the final sentence of the pope, and the last utterances of Guido. The two lawyers we could well dispense with; they constitute the marked blemish of the whole piece. The humorous interludes in deep tragedy—the porters' scene in *Macbeth*, or the gravediggers in *Hamlet*, at once relieve and heighten the solemnity of the rest of the piece, but here they only weary us by their utter futility—and they disappoint us where we reasonably expect some insight into the difficulties of the story, and do not find them. But the personal utterances of the chief actors are works of art of the highest order. Pompilia is exquisite: we rise from the book feeling that we have communed with one of the finest creations of poetry, and that our souls are refined and elevated by the communion.

Not that Guido and Caponsacchi are not also masterpieces; indeed, as being more complex and more comprehensive characters, they may be regarded as even greater triumphs of art than Pompilia; but there is a completeness and perfection about the latter which the mind at once grasps, and never afterwards forgets.

Little Pompilia with the patient brow,
And lamentable smile on those poor lips,
And under the white Hospital array,
A flower-like body,

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there she lies and breathes away her life in her artless moan of unaffected misery.

Of the two stories, Guido's is that which has by far the greatest intrinsic probability. The account given by him in the following lines of his feelings at the instant of the murder is very characteristic:

And then—why even then I think
I' the minute that confirmed my worst of fears,
Surely—I pray God that I think aright!—
Had but Pompilia's self, the tender thing
Who once was good and pure, was once my lamb,
And lay in my bosom, had the well-known shape
Fronted me in the doorway—stood there faint
With the recent pang, perhaps, of giving birth
To what might, though by miracle, seem my child.
Nay more, I will say, had even the aged fool
Pietro, the dotard, in whom folly and age
Wrought more than enmity or malevolence,
To practice and conspire against my peace.
Had either of these but opened, I had paused.
But it was she the hag, she that brought hell
For a dowry with her to her husband's house;
She, the mock mother, she that made the match,
And married me to perdition, spring and source
O' the fire inside me that boiled up from heart
To brain, and hailed the Fury gave it birth—
Violante Comparini, she it was,
With the old grin amid the wrinkles yet,
Opened: As if in turning from the Cross
With trust to keep the sight and save my soul,
I had stumbled, first thing, on the serpent's head,
Coiled with a leer at foot of it.

But if Guido's story, taken by itself, is plausible, it is no match for the pathos of Pompilia's simple autobiography. There is no violent indignation against her husband, the murderer alike of her happiness and her life—scarcely even of complaint; the whole force of her story is thrown into love for her babe, and devotion to her saviour Caponsacchi,

The lover of her life, the soldier saint;
Oh, how good God is that my babe was born—
Better than born—baptised and hid away
Before this happened, safe from being hurt.
Then I must lay my babe away with God,
Nor think of him again for gratitude.
Yes, my last breath shall wholly spend itself
In one attempt more to disperse the stain,
The mist from other breath, fond mouths have made
About a lustrous and pellucid soul;
So that when I am gone but sorrow stays,
And people need assurance in their doubt,
If God yet have a servant, man a friend,
The weak a saviour, and the vile a foe—
Let him be present by the name invoked,
Giuseppe-Maria Caponsacchi.
And this man men call sinner? Jesus Christ!
Of whom men said with mouths thyself madst once:
'He hath a devil'—say he was Thy saint,
My Caponsacchi! Shield and show—unshroud
In thine own time the glory of the soul,
If aught obscure—if ink spot from vile pens
Scribbling a charge against him—(I was glad
Then, for the first time, that I could not write)
Flirted his way, have flecked the blaze!

While the following quaint description of her introduction, at twelve years of age, to her future husband by Violante, is very characteristic:

And when, next day, the cavalier who came—
. . . . . .
When he proved Guido Franceschini—old,
And nothing like so tall as I myself,
Hook-nosed and yellow in a bush of beard,
Much like a thing I saw on a boy's wrist
He called an owl, and used for catching birds—
And when he took my hand and made a smile—
Why, the uncomfortableness of it all
Seemed hardly more important in the case
Than—when one gives you, say, a coin to spend,
Its newness or its oldness; if the piece
Weigh properly, and buy you what you wish,
No matter whether you get grime or glare!
Men take the coin, return you grapes and figs.
Here marriage was the coin; a dirty piece
Would purchase me the praise of those I loved;
About what else should I concern myself?

Caponsacchi's statement makes indeed large demands upon our credulity, and tries our faith to the uttermost, but the force of purity and truth in it renders doubt impossible, and the elevated strain of passionate indignation with which he concludes must have excited an outburst of applause which the officials found it difficult to suppress. The following exquisite lines occur in his description of the commencement of their flight to Rome:

For the first hour
We both were silent in the night: I know
Sometimes I did not see nor understand;
Blackness ingulfed me—partial stupor say—
Then I would break way, breathe through the surprise,
And be aware again, and see who sat
In the dark vest with the white face and hands.
I said to myself: 'I have caught it, I conceive,
The mind of the mystery; 'tis the way they wake
And wait, two martyrs somewhere in a tomb
Each by each, as their blessing was to die;
Some signal they are promised and expect
When to arise before the trumpet scares:
So, through the whole course of the world they wait
The last day, but so fearless and so safe!
No otherwise in safety and not fear
I lie, because she lies too by my side.'
You know this is not love, sirs—it is faith;
The feeling that there's God, He reigns and rules
Out of this low world: that is all; no harm!
At times she drew a soft sigh—music seemed
Always to hover just above her lips,
Not settle—break a silence music too.

And in these words of fiery indignation he withers the cowering Guido:

I conceive—
In all due self-abasement might I speak—
How you will deal with Guido: oh, not death!
Death, if it let her life be: otherwise
Not death. Your lights will teach you clearer! I
Certainly have an instinct of my own
I' the matter: hear with me and weigh its worth.
Let us go away—leave Guido all alone
Back on the world again that knows him now!
I think he will be found (indulge so far!)
Not to die so much as slide out of life,
Pushed by the general horror and common hate,
Low, lower—left o' the very ledge of things.
I seem to see him catch convulsively,
One by one, at all honest forms of life—
At reason, order, decency, and use—
To cramp him and get foothold by, at least.
And still they disengage them from his clutch.
'What! you are he that had Pompilia once,
And so forwent her? Take not up with us.'
And thus I see him slowly and surely edged
Off all the table-land, whence life upsprings
Aspiring to be immortality.

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As the snake, hatched on hill-top by mischance,
Despite his wriggling, slips, slides, slidders down
Hill-side, lies low and prostrate on the smooth
Level of the outer place, lapsed in the vale,
So I lose Guido in the loneliness.

A COUNTY FAMILY.

CHAPTER XXV.—JENNINGS' LEASE.

Doctors were summoned of course from far and near; they came, and went, taking their fees with them, but leaving the old Squire of Redcombe precisely as they found him, alive and likely to live, so far as continuance of breath was concerned, but a wreck in mind and body. One side of him was totally paralysed. The stalwart limbs that had borne him so bravely through so many hardships, the giant arms that had been wont to lift such weights and strike such blows, were to do work no more. Even his speech, which for a time had wandered with a vague indistinctness only too consonant with his dim and confused thoughts, had ceased to be intelligible. Only his eyes were still quick and restless, and evinced such evident loathing and repugnance at his son's presence, that the doctors had forbidden his approach to the sick-room. It was quite usual, they said (for what will they *not* say upon occasion?), for a person thus afflicted to take unaccountable aversions to those who were nearest and dearest to him. They received Mr William's account of his parent's seizure with the most grave credulity. He said that his father and himself were having some slight disagreement—it could scarcely be called a dispute—about the letting of the Home Farm, as to the tenant's right of shooting game, when all of a sudden the old man had started up, with cries of 'Away, away!' and 'Don't come near me!' and then had fallen on the floor. That was absolutely all that had occurred.

The great Dr Fleam, and the great Dr Pulsatilla, who had each founded schools of medicine diametrically opposed to each other, were unanimous with the local practitioner that such cases were by no means uncommon—that is, they were so when interrogated by ignorant, anxious Mrs Blackburn. When the three medicos were alone, Dr Fleam had quietly observed, and Dr Pulsatilla had gravely nodded his adhesion to the pregnant inquiry: 'Do you think it likely, Mr Allcase, that there was any actual physical violence?'

The local practitioner, sitting, with an air of much deference, upon the extreme edge of his chair, had replied: 'I think *not*, gentlemen—I really think *not*. Mr Stanhope informs me that he put that question to Mr Blackburn at the time, and it was answered in the negative.'

As the final result of the consultation, an electric battery was sent down from town, which was so far of use that its presence terrified the servants from approaching their master's room; and perfect quiet, it was decreed, was above all things necessary to him. Finally, so great were the resources of science, that a slate and pencil were provided, in case the invalid should recover the use of his fingers and be able to express his thoughts.

Thus Redcombe Manor became a hospital, and also in a sense, to one of its inmates at least, a prison. Lucy Waller was as fast bound and tied to the spot as the Squire himself; for, urged her father, would it not be the height of ungraciousness to leave the hospitable old man in so sad a plight, when her occasional presence (as it evidently did) afforded him pleasure. But he did not also add, that the storm which had been so long threatening his own affairs had burst, and would have sunk him altogether but for the rumoured engagement of his daughter to William Blackburn, with which he pacified his more pressing claimants, as with a promise to pay. So long as he remained with her beneath the Squire's roof, these bills on the Bank of Expectation might obtain currency and credit; but should he leave it, his creditors, he was well aware, would begin to question the security.

To her father's arguments in favour of remaining at the Manor, Ellen's entreaties were added, to whom indeed Lucy's companionship was become more than ever grateful. After long watches by her mute grandfather's pillow, it was a relief indeed to take a brisk walk with her friend (for it had become too cold for croquet), or to seek with her that common ally, the piano, or to hear her clear voice read aloud the literature to which her own youth in its chill poverty had been a stranger, but that Lucy had taught her to love. In one respect, although their affection was so genuine, their friendship differed from that between most young ladies. At night, when they repaired to one another's rooms to brush out their back-hair—an operation which (perhaps from its electrical nature) has commonly quite a magical effect in eliciting mutual confidences—they did not speak to one another with total unreserve: perhaps one or both had a secret of her own which she wished to preserve, or perhaps it was only that they tacitly agreed to keep silence upon certain topics.

Herbert Stanhope of course remained at Redcombe. The Squire's 'Keep near me'—the last intelligible request he had made—was an invitation so pressing that it might almost have salved his conscience for continuing there, notwithstanding the mercenariness of his scheme, and the very moderate hope of its success. He knew that it was base, as a once rejected and still unwelcome suitor, to inflict his presence upon the daughter of the house; but, on the other hand, was he not useful to her, as indeed he was to all the rest, as a friend and protector? Without him what anarchy would there not have been at the Manor, with coarse William as Lord of Misrule? Even Mrs Blackburn, who saw the velvet glove without guessing at the hand of steel, confessed that nobody understood her Willy so well as Mr Stanhope. As for her husband, he was still eloquent, so far as eyes could speak, in his regard for the young man. They followed him with eager restless looks, and glanced from him to Ellen and from Ellen to him in a manner so wistful as to be unmistakable. To do Stanhope justice, he took no advantage of this favour to urge his suit, but seemed content to trust to time and its effects, the impression produced by his respectful but unceasing attention, his dexterous management of the common tyrant, and delicate consideration for his host and hostess, evinced in a hundred ways. Since he was present, and this John Denton away, he must, he concluded, surely be making progress, while the other receded in the young girl's good graces, or at most stood still; and one day it could not be but that he must needs get level with his rival, and the next day pass him. That is how one man always does cut out another with a

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woman, as 'Sporting Dawlish' had observed in one of his practical philosophic letters.

That gentleman's correspondence had of late, however, become less philosophic than practical. He had hinted that his friend was making too much of a waiting race with the Blackburn filly, and had better go in and win. He had himself given a sop here and a sop there—and, so far as he was concerned, 'Herby' was quite welcome to the temporary accommodation—but nothing would prevent 'people talking,' and very unpleasant things had begun to be said. The absence of his friend from his usual haunts during the end of autumn had been commented upon without much scruple, and although Dawlish softened the expressions, he rendered them with sufficient faithfulness to prick his correspondent's pride—as he intended to do—to the very quick. Stanhope already owed Dawlish himself, for these friendly advances, more money than he could pay without parting with that remnant of the Curlew Hall estate which he could still call his own—and these advances were mere drops in his ocean of debts, the burden of which sat none the more lightly upon him because they could not be exacted by the law. If his present intentions were dishonourable, it must be conceded that his chief desire for their success arose from a certain sort of honour too—very much (though he would not have relished the parallel) as King Herod kept his royal word at the expense of his captive.

By help of the hold which Stanhope possessed over William Blackburn, he could doubtless have squeezed out of him a temporary loan, had that gentleman possessed the money; but he was, in truth, almost as much in want of funds, or at all events as destitute of them, as either of his father's guests, a fact which Mr Waller had ascertained by practical experiment. The ex-M.P., on the presumption of their future relationship, had actually attempted to borrow of his possible son-in-law, and failed. Fortunately for herself, Lucy was ignorant of the degradation she had thus been subjected to, nor did she suffer from it (as would otherwise have certainly been the case) in the increased familiarity of the young Squire's manner, for a reason with which we are acquainted. If he did not persecute her with marked attentions, it was because he did not dare bring matters to the point at which he must needs acknowledge himself as a suitor for her hand. Although, by having cut himself loose from his matrimonial moorings, he might indeed win a bride, he could of course not wear one; while Bess was alive, no matter how cruelly he had menaced her, or how sternly he had enjoined silence, he could never marry. There was not a day in which he did not secretly regret that he had not put that murderous scheme of his into execution, and made himself a free man in fact, and not merely in appearance. If those ravings of his, the listening to which had wrecked old Anthony in body and mind, had only been true! As it was, he had all the credit with his father of having put an end to Bess, with no sort of compensating advantage. If the Squire should recover his wits, the first use he made of them would doubtless be to settle on him some sum which, compared with his reasonable expectations, would be a mere pittance for life, and to exile him from Redcombe, and probably from England, for ever. While, in case of the invalid dying without sign (as seemed by far the most probable), he would still be left by the old man's will without adequate, or, at all events, as compared with Ellen, proportionate provision. That a will that did thus unjustly distribute the family property was in existence, he knew for certain. The Squire himself had as good as owned it. Lawyer Moffat, whom he had had the imprudence to rudely interrogate upon the matter, had not denied it. He had only said: 'You had better direct your inquiries to your father, sir. If the will were in my possession, it would be most dishonourable in me to accede to your request' (for William had even asked to see it); 'but, as a matter of fact, I have not got it.'

The lawyer had spoken with an irritation apart from that which his question had aroused; for one of the first acts of old Anthony, upon his coming to Redcombe, had been to transfer all the family documents from Mr Moffat's keeping to his own. Perhaps he feared that his scapegrace son might, one day or other, tamper with his agent, as indeed he would certainly not have hesitated to do, had the opportunity been afforded to him; or perhaps he preferred to hold in his own hands the title-deeds of his house, to have tangible possession of what had so long been a mere dream of wealth. But, at all events, much to Mr Moffat's chagrin, he had carried off the fire-proof box labelled 'Blackburn Estate,' which had so long been the chief pride and ornament of 'the office,' and placed it in his bedroom at home. He had also retained possession of his own will. The lawyer's manner convinced William Blackburn, even more than his words, that he had in truth not got it, and, in fact, that it was somewhere at the Manor-house. But if so, where had the old Squire hid it? In what particular spot was this piece of parchment, the existence of which debarred him from his just rights, and the destruction of which would restore them to him—make him his father's sole heir! Truly, a pregnant question.

Since the old man's seizure, months had now elapsed, during which Mr William, debarred by the doctor's orders from the sick-room, and left a good deal to himself by the presence there of the rest of the family, had had much indoor leisure, and he had consumed it in a singular fashion. The time he had spared from billiards with Mr Waller and brandy-and-water with himself had been devoted to hide-and-seek. As in that innocent game, the seeker had had no desire (at present) for the object itself—for his father might recover and inquire for it—but merely to know where it was. He searched high and low, in places probable and in places almost impossible, but he could not find it. He did not even know whether he had ever been near finding it, since there was nobody to tell him when he was 'warm.' But, after all, he was not seriously disappointed, since the most promising cover remained yet undrawn. One of the most likely places where the Squire would keep his will was in that same strong-box in his own bedroom, and that, in the present case, was the very spot which his son was personally unable to explore. His native cunning, however, after much counsel with himself, enabled him to get this done by deputy. There had been really some disagreement between his father and himself (although not at the date he had assigned to it) concerning the right of shooting enjoyed by the tenant of the Home Farm, and he

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easily contrived to make out to Mrs Blackburn that the matter was a serious grievance. It was nothing to him personally, he said, but it was very irritating to feel that the Squire's good-nature was being imposed upon. He was unwilling to trouble that fellow Moffat (who had behaved to him so disrespectfully), but if he could only see a copy of the lease in question, one look at it would decide the matter at issue. It was probably in the strong-box in his father's chamber, along with the other law documents, and he would be much obliged if his mother would just get it out for him.

She had replied, as he had expected, that for her part she did not know one law document from another. 'Then,' said he, 'some night, when you are keeping watch alone, bring them all to me, and in half an hour you shall have them back again.'

'But I hardly think, if your poor father were aware, Willy, that he would like me to meddle with the box,' hesitated Mrs Blackburn, who, with all her weakness for her son, was loyal to the husband of her youth. 'I have never done anything on the sly, as it were, nor against him; and now that his poor wits are wandering—no, no, I could never take advantage of that, Willy.'

'But, mother, I am only asking you to do something for his own good; something which, if he was right in his mind, and fit to form a judgment upon things, he would wish done himself. I tell you, he has been imposed upon by Farmer Jennings, and that ought not to be. Nor is he the only one who has imposed upon father of late, as you well know. There is a regular cabal in the house against you and me, because we stand always together, we two.'

'As we always shall, my darling,' added his mother gratefully, for it was not often that her son exhibited such affection.

'Well, let us do so now, then,' said practical William. 'You must get me a glimpse of these papers, and also take care that no one sees you doing it. They are all jealous of my "interference," as they choose to term the interest I take in my father's affairs, which are surely also my own, and yet how long is the estate to go without a master? It is impossible to say when father may recover, even if he recover at all, and in the meantime everything is at Mr Moffat's mercy.'

'But everybody says Mr Moffat is an honest man, Willy. Mr Waller, who has been his neighbour so long'——

'Yes, yes; but has he no reason for saying so?' broke in William impatiently—'no interest in letting things be as they are? Why, Waller could always wind my father round his little finger, and will do so more than ever, if the old man should flicker up a little.'

'But Mr Stanhope, who is such a friend of yours, Willy, even he says'——

'*He* says,' hissed the other savagely. 'You might as well say "Ellen says" at once. O yes, he is my friend with a vengeance; such a friend as would strip me bare and wear my clothes. They would stick at no lie to do it. If either of them saw you bringing me the papers, that would be the ruin of me, mind that. And yet, as I said, there is no harm in it, but only good.—Now, don't argue about it, mother; because, you know, I hate to be argued with. It's only the lease I want, and even that only to look at. You shall have all back in half an hour or less.—When is it you have to watch with father next?'

'I shall be left alone with him from twelve to-night, "William"'—that was the only form which his mother's displeasure ever took: when some request was made of her more unreasonable than usual, she would call him (but still granting it), instead of Willy, 'William.'

'Then bring me the papers at two; I shall be waiting for them in my room. Be sure there is nobody stirring; and close the strong-box softly, so as not to wake father. There, that's well; and now I know you really love me.'

'I think you might have known that before, Willy,' sighed Mrs Blackburn. She felt she was about to do wrong, and yet she could not—perhaps, though she did not even own it to herself, she dared not—refuse her son. In the middle of the night, then, when all the household, including the invalid himself, were asleep, she rose softly from the sofa-bed by her husband's side, and opened the strong-box, the key of which, always kept in a cupboard in 'the Squire's Room,' William had given to her. There were a good many documents in the box, but she managed to wrap them all in a towel, and carry them to her son's room: 'There are fifteen,' whispered she as she gave them into his hands.

'Why should you have counted them? You did not suppose I meant to steal any, did you?' was his harsh reply.

She had not, in fact, entertained any such suspicion; but when he spoke thus, her heart misgave her; not on her son's account, even then, but on her own. She felt more than ever that she was doing wrong; for if William could hint such a suspicion of himself, what might not others hint if the thing were discovered? At the time appointed she returned to his room. He was waiting for her with the parcel. 'Jennings was right,' said he; 'but I am glad the matter is set at rest.' Yet his tone was full of sullen disappointment, and his face pale. Something, indeed, so strange was there both in tone and face, that before returning the documents to their receptacle, Mrs Blackburn found herself counting them over, and a sigh of relief involuntarily escaped her when she found the fifteen were there. As she closed the lid, she looked round mechanically, and by the dim glimmer of the night-light, she could see her husband's eyes, which she had thought fast closed, fixed earnestly upon her. Their look of keen reproof cut to her very heart!

'Have we been man and wife for fifty years,' it seemed to say, 'to be sundered thus at last!'

'I meant no harm, dear Anthony,' answered she to this mute appeal, falling upon her knees beside his pillow. 'It was only Jennings' lease, that Willy wanted to look at, and which he has been seeking for high and low; indeed, that was all.'

But the poor fading brain could, as it seemed, comprehend nothing about Jennings' lease; it could only understand, and continue by that reproachful gaze to shew that it understood, how old age and sickness, and the visitation of God, had been taken advantage of by one who had sworn to be faithful and true, notwithstanding all such things. She knelt for hours trying to comfort him, not without repentant kisses, bitter tears, but old Anthony would not be comforted. He had 'flickered up,' as William had phrased it, with a vengeance; and his wife, instead of longing—as the

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watcher even more than the sick man is wont to long—for the morning, dreaded its coming, since others must then needs behold those reproachful eyes, and ask their meaning.

CHAPTER XXVI.—THE SQUIRE SPEAKS.

It was plain to all who sought the sick-room that day—and it was the morning custom even of his guests to look in with a kind nod and a smile, of which the old man seemed generally to be more or less conscious—that there was some change in the Squire's face. It was wont to be so still and quiet, immobile as a sculpture, always excepting the eyes—and now the wrinkled features were twitching and perturbed. Love and Duty, helped by Use, had hitherto been able to decipher his mute requests and supply his simple needs; but now they were at fault. It was plain that there was something wanted for which that scanty language had no sign. Wanted? Nay, yearned for. It was impossible to misunderstand him so far. And yet how to satisfy an unknown desire? There were sharp wits at work to interpret for him too. Not only his wife, repentant for the pain she had involuntarily caused him, and eager to make amends; and Ellen, whose loving eyes had ever been quickest to flash responsive to his dumb appeals; but Lucy Waller, always composed and prompt; and her father, who knew men so well, and all their needs, as he fancied—but not men in such a strait as this, and *their* needs; and Herbert Stanhope, keen and observant, and as willing as Ellen herself. He was really touched by the old man's condition, and could not regard it in the philosophic and abstract way that Mr Waller was wont to do over his after-breakfast cigar.

'Gad, sir, it's terrible,' that gentleman would observe. 'One has heard of one leg in the grave; but our poor friend yonder has everything in the grave except his eyes. It is as you might say, death in life; and there is no knowing how long it may last, for he is but about seventy. It would be a happy release to him, one might almost say, if he were to have done with it all.'

Some men are like the crows, who, when any of their brethren are smitten (or seem to be so) with a mortal disease, adopt at once the 'Happy Release' theory. And yet Mr Waller was by no means a heartless person, and was a very good-natured one. He cudgelled his subtle brains as soundly as the rest to get at the poor Squire's meaning, and would have given what he had to discover it. Mrs Blackburn, not without an inward struggle and a blush in her withered cheeks, had pointed to the strong-box, and even shewn her husband its contents, in case it was concerning them and their safety that those still piteous glances were so anxious. But Anthony closed his eyes, in token that his need did not lie there, and then opened them again, to rove from face to face with the same urgent inquiry as before. Mr Allcase had been sent for in the first instance, but he had been summoned away on some parochial emergency, in the night, so that Science was not at hand to solve the difficulty, which it probably might have done. It has been said, indeed, by some one, doubtless who owed medicine a bad turn: 'Leave Nature to herself' (as though she were a child in a passion), 'and she will come round;' but surely there are cases where skill can hasten her movements. Thus, a doctor might have drawn at once a deduction from the poor Squire's altered features, which it took unlearned helpfulness hours to draw.

'Do you think, grandfather,' said Ellen, driven to her wits' end, and when all were weary with touching and pointing and asking 'Is it this?' 'Is it that?'—'that you could write down the first letter, if I brought you *the slate*?'

This implement had been tried and found useless so often, that it had long ago been thrown aside, and even placed in another room. Scarce a muscle of poor old Anthony—save a certain involuntary twitching of the mouth—had stirred for months, and far less a finger. But no sooner did Ellen utter the word 'slate,' than, like fire to flax, it lit up the white bearded face with eager joy.

Eureka! The problem was solved so far, at all events. They brought slate and pencil, and released his nerveless hands from the clothes that covered them, and propped him up with pillows, and watched as men of old might have watched at some Sibyl's cave for her vague prophecy; and scarce could one of her leaf-inscribed mysteries, after the wind had taken the rest, have been more difficult and inscrutable. He strove, and strove; but only could you trace some wandering scratches, a spider-web scrawl with the meaning strangled in it like any fly. And yet it was so pitifully plain that it *had* a meaning, though not the eyes of love, nor even those of deftest compositor (had such been there), could decipher it.

'I have it!' cried Ellen suddenly; and fleeing from the room, she returned at once with a worn and dog's-eared little volume. It was a relic of those so different days when she had been pupil-teacher at the village school under Slogan, and was in fact a spelling-book. She opened it at the alphabet, great A, great B, from which so many lisping little ones had learned their first lesson; and now she was to teach it once again to one in *second* childhood, upon the threshold of life, indeed, like them, but about to *leave* it. The rest stood round her, keeping an anxious silence as she held the open book before her grandfather, and touched the letters slowly with the pencil one by one.

'When I come to the first letter of the thing you wish for, grandfather dear,' she had said, 'you must close your eyes.'

She had gone over half of them, and still, though his eyes had seemed to follow her every movement, they had given no sign.

'It is too much for him,' whispered Mr Waller to Stanhope; 'I doubt whether he comprehends at all;' and indeed so Stanhope and the rest thought; but the faithful fingers pursued their task nevertheless to the end, or rather just short of the end, when they were rewarded, for, at the letter W, Anthony's eyelids dropped.

'Does the thing you wish for begin with W, grandfather?'

No placard, the most plainly printed, that was ever stuck on wall could have been read more easily than that earnest glance of his 'Yes, yes.'

Ellen had thus discovered, as it seemed, provided only that this new-born intelligence of the old man should last, a mode of interpretation for all his thoughts. But *would* it last? The Squire's brain had been quickened into activity by a circumstance, the precise nature of which only one person present could have indicated. Had it been awakened

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only to sink back again into torpor, since the incident that aroused it was not likely to recur? The sick man already appeared much fatigued, as with his unaccustomed exertions, not to mention those hours of untranslated anxiety, he well might be, and it was evident that only by effort could he keep his attention fixed on the task before him, but he did do so, so far as to spell out the first four letters of his son's name—W, I, L, L—without which indication of his wishes they would certainly not have been guessed. Then his eyes closed, as though he had done enough for that day, and he sank back, as if exhausted.

Then a council was held as to whether or not William should be sent for: Mrs Blackburn opining that he should be, since the Squire was so evidently desirous for reconciliation with him; but the rest, unwilling to act in such direct contradiction to the doctor's orders, opposed this. Finally, it was resolved to await, at all events, the arrival of Mr Allcase.

The surgeon positively declined to undertake the responsibility of disobeying his metropolitan chiefs. They had declared it to be their opinion that it would be highly dangerous, and might be even fatal to the patient, to permit access of the person who (whether wilfully or not) had been the immediate cause of his seizure, and at whose approach he had since shewn such evident marks of perturbation.

'But my husband has asked to see him,' urged Mrs Blackburn.

Mr Allcase smiled blandly, and shook his head.

His practice was a general one, but had not included examination of the paralytic by alphabet. He had listened to the whole account—as he was accustomed to listen to the extraneous detail of the sick-room, unprofessional opinions, and new and miraculous methods of treatment—with good-natured incredulity.

'It is very natural in you, my dear madam, to imagine that Mr Blackburn has expressed the wish in question; but in my opinion the whole affair is a delusion. He has not for three months been in a condition to entertain such a desire, much less to express it, although what you tell me of his attempting to write is very curious, very curious indeed. The brain may be active, but it is only mechanically so. Miss Ellen here is about to give him his cordial, which will put him, for the moment, at his best. Let her ask him, in my presence, whether he is of the same mind with respect to his son William; if he still wishes not to see him. If so, let him close his eyes, in token thereof, as you say it was understood he should do on the previous occasion.'

Mrs Blackburn was eager for this test; and the poor Squire being propped up as usual, while Ellen administered the potion, the question was put to him, as well as the proposed method of reply.

'Do you still wish not to see Uncle William, grandfather?'

The Squire closed his eyes and kept them fast, notwithstanding that quite a murmur of surprise broke forth from the womenfolk.

'There!' said the doctor, with quiet triumph; 'did I not tell you so? My dear madam, it is folly to be annoyed by such an incident' (for the poor lady had turned very pale)—'these are not even the caprices of a sick man. Mr Blackburn would have closed his eyes from very weakness, no matter what question you had proposed to him. For my part, I confess that at present I see no alteration in our poor patient. There is nothing for it, till some change occurs, but the same course of treatment—rest and quiet, quiet and rest: and you will forgive me if I hint—though it seems cruel to deprive one in his position of the society of a single friend—that there must not be too many people about him at a time.' And with that Mr Allcase, who was a man of action, and would never have made a fortune in Mayfair, took his leave, and proceeded as usual to make his report below stairs, nominally to Mr William, but in fact to Mr Waller and Stanhope.

There is no trade in which the professional has so decided an advantage over the layman as in physic. Few can gainsay him; for intelligent men, who, masters of their own calling, are inclined to credit others with the same knowledge of their proper affairs, have often but slight acquaintance with the phenomena of the sick-room. Still, Mr Allcase did not find his present audience so easy of conviction as the last. They stuck to it that the Squire had been in full possession of his wits, whatever might have been amiss with speech and movement, when he had spelled out the beginning of his son's name that morning.

'My good sir, we must believe the evidence of our own senses,' urged Mr Waller.

The surgeon's smile was pregnant with pity and good nature.

'Why, you are worse than Gibbon, Mr Allcase. You refuse to believe a miracle because it is contrary to your mere medical experience.'

'I don't know to what precise circumstance you are referring, Mr Waller; but I should say that Dr Gibbon was right.'

'Nay,' added Stanhope; 'why, one of the best scenes that Dumas ever wrote is where the paralytic old Noirtier, assisted by his grand-daughter—just as it might be Mr Blackburn and Miss Ellen—makes his will by merely winking his eyes.'

'I don't suppose Mr Dumas is a medical man,' observed the surgeon drily. 'If the patient he describes had winked with one eye, and pointed over his left shoulder, I could have understood what was meant.—Good-morning, gentlemen, for I have no more time to spare for your experimental philosophy.' And he mounted his cob, and rode away, as his custom was, at the gallop.

'There's a sceptic for you,' observed Stanhope laughing; 'and yet I suppose the man is right. He ought to know what he's talking about; and, besides, it appears that Mr Blackburn did decline to see his son, by the same token that we took for'——

'My dear Stanhope, I've got it,' interposed Mr Waller gravely. 'Allcase is a mere fanatic, with the Pharmacopœia for a Bible; but he is right thus far—that it is not his son whom Blackburn wishes to see. Perhaps I should never have hit upon it (although he spoke as plain as letters could speak, poor fellow), if it had not been for your chance allusion to Dumas. What the Squire wants to see is not William, but his WILL. Now, the question is—Where is it?'

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NEVER PLAYED OUT.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.—CURATE OF MARL HILL SCRIBIT.

No; I am not in the fens, old friend, though you may smell them when the wind blows from the sea, and though a considerable portion of the largest estate in the parish is certainly marsh-land, as yet unreclaimed. Marl Hill proper is really not called so in satire; it is on rising ground, the first wave of the wolds: the house I live in is at least eighty feet above the sea-level. The land all about is thoroughly drained and highly cultivated; and if you will come to see me, I will insure you against ague, unless, of course, you get it by voluntarily going into its strongholds to shoot wild-fowl.

It is a trifle dull, I must confess; so that you must expect to get long-winded old-fashioned letters in exchange for your occasional penny-post notes. One cannot read all the long evenings and all the mornings too; and sermon-writing is not a difficult style of composition here, for it is impossible to be too simple; you must talk rather than preach if you want to catch the attention of the people. These are scattered about, living in disgraceful cottages, upon the different estates. There are one or two small farmers, but the greater part of the land about here is let out and cultivated in a wholesale way, and one farm of a thousand acres pretty well takes up a parish. That is why the vicar has two, I suppose. He is one of the old school, and took things pretty easy: had morning service in the one church, and evening service in the other, every Sunday; married, buried, and christened when obliged to do so, and bothered himself no further. He has been ordered off to Madeira for his health, by a homœopathist, one would say, and on the principle that like cures like, if, as scandal reports, his ailments are traceable to his fondness for that too seductive wine. At anyrate, he required a curate to take his place, and here I am. After the fashion of new brooms, I want to perform some sweeping, but it is very difficult to do anything. The people are more heathenish than I had any idea was possible in this Christian country; but the job is to get at them. The women and children are out at work almost as much as the men; and district-visiting is impossible when the cottages are locked up and empty, or in the charge of a young girl, who also has to look after her small brothers and sisters. Drunkenness is not very prevalent, because the beer-shops are few and far between; but the devil does not lose much, for opium-eating is a common habit. It is a fact, I assure you. When you come here, you shall be taken to the chemist's in the nearest village on Saturday evening, and see the piles of opium pills he sells to the labouring classes. I tried tracts, but found that very few could read them. However, I have managed to double my congregations, and have established a Sunday school, which is a beginning. I hope to get up an infant school for week-days, next. You asked me what sort of life I led, you know, so if these matters bore you, I am not responsible.

I should like a little more civilised society, I confess, for, not being able to afford a horse, I am well nigh neighbourless. The property about here belongs nominally—for I believe it is mortgaged as heavily as it will bear—to a Major Holcombe, who lives with his only child, a daughter, at the Marl, which must have been a nice place once, but now—— I do not know how to describe it to you; think of Hood's Haunted House. The stables are in ruins; the garden is a wilderness; there is good feed on the drive up to the front door, which is never opened, the people going in and out by the back ways. As for the master, he has just recovered from an attack of D. T., but is dying. He has something on his mind, I think, or I doubt whether he would care so much for my company, or listen so patiently to all I have to say on religious matters, especially as I must seem a mere boy to him. I was rather stumped at first, but he soon began to talk scepticism, and arguing set me all right. And then I do look ten years over my age; that is one of the advantages of being ugly. He is constantly on the point of telling me some secret, only I do not encourage him, and he often says that he will

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write something down, and leave directions for the paper to be given me after his death. What is my duty, I wonder? If one were a Roman, I suppose it would be clear; but you see I am not even in priest's orders yet, and altogether I had rather be without his secret. But probably it is all nonsense. A man just out of D. T. is never right in his head; and yet, I daresay, his conscience is bad enough, for he has led a queer life, by all accounts. He has run through three fortunes, they say, two of his own, and one of his wife's, whose heart he also broke, they say; but 'they' always do say that of a spendthrift. When his wife died, he disappeared for a while; went yachting, to dodge his creditors, and placed his daughter, who was but ten, at school. He was away for eight years, and then he returned here, and brought his girl with him. And a strange life that poor young lady must have led, considering that she is not a Di Vernon. Only men came to the Marl, and those of the fastest. Major Holcombe wanted her to marry one of them, the son of an attorney and land-agent who had made his fortune, named Naisley; but Miss Lucy would not have him. Perhaps, however, she would have been bullied into it, only Naisley got a fall out hunting which injured his spine.

I can see you grinning, but you are quite out. I do not believe that I should ever fall in love with her. She is good looking, no doubt, and friendly enough; but she has got some great sorrow weighing upon her. Her father's state would of course account for a certain melancholy; but there is more than that; there is mystery, suspense, expectation of something which never happens, and which yet *may* happen, in the expression of her face. I have not made my meaning clear, but no matter; I could not if I tried for a twelvemonth. Miss Holcombe is my only ally in the small reforms which are being attempted; without her aid, I doubt whether the Sunday school would ever have become a fact. I close this in haste, for a messenger has come to say that this same Major Holcombe is *in extremis*, and calls for me.

CHAPTER II.—THE UNFINISHED RUBBER.

The strangest thing has happened, Brown: Major Holcombe is dead. The paper he talked about leaving for me to read is lying before me, and it affords a clue to our mystery—I mean about poor Godwin. Do you remember the minute details of that evening? I think *I* do, and propose to jot them down here. If I am incorrect in any particular, perhaps you may be able to set me right: then, please send this letter on to Thorpe, and ask him to supplement our memories still further. I want to have the account very accurate, because legal proceedings may follow upon the steps which I shall feel bound to take.

Our happy Cambridge life was drawing to a close; indeed, I had taken my degree, and only remained up because I had a scholarship to run out. You others were still undergraduates, but were going in for your final examinations in the winter, and it was late in the October term. To be precise, it was on the 4th of November 1840, exactly three years ago. You came up to the B.A. table in hall, touched me on the shoulder, and said: 'Come to my rooms afterwards, and have a rubber.' I accepted at once, for you had brought some very excellent port wine from home with you, and there were a few bottles still left. Just then, Thorpe passed, and you invited him. Thorpe fancied that he could play very well at whist, and did not like to sit down with an inferior performer; so, before giving a decided answer, he asked who the fourth was. 'Hylas Godwin,' you replied. 'All right,' said Thorpe; 'I 'll come.' Who first called Godwin, Hylas? It was a capital nickname, for it just hit off his style of beauty. What a good-looking fellow he was, certainly the handsomest man of our time. Rather conceited, perhaps, as youngsters who are admired by women are wont to be, and finikin in his dress. Yet he was clever too, though, may be, not such a genius as we esteemed him; and I do not think that I have ever met with a more agreeable companion. Gerrard said better things, but in so confused a way that they lost their pungency in the uttering: he always went shy in the middle of a joke. But Godwin rattled out any absurdity that came into his head in a manner which was irresistible. And he was in particularly good cue at the whist-table—not that he ever spoke during the play, he was far too keen a lover of the game for that, but between the deals he made amends for previous silence, and generally kept his three companions on the grin till the hands were sorted and the first card led.

He was in his usual spirits that evening, nor could we afterwards recall a word or look which seemed to shew that he had anything on his mind, or any presentiment of evil.

We sat for a little while round the fire, drinking a glass or two of your port, and then opened the card-table, and cut for partners. It was you and Thorpe against Godwin and myself. The cards fell very evenly, and the first rubber, which you won, was very protracted, so that we had hardly finished the first game of the second when we heard the chapel bell going, and Thorpe cried that he was short of his chapels for the week, and must keep that one.

'I have had a notice from the dean too,' said Godwin, 'but I 'll cut chapel and finish the rubber for all that, if Thorpe will.'

But Thorpe was firm. We abused him for his laziness in not getting up for morning service, and so securing evenings of unbroken comfort; but he prided himself on his sloth, and took our sarcasms for compliments. When he actually rose and threw his gown on, it became evident that our rubber was really to be interrupted, so we all agreed to wipe a chapel off our score, leaving the cards on the table, and returning to finish the game directly service was over.

Do you wonder at my writing down these minute details? I am purposely allowing my mind to dwell on every little particular, because, to tell the truth, I can think of nothing else just now, and I find my memory very vivid. I can see the counters I had just stuck under a candlestick to mark a double; the patterns on the back of our pack and of yours. I can see Godwin's face as he said to me: 'Now don't you go rushing off to your rooms for a pipe after chapel, as you are so fond of doing. Come straight back to Brown's, and don't keep us

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waiting. I will give you a cigar if you have forgotten your baccy.' And then in a loud aside to Thorpe, as we ran across the court: 'He never can resist smoking another fellow's cigars. Oh, I know where to have him!'

We were just in time to get in before the chapel doors were closed, and as we were walking up the aisle, he whispered in my ear: 'If you *do* admit a secular thought during the next half hour, partner, let it be a meditation upon the propriety of leading trumps when you hold five.'

Though three years have elapsed, I think I could swear to those being his exact words. How little I thought at the moment that they were the last I should ever hear him utter.

We all missed each other in the crowd on coming out; and when you, Thorpe, and myself met again at your door a few seconds afterwards, Godwin was not there. We went in and lit the candles, and laughed at his being the last, after the fuss he had made about the punctuality of others. You said that the porter had met you in crossing the court, and had given you a letter; so we concluded that the same thing had happened to Godwin, and that he had gone to his own rooms, to see what it was about, before joining us. We speculated upon its being a *billet-doux*, and joked about Hylas and the nymphs, speaking finally rather harshly of the supposed lady, whose letter we assumed to have caused this delay in resuming our rubber.

It is curious to note how the first thought of suspicion or alarm comes into the mind with a flash—by instinct apparently. No doubt, some reasoning process has been going on with such subtlety as to be unfelt, and that which we often call a presentiment, is merely a logical conclusion. For some time on that evening, we never doubted but what the absent man would come in from minute to minute. The open card-table, with its two lighted candles, the cards, and the counters upon it, stood as it had been left. The sofa was drawn up in front of the fire, and you lay on it; Thorpe and I sat in two easy-chairs on either side; and so we remained, smoking and chatting, for upwards of an hour.

And then I perfectly remember experiencing a sudden uneasiness, which caused me to look across at Thorpe, and I read a similar feeling in his eyes. We both turned to you, and the expression on our faces must have been very plain, for you at once said: 'What! you do not expect that there is anything the matter with him?'

'Of course not,' replied Thorpe. 'But—there would be no harm in going to his rooms to see.'

We went, and found the outer door sported; and while we were hammering and shouting, the gyp came by and told us that Mr Godwin had gone out of college, not wearing his academical dress, and carrying a carpet-bag. On going to the lodge, we heard this story confirmed by the porter, who also said that there *had* been a letter for him. We learned next day that he had left a note for his tutor, saying that urgent family matters obliged him to leave immediately, but that he would return or write as soon as he could. And that was the last of him.

He was a man who seemed pretty well alone in the world, so far as relatives were concerned. He had entered himself at college, and the tutor knew no one to communicate with. Of course a man could not disappear like that without causing some sensation in the university, but all inquiries were fruitless, and the majority of his acquaintances soon forgot him. The mystery of the affair struck us three, however, with a sort of awe, besides that, being his most intimate friends, we were naturally the most anxious to learn what had become of him. We even, you may remember, made a note of the state of the game of whist at the time we rose from it, and agreed that, if ever we could meet with Godwin again, we would play it out. That can never be. For here, on the borders of the Lincolnshire fens, I have unexpectedly come upon the traces of our old friend, and the cause of his disappearance. I will copy out Major Holcombe's—confession I suppose I must call it, though I hate the word, and will send it you, but you must not shew it to any one, at all events at present.

CHAPTER III.—THE PATRICIAN'S CONFESSION.

It is true, it is true, that which you have preached to me, that which I believed when I was a child, that which I have scoffed at as an old wife's fable. All is not over when this machine of flesh and blood stops. When a young man goes to the money-lender, the present pleasure seems so very real, the future burden so distant and intangible, that the idea of self-denial is to him like grasping at shadows, and missing the substance; but pay-day comes, and ruin. 'A short life and a merry one,' cries the lad; but the merriment evaporates, leaving the nerves shattered, the body diseased, the heart full of bitterness and misery; and I feel a conviction that this is part of an inexorable system which extends after we are able to trace it. In whatever direction we seek to probe the mysteries that surround us, we are lost in infinity. Space is infinite, and time, and life. Motion is infinite; the moon revolving round the earth, the earth round the sun, this solar system round another, till the brain reels: is not retribution infinite likewise? These thoughts are new to me; I but grasp them vaguely, express them crudely, but they burn in my soul. Oh, the innocent hearts into which I have infused the germs of evil! Oh, the weak ones vacillating between good and bad whom I have drawn devilwards! Repent of my own sins? Ay, if that were all; but how to account for the eternal wrong I have done to others? And the one great crime which renders my conscience sensitive to the sins which I might otherwise have forgotten, on this side the judgment at least, how can I atone for that? By confessing it to you? No, no; and yet I have a thirst to do it, a desire not new to me. I have written the details in the form of a narrative, which will be placed in your hands at the same time as this letter. I began this account, of what it was the one remaining object of my life to hide, some months ago, carefully stopping at those details which would criminate me. I have not finished it now even, as I write this; but I will before you have it; yes, if my head keeps clear, and my strength holds. Criminate me? What do I mean? Nothing I could say would do that. But my nerves are not what they were; it is years and years since men first began to notice that I craned at my fences; and I see visions since that illness. For weeks a young man stood over against me night and day, with a bloody bruise on one

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side of his head, and a look so pitiful and reproachful, that it was a miracle I did not go mad. Will faces come around one like that hereafter?

I was what prudes and parsons call wild, I suppose; not worse, perhaps, than my neighbours, but more careless. I never could think economy anything but mean; and I confess to having been a fool in money matters. Though a younger son, I had a fair portion, quite as much as any man in my regiment—and I spent every penny of it. Then my elder brother died, and I came into the estates, and soon had them pretty well dipped. To get clear, I married a woman with money, whom I never liked so much as she deserved, for she loved me well, and stuck to me through everything—ay, to the very last. If it had been left to her, there would have been no settlements; but her people insisted on my tying up a few thousands for her and her children—she brought me but one, a girl, and died a few years afterwards. I was again involved in money difficulties by that time, so I put Lucy at a good school, and went to the Mediterranean in Lord Plunger's yacht. He was shirking the bailiffs too; and we cruised about together for some years. It was only in '39 that I could return to England, and then I settled here, and began to look about me. There is a deal of marsh-land on the estate, and I had a mind to try draining a part of it, as many landholders have done in the county, to the great improvement of their property. But there was no capital to start with, and Marl Hill would not stand another mortgage; so then I thought of Lucy's money, which was lying idle in the funds. The estate is not bound to go to the male branch, but will come to her after my death, so the tied-up capital could not be laid out better for her than in reclaiming this fen. One of the trustees was dead, and the other very ill at the time—only had a bit of one lung, people said; but it seems to have grown again, for he has got better, they tell me. He was living in Devonshire, and there was a difficulty about communicating with him, as also about the transaction altogether; there always is in such matters, I believe. However, it was got over, and a part of the money was withdrawn, and applied in the way which promised to be so much more advantageous.

There was not much to start such an undertaking with; and I had to begin in a small way, and do it cheaply. I found a man named Bradley, who professed to understand draining, and bargained with him to keep a party of five men at work on the place most favourable for a start; and they built some wooden huts on a dry spot in the marsh, so as to live close to their operations. Whenever he had an opportunity, Bradley was to add to the number of his workmen, so that sometimes there would be ten or twelve employed, but never less than five. The draining did not go on fast, but then the wages paid were very small; the truth being that Bradley and his gang carried on more profitable business, and found working for me useful as a blind. This got suspected, and the fellows were called 'Holcombe's Rough uns' by their own class, 'Holcombe's Ruffians' by mine. I got rather a bad name amongst certain people; but what did that matter to me? Everybody is liable to that.

Bradley's gang were a bad lot, no doubt. They drank a good deal of spirits, to keep off the ague, and were suspected of brewing their own medicine. They were clever poachers, and never got caught; they kept up communication with vessels in the Humber, and made use of a small but navigable stream about four miles off for smuggling purposes. Some very queer fellows hid for awhile in those wooden huts sometimes, I daresay. But I do not preserve, and hold no office in either the Excise or Customs, so I got my draining done cheaply, and asked no questions.

Lucy was too old to be kept at school any longer, so I sent for her to the Marl; and a few days after her arrival a man named Naisley, the son of a Louth lawyer, who has bought land near here, and wishes to be thought a county gentleman, saw her, and fell in love with her. Naisley is rich, and the marriage would have been a good thing on that account; but besides that, he knew all the rights of the difficulty I had had about that money which was tied up by settlement, for he was still a sort of sleeping-partner in the legal business, and the firm had transacted all my affairs, so that Naisley had opportunities of making any inquiries he chose, and suspected something not quite right. I had reasons therefore for taking up his cause pretty warmly; but there was a difficulty. As I was not on good terms with any of the distant branches of my family, there had been no one to receive Lucy during her holidays, and I had made arrangements with the schoolmistress to let her remain with her all the year round. But when the girl grew into a young woman, she formed romantic friendships with other girls, whose parents asked her to their homes; and when the matter was referred to me, I saw no reason to forbid her accepting such invitations. On one of these visits she met a young man, who fell in love with her; and when Naisley began to shew her attention, and I backed him, she told me that she was engaged to this lad, who was a Cambridge undergraduate, and would not be in a position to marry probably for years. It was annoying; but I took it for granted that she would soon get over this girlish fancy, and made light of it at first. But the more I reasoned, the more she pleaded; and she would hardly treat Naisley with common civility. Then I lost my patience, and spoke harshly; and Lucy, who was very different from her mother, grew more obstinate as I insisted. Matters might have gone differently if she had respected me; but how should she think much of a father who was constantly drunk? Hardly a day passed without some violent scene; and in a short time we felt a positive aversion for each other—for I have always come to hate any one who opposed my will, and my feelings towards her reached almost as far, though she was my own child. I judge of her sentiments to me by her shrinking, as if she expected a blow, whenever I came upon her unexpectedly.

In the summer, during the long vacation, her lover came to Lincolnshire to see me; and, learning from his own mouth that his patrimony was but a small one, I told him that I had other views for Lucy; that I disapproved of long engagements; and finally I forbade him to hold any further communication with her. He left the house without saying whether he would obey me or not, but hung about the neighbourhood, and contrived several clandestine interviews with my daughter before I discovered what was going on. Then there was a quarrel, and blows were struck, though I confess

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that he was as forbearing as possible, and only threw me to the ground in self-defence. Still I hated him for it—hated him keenly and personally now, not merely as the cause of my plans being thwarted, and my safety endangered. I caused Lucy to be closely watched after this, for if she eloped with this Godwin, who must now look upon me as an enemy, he would make inquiries after a time about the property secured to his wife by her mother's marriage settlements. So, while her lover was in the neighbourhood, I kept her a close prisoner in her own apartments. Soon after this, Naisley became pressing, and almost threatening, affecting to suspect that I was playing him false, and not doing my best to force Lucy to listen to him.

Early in the following November, I went up to Lucy's room one morning, with the intention of trying what conciliation would do, now that it was evident that she could not be compelled. She had been writing, and as I entered, she closed her blotting-book on the letter. After talking quietly for a little time, I alluded to this, and expressed a hope that she was not corresponding with the man who had made use of personal violence towards her father. Then she made a false move; had she remained quiet, it would never have occurred to me to examine what she had been writing; but she darted towards her blotting-book, and so roused my suspicions; and the next moment, in spite of her struggles and despairing cries, the letter, which was finished and signed, and the envelope, which was directed, were in my hands. She was accustomed to put on a quiet, protesting, persecuted-heroine air in her interviews with me; but now she fell at my feet, and clasped my knees, imploring me not to read what she had written. By which, of course, I knew that it was very important that I should do so; and when she found me determined to disregard her entreaties, she went into hysterics.

A glance shewed me the purport of the letter. I then rang the bell, and told the servant to remain with her mistress till she recovered, and to lock the door upon her on leaving the room. Then I went to my private room, and studied the letter. Where could a young girl have got such boldness and such invention? It seemed that this lover of hers, Godwin—to whom, of course, the letter was addressed—had endeavoured to persuade her to elope with him on one of those occasions when they had met in the summer; but that she had refused to take so serious a step, urging that he himself would think the worse of her afterwards for it. She now alluded to this, in order to own that she had been wrong: my tyranny, as she chose to call it, had become insupportable. I was determined to force her into marrying a man she positively hated. Then followed her reasons for thus hating Naisley, which shewed considerable power of discerning character, and she positively appealed to her lover to come and save her from the cruel fate I designed her. But the most astounding part of the letter was the cunning and carefully studied plot which she had framed for the evasion. She knew that Godwin could not come undisguised into the neighbourhood without my receiving early intelligence of it; so she directed him to dress himself as a navvy, and demand employment of Bradley. Men on the tramp to or from Hull often took a spell of work on my fen; and his making a similar application would excite no suspicion, or even particular attention. She was to disguise herself as a peasant, and they were to meet at a certain spot at eleven o'clock at night, and go off wherever he chose. Nothing was forgotten; she calculated the first possible night of his arrival, and said she would be at the appointed place on that, and if he were not there, on the next, then the next, till he came. She gave him a pass-word; told him the times of arrival and departure of the ferry-boats from Hull to the nearest town on the Lincolnshire side—in short, the whole thing might have been arranged by a Leporello or a Figaro.

I was nearly mad with humiliation and rage when I had read that letter carefully through. What had I said or done to drive an innocent young girl to plan and write it? Something probably inspired by drink and fear, which I remembered nothing of now I was sober. I cursed myself for my folly; I cursed Naisley, who had goaded me to it; the girl herself; and above all, this man, who had interfered to thwart my plans. I had spoiled this one scheme; but could I always make sure of equal success in the face of such method and such determination? Yes, if I could keep clear of drink; but drink was as necessary to me now as air.

I went up to the fire to throw the letter into it, when suddenly a thought came into my head—clear, distinct, inspired by the devil. Instead of burning the letter, I put it into the directed envelope, sealed it, rode over to the nearest village, and posted it with my own hands.

Then I visited the place where the draining was going on, called Bradley into one of the huts, and——

No, I will write down what I said to him when I have told everything else. Not yet, not yet. But I swear, and I know that I am a dying man, that I did not intend that to happen which did.

A week afterwards, I saw Lucy for the first time since the day that I intercepted her letter, and told her that her determined opposition to my wishes had at length convinced me that they would not tend to her happiness, and that I was ready to give way in anything, rather than drive her to so disgraceful a step as an elopement. If this marriage, which she had so set her heart on, must take place, let everything be done decently and without scandal. She should no longer be imprisoned or watched, but might correspond with her lover, and even tell him that I was willing to let by-gones be by-gones, and see him, if he still continued in the same mind, and would come to the Marl.

Ah, that burst of gratitude! I have led a hardening life, but my heart is not quite seared; and it was an agony to hear her self-reproaches, her promises of filial duty, and her auguries of a happy future—an agony to see her step lighten, and the flush of health come back to her cheek; for I was a traitor, and I knew the sickening disappointment which was in store for her.

She wrote, and waited for an answer, which never came. She wrote again—a third time—still no response.

She sickened and pined; her eyes seemed to grow preternaturally large, and were turned on me at times with a look of mournful inquiry which was haunting. I can write no more now; I am giddy; the letters are confused. To-morrow.

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CHAPTER IV.—THE PLEBEIAN'S CONFESSION.

I read the first part of this unfinished manuscript, left for me by the man who now lies dead at the Marl, as the mere raving of a brain disordered by drams, till the name of Godwin caught my attention; and then a comparison of dates shewed that this improbable story tallied exactly with our friend's mysterious disappearance, and I could not doubt that he had met with foul play.

I write calmly now; but I was thrown into a terrible state of excitement at the time. The confession was incomplete, and he who had volunteered it could not write another line or utter another word. I am sorry, my dear Brown, that you cannot come here to pay me a visit at present, and I own that your reasons are valid; but had it been possible, you would have been of the very greatest assistance to me. I knew you would feel the interest you say you do, and I will send you a continuous narrative of my success or failure in tracing what I fear will prove the last footsteps of our poor friend. The first thing will be to find this Bradley. Of course, it will be impossible to speak to Miss Holcombe till after the funeral; and if her late father's account is to be trusted, it would be inflicting needless pain to trouble her with the subject at all, except that she could confirm or contradict the various statements in that account of which she has cognizance, and so enable us to judge of its general trustworthiness.

Three weeks have elapsed since Major Holcombe's funeral, and I have strange news for you. I will not enter into the minor details of my proceedings, but leave them to be talked over when we meet, and confine myself now to results. I *did* speak to Miss Holcombe as soon as it was decent to do so, and she was much overcome on hearing that I had been poor Godwin's friend. It was also a great shock to her to learn that her late father had sent the letter he took away, which she was sure that Godwin had received, because the later ones had been returned through the dead-letter office. It was not an easy matter at first to gain any tidings of Bradley, so I went to Hull, and put the matter in the hands of the police there, and they were able at once to trace him, as he was undergoing a sentence of imprisonment at Lincoln, to which town I proceeded. Then it appeared very doubtful whether any magistrate would commit him on a charge of murder, with no stronger evidence to go upon than the obscure hint of a man whose brain had been disordered; but Bradley, whose nerves seemed shaken by confinement, was so alarmed at the idea of such an accusation hanging over him, that he volunteered a confession of all he knew about the matter, which was taken down in writing, and here is a copy of it.

That there gentleman as came to the Marl Fen in November 1840, murdered? Don't you believe it, sir; he weren't no more murdered than you are. I am an unlucky beggar, and always was, but to get into trouble along of having done for a bloke, as for all I know is a-eating of his dinner comfortable at this present moment, is too bad, it is.—Ay, I know Major Holcombe thought he was dead; I let him think so for a reason, but bless yer, it was all kid. Ask Bill Blazer, Joe Keggs, Lushy Noggins, or Abe Snarem; ask Captain Blobber of the *Slosure*.—How was it? Why, this is how it was.

I was digging in the Marl Fen one arternoon along with my mates, when the major rode up and called me; and when I got to him he beckoned with his head, and said low like: 'Come here,' so that I should go up quite close. So I did, and put my hand on the horse's neck like, and he bent a bit and said: 'Bradley,' says he, 'I know, of course, that you and your mates would not drain my land, at the price you 're a-doing of it, unless you found the situation, and the excuse for living in these out-of-the-way huts, convenient. Well, that 's nought to me,' says he; 'it 's a mootooal advantage, and I 'm not a-going to see you fall into a trap for want of a word o' warning. The custom-house people is arter you; they 've got an idea there 's a bit of running done in these parts, now and then, and that Holcombe's rough uns have summut to do with it. And there 's a spy a-coming to-morrow, or the day arter; he will be dressed like a navvy, and come to you to be took on at the draining, so that he may live in the huts here, and find out everything. Be all friendly and mate-like until he gets the chance to betray you, you understand?'

'Thank ye, major,' says I; 'now we shall know how to make him comfortable. He shall have a pleasant evening, and I daresay he will be in a hurry to come back for another.'

'Well, Bradley,' says he, 'money ain't plentiful here, but I do so hate a spy—special when he comes a-interfering with my workmen—that I think I could find a ten-pun note somewheres if he got a warning to mind his own business done clever, so that there ain't a noise about it.'

When the major spoke of paying, I saw he was up to a game, so I says: 'If we should make a mistake, major, and we found arterwards he were not a preventive at all, that would hurt our feelings uncommon, and you would make it fifty, then, wouldn't you?'

'P'raps I would,' said he, and rode away.

Well, I explained the matter to my mates, for there was only us five reg'lar ones working at the time; that is, I told them a preventive spy was coming, and kept the idea that the major might have a grudge against the chap to myself—there warn't no call to speak of that. We agreed what we 'd do: that were, to receive him friendly and unsuspicious; get drinking, and start a quarrel, quite promisc'ous like, and then give it him stiffish—all under seeming of a pleasant quiet fight, and no malice.

He came the third day after, I think it wor, but I won't kiss the book to the actooal day. There was no mistaking him: he was dressed like a navvy, sure enough, but he 'd small delicate hands, mudded over artificial; and he weren't used to the heavy boots he 'd on, for his steps didn't drag. He acted his part very well, though; sat down and blew his baccy quite friendly, and offered to stand a couple o' gallons to wet his footing.

'There ain't a public nearer nor a couple o' miles, worse luck,' says Joe Keggs.

'Haven't you got a drop of something handy, in stock, as it were?' says the stranger; and I saw my mates look queer at that; it made 'em feel sartain this were the preventive spy.

'Well,' says Joe, 'there is a couple o' bottles o' stuff which was sent to us from the Marl, in case

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one on us should feel a touch of the rheumatics coming on.'

'Let 's have 'em,' says the stranger; and we did. But he tried to shirk drinking hisself, and that made an excuse for a quarrel.

I 'm not going to deny that that stranger got something for himself; two of my mates had drunk as much as they could do with, and punished him more than we meant. And just then the major came down, and had a look into the hut; none of the others twigged him, but I did. He had been lushing pretty free, as he always did, and I suppose couldn't keep away. But he looked precious scared at what he saw, and I expect it pretty well sobered him. The stranger was lying on the floor of the hut, face uppards, senseless, with a nasty place on his temple. He did look uncommon dead sure-ly. But he warn't, bless yer, not a bit. When the major was gone—and he only held the door ajar, gave a look in, and was off—I washed the chap's bruises, and made him tidy with a hankercher round his head. And then we played him a trick. The day before, Captain Blobber, of the *Slosure*—which is a whaler, and he her skipper—comes to me, and says: 'Do you know one Jack Sherks, who lives hereabouts? Because he came to me and engaged himself, and I gave him an advance to clench the bargain, and we sail on Saturday, and he hasn't turned up.'

Now, I knew Jack Sherks well enough, and that he didn't mean to sail in the *Slosure*. He 'd been a whaling once, and didn't much like it; but being down on his luck, he engaged to Captain Blobber, and then heard tell of something he liked better, and was hiding till the ship was off. But I wasn't going to split on an old pal, for Jack and I had done a little together in the smuggling way; so I says: 'No, I haven't seen him lately; but if I do, I 'll bring him if I can.'

'If you will,' says he, 'I 'll reward you handsome, for I 'm full short of hands. Or if you bring me any other sailor, and there 's many has a friend hereabouts,' says he, hinting delicate at my character for a bit of contraband, 'I 'll make it worth your while.'

I thanked him, and said I 'd do my best, and forgot all about it till that night, when the stranger was a-lying stupid on the floor of the hut. It was Friday, and the *Slosure* sailed next day, for the wind was favourable. Captain Blobber had only set eyes on Jack Sherks once, and couldn't know him well; so the trick I thought of was to take the stranger down to Grimsby in a spring-cart I knew how to get the loan of, and see if we could get him shipped for Jack. Well, we fetched the cart, and put the stranger into it. He had come round a bit, and groaned now and then, but didn't know where he was, or what we were doing with him; and we got him to Grimsby, where I found Captain Blobber at the house where he told me to ask for him. I said that I had met Jack Sherks at a public disguised as a navvy, and he had got drunk and been fighting, and got a knock on the head, but I didn't think it would be much, so I had brought him. The skipper got a lantern and came outside the town where the cart had been left; and when he looked at the man's head and felt it, he said he would be all right for a cut like that in a day or two, and he was so short of hands he 'd take him. So he got his boat and took him aboard ship at once, and the *Slosure* sailed next tide; and that 's the last I ever heard of the matter. Every word as I 've said is the truth, so help me.

How does this story of Bradley's sound to you, Brown? I confess that I am inclined to believe it. *Credo quia*—it is so improbable; the man could never have invented a lie so circumstantial. Besides which, I have made inquiries, and a whaler named the *Slosure*, Captain John Blobber, did sail from Grimsby on Saturday November 7, 1840. The fact is easily verified, because it made a considerable stir in the neighbourhood at the time; for the Hull whalers generally start for Greenland in the spring and return in the autumn. But John Blobber had some private dodge of his own about wintering in an uncomfortable proximity to the north pole, and securing the first of the fishing when the ice broke. A chosen party, who had made several ordinary trips with him, fell in with his views; but it was a small one, and he had considerable difficulty in getting outsiders to have anything to do with so wild a proceeding as starting northwards at that time of year. This would account for his rash advance of money to the able-bodied seaman Sherks, and also for his taking him (as he supposed) on board though he was temporally disabled.

One more point adds to the credibility of Bradley's account, or, at anyrate, throws a difficulty in the way of disproving it: the *Slosure*, alas for our poor friend! has never been heard of since.

CHAPTER V.—WHAT'S TRUMPS?

You will be surprised to see my handwriting again, my dear Brown, so soon after my last budget, especially as there is a chance of this letter crossing one of yours on the road, and you know my objection to such accidents. But you express so much anxiety to hear the latest particulars of anything which may throw light on Godwin's disappearance, that I will not let a post go by without sending you word of what has happened. Miss Holcombe has not shut herself up, or professed any great grief on account of her father's death. She feels that madness would have been so far greater an evil, that the actual event is evidently a relief to her mind. Of course, she has regrets, and pictures to herself that her father might have become reformed, and given up his habits of intemperance, if he had recovered his health; but still I fancy that she has too strong a conviction that the probabilities are all the other way for that sorrow to penetrate very deep.

Her position is a singular one. I do not understand much about the laws of my country, and fancied that land always went to males; but what Major Holcombe said in his confession is quite correct, it seems—he actually *had* the power of leaving Marl Hill to his daughter by will, and has done so. As she is just of age, therefore, she finds herself the mistress of a house and an estate, both half in ruins, and requiring a vast amount of care and judgment to set them right; while she is so ignorant of affairs that she looks up to me—a fellow who knows no more what ought to be done in any legal or agricultural juncture than an Ojibbeway—as a perfect oracle. Common sense told me one thing, that she ought to have some motherly middle-aged lady—a widow for choice—in the house with her; and as she saw the propriety of

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that, I looked about, and secured a comfortable, sympathetic dame, the relict of a clergyman, poor and without encumbrances, who was glad to accept the position of chaperon and domestic economist.

So soon as matters were thus in a measure settled, Miss Holcombe redoubled her efforts for the improvement of the poor around her; for she was able to spend a little money now, while at the same time she felt her responsibility as an owner of the soil in addition to a desire for some end and aim to live for. Coals, candles, and blankets have been distributed; the infant school is a permanent establishment; and she even entered into a little fancy I had for dressing up the church for Christmas. The edifice is so dull and gloomy that I am always longing for the power of painting it up a bit, clearing out the horrible old pews, and so getting rid of that gloomy air of depression which I fancy seems to affect the spirits of every parishioner who enters it. However, I am utterly unable to do anything permanent myself, but I thought a little temporary cheerfulness might be infused over the place in honour of the happiest of Christian festivals. Plenty of laurel, holly, and red berries could be had for nothing; nor were children wanting who entered into the spirit of the thing, and were delighted to bring the evergreens to the church; the only desideratum was the taste to arrange them, and for this I had to appeal to Miss Holcombe, and her new companion, Mrs Wing. They answered readily enough: the younger lady brought originality; the elder, experience; I, superior strength and a longer reach.

It was past three o'clock in the afternoon, and our task was fortunately approaching completion, for the light already began to wane, and the snow, which was falling in large soft flocks, silently gathered over the windows, and obscured it still further. The two ladies were at the east end of the church, putting the final touches to a bower of mistletoe which festooned over the marble medallion of the late Sir Timothy Wetherbel, Bart.—as if any one was likely to want to kiss *him!*

'One little bit more holly for the reading-desk, and I think we shall do,' said Miss Holcombe; and I went to the church porch to select a bough from the heap which had been thrown there.

The door stood ajar; on swinging it open, I saw a sailor standing in the porch, peering through into the interior, and supposing that he was attracted by curiosity, I told him to go in if he liked. 'We are smartening up a bit for Christmas,' said I.

He made no reply, but looked me steadily in the face.

'Is there anything the matter?' I asked. 'Am I wanted?'

'What's trumps, Stacey?' he said; and then I knew him.

'Hush!' whispered I, grasping his hand. '*She* is in there. She has lately lost her father, and'——

Before I could finish my sentence, there was a rustle behind me, and Miss Holcombe, who had heard and recognised the first tones of the sailor's voice, stood in the doorway. She gave a great gasp, and fell almost senseless in Godwin's arms, to the great surprise of good Mrs Wing, who had followed along the aisle to see what was up. I explained the state of the case in a few hurried words; and then the sympathetic matron began to cry.

Hylas Godwin rather marred the impressiveness of the scene by staggering under the weight of Miss Holcombe, who is a very fine girl, and sitting down on the holly: having tight sailor's trousers on, he got up again pretty quickly.

You must positively come now, Brown, and hear Godwin's yarns. He has been catching whales and exploring countries which are all hummocks and bears; and he has lost two toes from frost-bite, and been shipwrecked, and travelled half over the globe before he could get here. And of course he will marry Miss Holcombe as soon as it is decent; for she does not mind his being a toe or two short, not she. He will write to you in a day or two, for he wants you to be another witness to his identity, as he has been reported dead, it seems, and has certain formalities to go through to get at his own property. Whether he will complete his college career in the legitimate manner ('make his exit B.A.,' he calls it), is uncertain, for he doubts whether he could pass after three years' estrangement from classics and mathematics. Just as I was closing this, your letter came in announcing your intention of coming to see me at last. You will have to sleep on a sofa, as Godwin has taken possession of the bed reserved for you, but you will not mind that! Come along, old fellow; I wish Thorpe could be here too. Why, we might finish the rubber!

PROSECUTIONS.

In most civilised countries there is a public prosecutor, whose business it is to set the criminal law in motion against all who seem to be within the gripe of it. We have not any such officer here. Perhaps we do not like the notion of a nominee of the crown, kept up to his work by the jealousy of public opinion, which would criticise his salary with reference to the work done for it, prying *ex officio* into all our acts, seeking whom he may prosecute, going about to 'sniff out moral taints, and call the devil over his own coals.' Perhaps we do not like the notion because it is not our own—perhaps because we think we can get along pretty well with the machinery for prosecution already at our disposal.

The Attorney-general, who is the chief law-officer of the crown, is indeed in one sense a public prosecutor. It is his duty, on being satisfied that a punishable crime has been committed, to take such steps as are calculated to lead to the punishment of the criminal. He is bound to see that the suspected persons are arrested; that a full inquiry is had into the case before a justice of the peace; that, if committed for trial, the prisoners shall be duly pursued at the assizes or sessions; and it is his duty to demand judgment and execution of the sentence, in the event of a verdict of 'guilty' being returned.

But the Attorney-general proceeds in a case, or abstains from entering upon it, according to his discretion; and his intervention is practically limited to cases of great public interest, to cases where the crown is directly concerned, or to cases which it would be scandalous to leave unquestioned. Many minor offences are prosecuted by the authorities of the counties in which they have been committed; and sometimes they are so by order or request of the court, in cases where, from one cause or another, there is no other pursuer.

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It is a leading feature in English jurisprudence that any person whatever can set the criminal law in motion if he chooses—that is to say, if he chooses to be at the trouble and expense, and chooses also to run the risk of the consequences, in the event of his prosecution failing. These risks include liability to compensate the defendant for the injury done him through having been subjected to criminal proceedings, a liability very properly enforced in cases where the proceedings have originated in carelessness or gross blundering. The most insignificant person in the land can institute proceedings against any other save the highest, in whose name all criminal proceedings are conducted, even though the crown officers, having been applied to on the subject, have refused to enter upon it. In one sense, therefore, though we have not any public prosecutor, in another sense we have a most effectual one, for the public is its own prosecutor. And this applies not only to cases of wrong done to private persons who are directly concerned in the punishment of the wrong-doer, but also to cases in which the accused bears no personal relation whatever to the accuser, who simply stands forth as the champion of principles which he deems to have been outraged.

To guard against factious interference and annoyance from meddlers—to prevent also the malice of spiteful persons, who might wantonly set the law in motion, in order to gratify private hatred, even though the trial end in an acquittal, the law has provided various protections, which stand as barriers between the liberty of the subject and those who would infringe it. What these protections are it is proposed now to consider, and to point out at the same time the various steps which have to be taken, not only to set the criminal law in motion, but to secure a conviction.

If a constable or a justice of the peace sees a man committing a breach of the peace, or a felony, he may arrest him then and there, and so indeed may any one; but an unofficial person is responsible in damages for any mistake he may make in the matter, by taking the wrong man or otherwise, while the constable or justice is not. The ordinary way, however, in which the law is invoked is by application to a justice of the peace for a warrant ordering the arrest of the accused person. This warrant is not to be granted except on sworn testimony of such a character as to convince the magistrate that there is a strong possibility of the accused having committed the offence imputed to him. The warrant is given to a constable to execute, and in ordinary cases the accused is arrested and brought before the justice as a prisoner. Sometimes, however, when it is desired not to put the accused to the disgrace of an arrest by policemen, the warrant is given to the high sheriff of the county, who undertakes to bring his prisoner into court at the time named by the justices. This course was adopted in the case of Mr Eyre, on the occasion of his being ordered to be brought before the justices at Market Drayton, upon charges founded upon his conduct as governor of Jamaica.

So soon as a British subject is arrested, he is entitled by the ancient law of England, and also by special act of parliament, to be brought before a magistrate, whether justice of the peace or judge of one of the superior courts, in order that it may be publicly ascertained in open court for what reason he is detained in custody. Magna Charta asserted, among other things, that the king was not to 'deny or defer to any man either justice or right;' and because in the course of time there came to be crooked notions in the minds of the crown lawyers as to what this meant, and because the birthright of all British subjects came to be invaded, parliament, in the thirty-first year of Charles II., passed the Habeas Corpus Act, a new law declaring what the old law was, and providing means for the immediate examination, in all cases, of persons arrested for any cause whatever.

As a matter of fact, prisoners are now with all convenient speed brought before a justice of the peace, who hears the charge against them, and the evidence adduced in support of it, and then hears the defence. If he is satisfied that there is not any reason for going further with the case, he orders the prisoners to be liberated, and neither he nor those who moved him to exert his authority are responsible for the arrest and the detention hitherto, unless malice can be proved to have actuated them. If, at the hearing, the justice is persuaded of the truth of the charge, he either punishes the prisoner himself, by virtue of an act of parliament giving him authority to do so in certain cases; or, he sends him back to custody with a view to his trial at the next quarter-sessions, or at the assizes, in the event of the case not being one for summary conviction. The accusers of the prisoner are bound over to prosecute, and the witnesses to give evidence, and the prisoner is then said to be committed for trial. Except in cases of a very serious nature, as murder, high treason, or strong cases of felony, the justice is empowered, and for certain matters required, to accept bail for the appearance of the prisoner at the sessions, and not to remit him to custody. As an additional safeguard to the subject from the tyranny or whim of the wielders of the law, and because it was found that the right to be bailed was nullified at the discretion of the judge by insistance on enormous bail, it was inserted as one of the capital items in the Bill of Rights that excessive bail was not to be required. Sometimes the bail or deliverance money (from *bailler*, to deliver) is required only from the prisoner, who enters into a bond to forfeit the amount of his bail if he fails to surrender on the day and at the place ordered; but generally it is required from sureties as well, who agree to surrender the prisoner as ordered, or to forfeit the amount of the bond. In the event of the prisoner not being able to find bail, he is committed to prison till the day of trial; but should satisfactory bail be offered after committal, the magistrate committing is bound to take it, and to liberate the prisoner. Should the accused be remitted to custody, he ought not to be treated more harshly than is necessary to secure his safe keeping. He ought not to be put to menial work, nor, indeed, to be deprived of anything but his liberty, the object being simply to guard him till trial, not to punish him. It is to be feared, however, that these principles of treatment are by no means universally adopted in this country, nor even in the metropolis.

At the quarter-sessions or assizes, whichever it may be, the case as it presented itself before the magistrate is stated to the grand jury by the chairman or judge of assize; and they are required, after hearing his charge, and, if they wish it, examining witnesses, to say whether there is 'a true bill,' or

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'no true bill'—in other words, to say whether the prisoner is or is not to be put upon his trial before a *petit* jury of twelve of his peers.

If the grand jury ignore the bill, the prisoner is forthwith discharged, not any one being responsible to him for injury caused by his detention and imprisonment, nor even for the expenses incurred by him in his defence. If the grand jury find a true bill, he is given in charge to a jury of twelve, who hear the case in open court, with the advantage of counsel to represent both sides (the judge himself taking the part of counsel for the prisoner when he is undefended), and with the further advantage of the judge's summing up. Upon the unanimous verdict of the twelve, the acquittal or conviction of the prisoner depends, and against the sentence there is not any appeal on the merits of the case, except to the mercy of the crown. Sometimes the judge who tries the case will allow of the reservation of some point of law which may have been raised, for the consideration of the Court of Crown Cases Reserved, a court composed of all, or nearly all the judges, who carefully review the legal matter placed before them, with arguments, and lay down the law upon the subject. They have not any power to rehear the case itself, as the French Court of Cassation has, nor, indeed, can any case come before the court on appeal except on a point of law, for the further argument of which the judge who presided at the trial has given his permission.

Should this court take a view of the law favourable to the arguments of the prisoner's counsel, the sentence on the prisoner is modified so as to suit the justice of the case. He may be set at liberty, or he may receive a less punishment than that to which he was condemned, but any favour of this kind must be sought from the crown as the sole source of mercy; and even concessions which should be made on the broad principles of justice, are, theoretically considered, given by favour of the crown. The maxim that the king can do no wrong, goes to the length of supposing that the king cannot err by his representatives administering the criminal law. Any sentence, therefore, which may have been passed upon a prisoner cannot be revoked; and a sentenced man, who is afterwards proved innocent, must be content to accept as an act of grace a free pardon for an offence which he has not committed.

One point, and a material one, remains to be noticed in connection with the subject of prosecutions. At present, if a man is robbed, half-murdered, swindled, or outraged in any way, he has to bear not only the injury or loss directly accruing from the wrong done to him, but also the cost of prosecuting the wronger. What the cost is must depend very much upon the nature and complications of the case, but the fees to solicitor and counsel must at all events be borne, and other expenses arise incidentally which may make the costs of prosecution a ruinous fine. Of course, when the crown lawyers take up a case, all expenses of prosecution are borne by the crown, but in the great majority of cases, it is left to private persons to conduct the prosecution of criminals, and it does not seem fair that such persons should have to pay the cost of proceeding against those who are indicted as public enemies, breakers of the peace 'of our Lady the Queen,' and generally as disturbers of the public order.

On the other hand, it seems to be equally hard on the innocent man who is accused, tried, and acquitted, that he should have to bear the costs of defence against a criminal charge in which he had no part. A prisoner must either raise money with which to employ attorney and counsel, with which to bring up witnesses, and with which to defray other necessary expenses, or he must appear at the trial 'undefended,' and trust to the generosity of some barrister, who has not been instructed in the case, and who has to gather the lines of defence from what may be presented by the prosecution. If a man be guilty, it is scarcely an aggravation of his position that he should be thus placed; but to an innocent man, accused in error, from mistaken identity or any other cause, it is a grievous addition to his misfortune that he should have to bear the expense of proving his own innocence. Of course, where malice has actuated the prosecutor, the late prisoner can bring his action for false imprisonment and for a malicious prosecution; but it may well happen that the man is too poor to indulge in the costly luxury of civil proceedings, by which, even if he wins a verdict, he will be considerably out of pocket. In cases of prosecution through sheer mistake, and where malice cannot in any way be imputed to the pursuer, the prisoner has not any remedy against his accusers, and must put up with the fine imposed upon him through having to pay for his defence. Costs in such cases, if not also in cases of prosecution, might be paid out of the rates of the county in which the trial takes place.

A COUNTY FAMILY.

CHAPTER XXVII.—THE NEST-EGG.

NOTWITHSTANDING Mr Allcase's edict, both Mr Waller and Stanhope found themselves once more in the sick-room that afternoon. Lucy had brought down a report that the Squire was looking about him in the same anxious inquiring manner as before, and Stanhope was hardly less curious than Mr Waller to see whether the latter's theory of the will was a correct one. It was a delicate subject to introduce at such a time and place, and was rendered more so by other circumstances. In the first place, it was not pleasant to inquire of a sick man upon what, in all probability, was his death-bed, concerning that document at all; and, again, although any such idea was rendered impracticable by his condition, there *was* the idea of his wishing to effect some change in the disposition of his property. As his affection for Ellen seemed not only undiminished but on the increase, and as he manifestly did not desire even to see his son, this notion of change must needs be obnoxious, for her darling's sake, to Mrs Blackburn; as, indeed, for other reasons, it would have been to Mr Waller. What was, however, at the bottom of that gentleman's anxiety upon the subject was something that, at all events, testified to his sagacity, although, like most men of his class, he was prone to err through over-subtlety. A first-rate whist-player, unless his nature is adaptive, often credits his adversary with too much finesse, and this was Mr Waller's case. The truth flashed upon him at once that the Squire was anxious about the *safety* of his will, and although, of course, he did not know how seriously it was being endangered, he did not think that

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anxiety unreasonable. Perhaps he had hid it somewhere, as men often do, and was apprehensive that it would not be found after his death. Besides Mr Waller's general sympathy with the interests of justice, which we have no reason to doubt, he was unwilling that this should be the case; for he had a notion in his mind, from what had dropped from the Squire, that in that document Mr William was left a very considerable sum, *conditionally*—that is, in the event of his marrying one Lucy Waller. Now, although, if the Squire should die intestate, his son and heir would inherit infinitely more, he might then marry (almost in every sense) whom he pleased; and although he seemed so fond of Lucy, Mr Waller's faith in the power of love was more limited than some of his commercial responsibilities. He preferred a material guarantee to an *entente cordiale*. In this he did his possible son-in-law wrong, for the strong will and animal nature of William Blackburn—if we may not say heart—were set upon Lucy; and the insuperability of the obstacle to his wishes only added to their vehemence.

On the other hand, Mr Waller knew nothing of that game at hide-and-seek on which the young Squire had so long been engaged, and with which he still was busy. Whether Jennings' lease was in the strong-box or not, we may fairly conclude that Mr William had not worn that look of disappointment, on giving back the papers to his mother, for any reason connected with *that* document. The will, at all events, was not there; and where, in the Fiend's name, had the old man hidden it? Sometimes he tried to lay the flattering unction to his soul that his father had destroyed it, intending to make another, which his illness would now render impossible. But in less sanguine moments this seemed a slender hope indeed. It was contrary to his father's character to leave anything to chance which could be made certain, and far less a matter like this, in which his prejudices were so deeply involved. It was far more likely, thought he, that the Squire, whose infamous suspicions of his own son had absolutely no bounds, had put it in some place of security, where it should only be found after his demise; either in the general search and overturn, or, still more probably, by some express direction that by word or writing he would leave behind him. Had such direction been left already, or not? Not a scrap of paper in desk or pigeon-hole with his father's handwriting upon it had escaped Mr William's prying eyes, and yet he had found no such key to the enigma; while, as to verbal instruction, none had certainly been left with the only two persons in whom he would have been likely to confide—namely, Mrs Blackburn and Ellen. Mr William had asked the question of his mother point-blank; and she, in her turn, instigated by him, had interrogated her granddaughter. There was nothing that seemed to Ellen suspicious in such an inquiry; it was not unnatural that her uncle should wish to know whether his father had arranged his affairs, although at such a juncture it was not perhaps very delicate; but delicacy was not to be expected of Uncle William. At all events, she had answered frankly enough, that she knew nothing about the Squire's will—a matter, indeed, upon which, to do her justice, she thought less than any one in the house, not excepting even Lucy, to whom Mr Waller's frequent speculations about it had made the subject familiar.

And now the question was, was it indeed about this document that old Anthony was so disquieted? Had what he had seen on the previous night—that rifling of his strong-box by his unconscious, or, at least, only half-guilty wife—shot so sharply to his core as to revive intelligence and stimulate paralysis itself to almost action? Had he watched her through the whole transaction, seen her take the papers forth, and guessed her errand better than she guessed it herself? Nay, had not her very excuse sharpened his suspicion, and guided it aright? He knew—if he was indeed conscious of anything—that his son William *was* NOT anxious about Jennings' lease—was not at all likely to be looking 'high and low' for *that;* and yet he had evidence that he was in search of something, of which he was so earnestly desirous that he had persuaded his mother to take a step discreditable in itself, and quite antagonistic to her loyal and faithful nature.

'Authority deserts the dying king,' but bitter must it be to the monarch who, though moribund, beholds it fleeting.

Was it possible that Anthony Blackburn, conscious of this disobedience, was haunted also by the apprehension that a certain decree, upon which his whole system of government had, as it were, been founded, was now in danger of being reversed? Lying in that living tomb of his, feelingless, motionless, senseless, save in eye and ear, was he instinctively aware, as he had been always instinctively suspicious, of that search and its intention, which, if successful, would render the scheme of his life fruitless, and make William Blackburn the heir of Redcombe Manor, and the inheritor of all? And if so, did not, at this thought, some thrill of horror, even through that numbed and shattered frame, make itself felt? One would indeed have said so, who, when Mr Waller stooped over his pillow and whispered something in his ear, had read as he read the sick man's answer in his eyes; for it leaped out from them as in words of fire. Yes, yes, a thousand times yes; it *was* his will that he wished to have brought before him, and set in his sight, that he might have the safety of it assured.

The question was repeated to him aloud, that the others about him might hear, and there was not one of them—nor would have been, had even Mr Allcase been among them—who entertained a doubt of the nature of his reiterated reply.

'And where *is* your will, grandfather?' inquired Ellen, holding the alphabet beneath his earnest gaze, and pointing to the letters as before.

That the task before him, simple as it seemed, was to the sick man a matter of toil and pain, was evident enough—almost as evident as the intensity of his desire to accomplish it. To collect his thoughts and concentrate them for ever so short a time, was irksome and difficult; and even to keep the weary lids from closing before each letter was reached, and to lift them after they had fallen, seemed to tax all his remaining energies. After all, it was but one word he did spell out, and that, as it seemed at first, without a meaning—PEDIGREE.

Mr Waller and Stanhope glanced at each other significantly. Was the old man's mind, then, wandering still?

'It is a shame to trouble him,' sobbed Mrs Blackburn; 'you see he knows not what he wants.'

No voice replied to this observation, and the

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features of the sick man were sealed and shut. The watch upon the dressing-table seemed to tick as loud as the house clock upon the stairs; the idle whistle of Mr William made itself heard from the floor below; otherwise all was silent.

'I am afraid Mrs Blackburn is right,' whispered Stanhope gravely. 'It is the ruling passion strong towards the last; he was always so proud of his pedigree, poor fellow!'

Mr Waller shrugged his shoulders.

'Perhaps,' said Ellen gently, 'grandfather wishes to see the family tree, that hangs up in his little room.'

Then the sealed eyes opened with a glance of rapturous content and gratitude, and rested upon her.

'Shall I go and fetch it?' said Stanhope. Mr William was in the apartment indicated, and it had long become Stanhope's mission, and his alone, to deal with the young Squire. No other person cared to molest him, or come across him in any way, if it could be avoided; even Mr Waller shunned him. His tactics, as we have already said, were too delicate to cope with so rough a customer. Not only diplomacy, but even the art of war was thrown away upon that savage young chieftain.

Mrs Blackburn shook her head; it really seemed to her that there was something cruel in indulging these vagaries of her poor husband. He had not so irrevocably lost his wits that he should need to be thus humoured like a madman.

Mr Waller did not speak. In his opinion, there could not be the slightest connection between a 'will' and a 'pedigree,' except in an imagination that had gone astray. It seemed to him indifferent whether the thing was sent for or not.

'If you don't mind, Mr Stanhope, please to fetch it,' said Ellen quietly.

He was gone in a moment, yet without noise, as all save one in that house had now accustomed themselves to move. Even if his steps could have been heard as he drew near the snuggery, Mr William's whistling would have drowned them. It was not often that he whistled, but all that afternoon he had been as blithe and loud as any black-bird; and the sound, striking upon the hush and silence above stairs, had jarred not a little upon his mother's ear.

'Hollo, Stanhope; glad to see you,' cried he. 'You are come in the very nick of time. I was just wanting a game at billiards.'

It was quite unusual to see the young Squire so buoyant and so affable. He had been striding up and down the room with his hands in his pockets for an hour or more, giving vent to his feelings in popular airs, and now some one had come to keep him company. 'Have a cigar, old fellow?—How is the governor?'

'I am afraid your father is no better,' replied Stanhope gravely. 'We had hoped this morning he was getting more sensible, but I am now inclined to doubt it. He seems somehow to want to have that pedigree yonder brought up-stairs.'

'What! the family tree?' ejaculated the other, hastily stepping between it and his visitor. 'Why, that's ridiculous. Besides, it's nailed into the wall, man. It's not meant to be moved at all.'

'Nevertheless, since Mr Blackburn has asked for it, I shall take it up-stairs.'

'But indeed you shall not. My father would be as sorry as anybody, when he comes to himself, to find that pedigree hurt. Since he is not right in his wits, why not take the hunting map instead? He will never know it from the other, and then no mischief will be done. If it does not content him, you have only to take down the pedigree at last, don't you see?'

'Very well,' said Stanhope reflectively; 'there can be no harm in that. Only you need not shew your temper so about such a trifle, my friend.'

William Blackburn's face was indeed white with passion, and his hands trembled so that they could scarcely unhook the map from the nail on which it hung. It was impossible also to avoid remarking how eager he seemed to get rid of his visitor; making no rejoinder (with which he was generally ready enough) to his reproving words, and even opening the door for his exit.

'What is that pigeon-hole in the wall?' inquired Stanhope, lingering and pointing to a sort of niche by the fireplace which the removal of the hunting map had discovered.

'It's a place my uncle Charles had made to put his glass of grog into,' said William readily. 'He could take it so without going to the table, you see.'

'Just so. But is there not a corresponding hole on the other side—underneath the pedigree?'

'I don't know; I have never looked.'

'Then I will look,' said Stanhope, fixing his eyes steadily upon the other.

'No, no. You will hurt it to lift it up; it is as bad as taking the whole thing down.'

'Excuse me; that is not so, for somebody has already moved the bottom nails.'

Stanhope could never explain why his suspicions, aroused by William's irritable manner, should have taken this especial direction; it was quite at hazard that he raised the frame on which the parchment was stretched, and put his hand cautiously within, as a boy feels the eggs in a nest.

'There is a pigeon-hole,' said he, 'and there is something in it.'

'It is a plan of the estate, which my father keeps there,' said William hastily.

'I thought you said you did not know there was such a hole. Here's the plan, as you say; but there is something else.—By Jove! I believe it is the will itself, and that the Squire was right, after all.'

CHAPTER XXVIII.—ANTHONY MAKES HIS CHOICE.

Yes, the Squire was right. From the mere association of ideas, perhaps, or because it really seemed as safe a place of concealment as any in the house, he had hidden his will behind the family tree; and it had been only that very day, nay, within a few hours, and by the merest accident, that William had found it there. If he had only taken it and put it somewhere else, as he would now have done, could Stanhope even for a minute have been got out of the room; or if at first he had thrown it behind the fire, as he had thought of doing, but had been afraid to do; or if this meddlesome fellow, that he had always thought he hated, but whom, by comparison with his present vehemence of abhorrence, he must have almost liked, had not come hither upon his fool's errand!

These bitter and vain regrets—the knowledge of

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what he might have gained, and of what he now might lose—came in upon William Blackburn, wave after wave, and well nigh choked him. But he was not going to throw up his hand and forfeit such a stake while there was a card left to play. If Stanhope should once make certain it *was* the will, the destruction of it hereafter would be a perilous risk indeed; but at present he had only expressed an expectation of it, which was, however, also a suspicion; for he kept the hand that held the document behind him, just as though he thought a snatch might have been made at it—which without doubt he did.

'I don't know what that paper is of which you have possessed yourself,' observed William doggedly, 'but I know that it is of a private nature—something my father does not wish to be fingered and pried into by strangers such as you: I know *that*.'

'Your sense of delicacy is more acute than I should have given you credit for,' rejoined Stanhope coolly; 'but it is in this case unnecessarily alarmed. I am about to carry this document, which, as I believe, is the one he has been asking for, to your father himself.'

'The one he has been asking for?—and he without speech or motion? No, sir; I cannot permit this outrage, and I will not. You have taken upon yourself already more than most men would have stood in their own house; but there are limits, you must understand.'

'I am doing nothing of myself, Mr Blackburn,' said the other composedly, 'but only obeying, I do assure you, your sick father. He has contrived, by Miss Ellen's help, to make his wishes known.'

'By Miss Ellen's help! Yes, you and smooth Miss Ellen would grasp all. Oh, I know you both!'

'You cannot put me in a passion, sir, just now; but if I had any doubt whether this thing here was your father's will or not, your conduct has resolved it.—Am I to understand, by your standing with your back against that door, that you refuse to let me pass?'

'I do: I will.'

'You have an ugly look, William Blackburn, and you are feeling in your pocket for your knife; but I am not so much in love with life as to keep it at the price of the fear of a man like you. Nay, if you were fifty men with fifty knives, it would be all the same.'

'Ah! you say so.'

'And I mean it too.'

'And *I* mean something, Herbert Stanhope. I am a desperate man.'

'I well know that. I have not forgotten, though I have not repeated it, the word I heard your father speak in this same room, when I came in at yonder window. He called you "Murderer."—You smile contemptuously, and, indeed, I well believe that you never committed murder. But you have within you what goes to make a manslayer. You are thinking even now—not, "Shall I stab this man if he comes on?" but, "Shall I hang for it?"'

'Now, look you,' said William, with his hands outspread, at least as much to shew they had no weapon as to fit his words with their appropriate action, 'there is no need to fight about the matter. The case is simply this: I do not credit what you say. I decline to believe that my father wishes to deliver his most private papers into your custody, unless I have some better warranty. Put that thing back, and fetch my mother, and I will abide by what she says.'

'I agree to that—at least,' added Stanhope, seeing a gleam of triumph in the other's face, 'you must fetch her, for I will not part with this, or leave you alone with it, for a single second. I see now why your father wants to have it in his own keeping, safe from *accidents;* a will, under certain circumstances, being like a child that must not be left in a room with *a fire in it*.'

Mr William answered nothing to this insinuation, which, perhaps, as a vile personality, he knew how to despise; but, throwing the door open, he called 'Mother, mother!' in a loud and angry voice.

Mrs Blackburn came down stairs with finger on her lip. 'Hush, hush!' she whispered; 'your father is dozing again, Willy; I have sent them all away but Ellen.'

'Is it your wish, mother, that Mr Stanhope here should take my place in this house, even to the guardianship of my father's private papers?'

'Nay, Mrs Blackburn,' interposed the other, 'that is not the point at issue. Your husband has desired, as you know, to have brought to him a certain document'——

'Yes, yes; the pedigree yonder.—That is quite right, Willy, dear. But it can wait, for I am sure that, more than pedigree or anything, he needs just now rest.'

'The pedigree—do you hear?' cried William exultingly. 'Yet this man would have persuaded me it was something else my father wanted—something that he holds in his hand behind him, look you, like a thief.'

'Yes, madam, it is your husband's will,' said Stanhope with dignity. 'I will willingly commit it to your charge, to be taken up to him straightway, while your son stops here.'

'But not if Ellen is there,' said William obstinately. 'She would stick at nothing—she and those who abet her.—Do *you* keep it, mother; that, I suppose, will satisfy even this gentleman.'

'Dear Mrs Blackburn,' said Stanhope with respectful earnestness, 'whatever pain this most unseemly discussion causes you, believe me it is none of my seeking. You know as well as I do what your husband has been so anxious to possess; well, I have got it here. Let himself decide into whose keeping he will have it placed. Do you inquire of him, since Mr William here distrusts his niece'——

'And as Mr Stanhope here distrusts *you*, mother,' interrupted William.

'That is not true, sir, as you are well aware,' said Stanhope firmly. 'I have the utmost regard for Mrs Blackburn; yet I am prepared in this matter to stand under her misjudgment, and even her displeasure. As for you, sir, you well know what I could say, and what I have left unsaid, with respect to your mother and your influence over her; and unless upon your father's express commandment, I will *not* give up the will.'

'Dear me, dear me,' cried Mrs Blackburn, looking from one to the other in much perplexity. 'What a caddle is this all about a piece of paper. As to making my poor husband understand with the alphabet and things, it is only Ellen who can do it.'

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'And I'm not going to trust to Miss Ellen's version of the matter,' said William doggedly.

'Pardon me, Mrs Blackburn,' observed Stanhope, 'but if you will kindly come up with me, I am sure that I can make plain to you your husband's wishes. Miss Ellen need not be there at all.—Come, sir; you may surely intrust yourself and your interests to your mother's hands.'

Mr William was understood to allow this much, though not without a growl or two of objection; he saw Stanhope was not to be moved.

'I suppose this story will be all over the place to-morrow?' said he surlily; 'our family affairs being public property.'

'Nay, Willy,' exclaimed Mrs Blackburn; 'I am sure you do Mr Stanhope wrong: whatever unhappy differences may exist between your father and you, I am convinced this gentleman has never helped to spread them, and will not do so now.'

'Indeed, madam, you are right,' said Stanhope haughtily; 'I am no tale-bearer; and as for this particular affair, the sequel, however it may chance to end, shall never pass my lips.'

'That looks fair enough,' assented William, in his niggard fashion.—'Now, do you get Miss Ellen away, mother, and let us know what is father's fancy about this will—unless, as is most likely, he has forgotten all about it in the meantime.'

Then Mrs Blackburn went up-stairs, to insist upon taking Ellen's place in the sick-room, as she had often done before, while her grand-daughter took exercise or recreation with Lucy.

'There now, you have got it your own way, Stanhope,' said William Blackburn, as soon as they were alone. 'So mind and hold your tongue, whatever happens. And I *say*, I hope you'll behave honourable, and give a fellow a chance. Just put it to the governor whether it isn't only right and fair that his son should have the keeping of his papers and things, and not anybody else. And don't suggest Waller's name, nor Moffat's—do you understand? Because, you see, I shan't be there to look after my own interests.'

'I will represent the matter as you wish,' said Stanhope quietly. 'I have no other aim than to have justice done; but your father cannot be troubled by much talking; he can scarcely keep his attention even to one thing.'

The door was gently opened, and Mrs Blackburn appeared, with beckoning finger. 'He is alone,' whispered she, 'and awake. I have sent Ellen away, and you must not let her hear you come up-stairs.'

Stanhope nodded, and followed his hostess to the sick-room, which they entered softly, leaving the door ajar.

'I have brought you, Mr Blackburn, what I believe you have been inquiring for,' said Stanhope, seating himself by the pillow, and speaking in low but very distinct tones. 'Is not this your will?'

A look of grateful pleasure overspread the worn white features, and the joyful eyes glanced from Stanhope's face to the paper which he held in his hand, and back again with earnest approval.

'Why, he wants you to read it, Mr Stanhope, that's what he wants!' exclaimed Mrs Blackburn involuntarily.

Such was without doubt the sick man's wish, as Stanhope saw, but he only smiled and shook his head. 'No, sir,' said he softly, 'I will not read it; but I am come here to place it in whomsoever's hands you may please to wish.'

Again the eyes glanced earnestly from the will to Stanhope, from Stanhope to the will.

'He wishes *you* to keep it, Mr Herbert,' said Mrs Blackburn sighing; 'and I am sure, although I might have wished his confidence to be placed elsewhere, there can be no objection.'

'There are three other persons who have a more natural right to such a trust,' said Stanhope, 'and it is only proper that this should be made plain.'

'Do not mention my poor Willy,' sobbed Mrs Blackburn; 'it is no use, I know: I am quite content that you should keep it. And oh, it puts him out so to speak of Willy.'

But Stanhope, mindful of his promise, went on unmoved: 'There is your wife, sir—your true and tender wife—would you not wish that she should keep the will?'

The Squire's eyes shut fast. You might have thought he was a man laid out for dead.

'There, sir, you see it's no use. He does not wish me to have it,' sighed the old lady. 'And yet you might have trusted *me*, dear Anthony.'

The Squire looked at her, tenderly enough, and even gratefully; so much so, that once more the question was put: 'Do you wish your wife to keep it?'

'No; most certainly, no.'

'And Miss Ellen, sir? Would you not wish your grand-daughter to have the keeping of it?'

For one instant, there was indecision—a mere quivering of the eyelids; but the next, they were shut close and rigid as before.

'No, not Ellen.'

'Oh, why do you trouble him thus, and torture *me*, dear Mr Stanhope? I know that he means you to keep the will.'

'Nevertheless, dear Mrs Blackburn, I must put one more question.'

'There is another person yet, sir, to be mentioned, who has a stronger claim than any to your confidence. I beg of you to put aside all bitter memories in answering now; to forget the past, and, so far as it is possible, to be hopeful of the future. Do you wish this paper to be taken charge of by your son, William Blackburn?'

The eyes did *not* close now; they opened wide; they shot—each glance was an arrow tipped with flame—unspeakable disgust and horror.

'Oh, but this is terrible!' cried Mrs Blackburn. 'Great Heaven! what is it that he sees?' She turned her gaze, whither Stanhope's was already turned, to the wall opposite the foot of the bed, on which had been hung a mirror, so that the sick man should have the windows' out-door sights presented to him. The home-lying fields that he was never to tread again, the flying clouds, the life and motion of the flocks and herds, were dear, it was thought, to him, chained to his pillow.

'I see nothing, Mr Stanhope. Do you?'

'No, madam; nothing.'

'Then, pray, put no more questions to dear Anthony, for you see they have half driven him wild; and take away that dreadful paper, and send Ellen. He is quiet again now, thank God.'

Stanhope *had* seen something, though but for a moment's space. Besides the window, was mirrored in the same glass the door, and at it, half opened, he had caught William's prying face, there, doubtless, to see that faith was kept with him. One glance, such as we have seen, had Anthony bestowed upon his son, and then the latter had

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turned and fled down-stairs, noiseless, with stockinged feet. So haggard and awe-stricken had been his answering glance, that Stanhope felt a sort of pity for this wretched spy, thus shamefully detected. The thought flashed through him: 'Bad as the fellow is, may not his father have judged him somewhat too harshly, to cast at him, from what may be his death-bed, such aversion and distrust as this? And was there not something in William's sullen face, which, though not innocence, seemed really to be a sense of wrong?' As for the base suspicion of himself, implied by the espial, that was only natural to such a man, and Stanhope determined not to tax him with it. The will was safe in his own keeping, and so far he could afford to be generous to the other, foiled.

'Well, and who is to have it?' inquired William presently in the room below, with a would-be air of curiosity, as though he had not already received his answer at first hand, and yet with a certain spite in his tone that belied it. 'Not me, I'll warrant.'

'No, sir; as Mrs Blackburn will inform you, if my word is not sufficient. Your father has requested me to take charge of this document; and you may depend upon it,' he added, with a significant glance, 'that this time it will be put out of harm's way.'

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

Among the fifteen elected this year into the Royal Society are Sir Samuel Baker, the famous traveller, and Mr J. Norman Lockyer. The latter holds a situation in the War Office, and in his spare hours has studied astronomy to such good purpose, that he has added largely to our knowledge of the sun and stars, and has achieved for himself a European reputation. This is an instance which those young men who complain that they have not time for study or self-culture would do well to keep before their eyes.—The Society of Arts have awarded their Albert Gold Medal to Baron Liebig 'for his numerous valuable researches and writings, which have contributed most importantly to the development of food-economy and agriculture, and to the advancement of chemical science.'—The Chemical Society have established a Faraday Medal, in commemoration of the late distinguished philosopher, which is to be given annually to some scientific man, who on his part is to deliver a lecture on some part of chemistry. The lecture for this, the first year, was given at the Royal Institution, by Dumas, an eminent chemist and member of the French Academy of Sciences.—A public meeting has been held, under the presidency of the Prince of Wales, to initiate a subscription for erecting a statue to Faraday in St Paul's. We hope the sculpture will prove worthy of the man in whose honour it is to be undertaken.—The British Association are about to hold their annual meeting at Exeter, when the president for the present year, Professor Stokes, one of the Secretaries of the Royal Society, will deliver an address which may be expected to embody all the recent advances in mathematical and physical science. We hear that Professor Huxley is spoken of as president for next year, which, if true, will gratify anatomists, naturalists, and palæontologists.

Among the sights shewn to M. Dumas (whose lecture is above referred to) during his visit to this country were some remarkable experiments with gun-cotton at Woolwich. A few particulars will probably surprise our readers. A heavy palisade of oak timbers, a foot thick, was fixed in the ground, and supported by struts in the rear in the usual way. Two or three disks of gun-cotton were laid on the front of each timber a little above the ground, having a narrow strip of wood to rest on, and were fired by electricity. A sharp but tremendous report followed, and down fell the palisade, the massive timbers being blown away and splintered as if they were laths. What ship's side, what gate, what wall can now be regarded as a defence? A few disks of gun-cotton will blow them all away. And if one of such disks be fired lying on the top of a block of stone or of iron, the metal and the stone are at once crumbled to powder. Perhaps when the New Zealand Maoris hear of this, they will leave off building pahs; and it is not difficult to foresee that the practice of attack and defence is about to undergo important modifications.

Dr Matthiessen, F.R.S., of St Bartholomew's Hospital, has made a curious discovery, which may be of use to medical practitioners. By treating morphia with hydrochloric acid, he obtained a product which he calls apomorphia, and while working with this he and his assistant were overcome by fits of vomiting. Here, then, is a new emetic: it operates speedily, and in small doses, and though attended by depressing effects, these soon pass away. Moreover, this apomorphia serves the purpose without being taken into the stomach, for if one-tenth of a grain is injected under the skin it will occasion vomiting in a few minutes.

Mr W. R. Grove, author of that excellent book, *The Correlation of Physical Forces*, has delivered an address, at St Mary's Hospital, on the importance of the study of physical science in medical education, which ought to inspire the students who heard it with a hearty love of work. He shewed how limitless was the field of work that lay before them, and the advantage involved in variety of study. Variety within proper bounds tends to promote elasticity of mind; and in natural philosophy, the laws of motion, the effects of light and heat, the effect of food, there is scope enough to occupy even the most active. Then as Mr Grove remarked: 'Chemistry applied to the respiratory functions offers a field of inquiry not much trodden since Dr Beddoes established the Pneumatic Institution at Bristol; not merely by inhalation of gases *per se*, but by a judicious admixture of small portions of given gases with the ordinary air. Thus, a small increase of carbonic acid in the air tends to produce somnolence: might not this be carefully tried in cases of extreme nervous excitability and insomnia? Ozone, again, doubtless has its effect, probably of somewhat a converse character to that of carbonic acid. Such remedies might be free from the disturbing influence on other organs which the administration of sedatives or stimulants by the stomach frequently, always perhaps in degree, occasions.' Mr Grove's address abounds in suggestive instances of this sort.

Mr G. Campbell has read a paper before the Society of Arts on the cultivation of waste lands in India, and in discussing the question, he regards India as a favourable field for English colonists.

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For this reason, he confines his observations on waste lands to the hill districts which have a comparatively cool climate, and where, as he says, great profits are to be gained by enterprising settlers who employ native labour. There are many vegetable products which flourish and yield abundantly at high elevations within the tropics, and in the cultivation of these, Mr Campbell believes there are advantages to be gained beyond any offered by other countries to which emigrants are always swarming.

It was stated at a recent meeting of the Entomological Society, that silkworms' eggs and other objects of natural history could now be sent to or from different parts of the world by the 'pattern post.' They may be enclosed in a box, provided the ends of the box have small openings through which the contents can be seen. Perforated zinc would answer the purpose. Mr Wallace mentioned that a closed packet which came to him by post from Japan was charged forty-seven shillings; but a similar packet, *with open ends*, which he sent to Japan, was charged four shillings only.

Some years ago, a photograph of a bronze statue was taken at Berlin. Besides the image, it shewed a few small faint streaks of light, one of which shot upwards from the point of a spear held in the hand of the statue. What produced them was a question, which at length was solved by a member of the Prussian Academy of Sciences. He suggested that the figure was in an electric condition while the photograph was taken, that streams of electric light were passing off at various points, and that these, though invisible to the eye, were detected by the photograph. Hence there was a talk about invisible light. This has recently been verified: by sending an electric current through a Geissler's tube (a glass tube almost completely exhausted of air), an interior light is produced, which cannot be seen by daylight, but which is distinctly shewn in a photograph of the tube. It has often been remarked that photography detects particulars which escape observation, and here is another proof of it.

It seems as if the endeavours made at different times and places to extend our knowledge of sacred history, geography, and topography, were about to be largely increased. The general interest in these subjects has been manifested by the support given to explorations in the East, the survey of Palestine and the peninsula of Sinai, the excavations at Jerusalem, and the welcome shewn to the researches of scholars. These researches, as stated by Sir Henry Rawlinson to the Royal Asiatic Society, have brought to light a series of facts of the highest importance out of the historical documents collected at Nineveh; namely, the Scripture history as contained in the Book of Genesis from the time of Abraham, narrating nearly the same particulars. Sir Henry himself is at work on a paper in which it will be shewn that the natural name of Babylon was the Garden of Eden, the rivers being described by the same names as in Scripture. And further, that these ancient Babylonian documents furnish an account of the Flood and of the building of the Tower of Babel. All this seems little less than wonderful. Who would have expected to find Biblical history in the inscribed cylinders and bricks from the banks of the Euphrates, as well as in the ancient Hebrew and other oriental manuscripts!

The Peruvian government for some years past have sent out what they call a 'hydrographic commission,' to explore one by one the tributaries of the Amazon. By the latest Report communicated to the Royal Geographical Society, we learn that the explorers had ascended the river Ucayali from its confluence with the Marañon to the place where it is formed by the flowing together of the Urubamba and Tambo, a distance of seven hundred and seventy-two miles. The country passed through on this long voyage was before unknown: it is described as salubrious and fruitful, with facilities for trade. The two rivers above named are also navigable, and will in turn be explored; and in the course of a few years, we may expect to hear of steamers trading from the sea up to the very foot of the Andes. Who shall say there is nothing left to discover while those vast regions exist—vast enough to receive the population of Europe. The Report states further, that the Ucayali, and not the Marañon, as hitherto supposed, is to be regarded as the source of the Amazon.

HIDDEN.

O BLUSHES, rise not to my cheek;
O tell-tale eyes, be clear and gay;
O lips, no warmer language speak
To him than simple yea and nay;
O heart! in thy most deep recess,
Be safely, surely hid away
This secret, that he may not guess.

They call me beautiful: alas!
By him uncared for, what care I?
Once I knelt down and kissed the grass
His foot had pressed in passing by;
A little common buttercup
That he had crushed, and left to die,
Still for his sake I treasure up.

O tender Father! is it sin
To love thy noblest creatures thus,
Although no answering love we win?
Art Thou not ever leading us?
And hast Thou sent this love to me,
To calm my heart tumultuous,
And guide me, through my grief, to Thee?

O let me love him to the end
Most purely; and perchance some day
He 'll take my hand and call me friend,
When time for love is passed away;
When eyes that shine when he is near
Are dim; when golden locks are gray;
And Death, the angel, draweth near.

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SAVAGES I HAVE KNOWN.

THE HALF-BLOOD.

MY experiences of the Spanish Main could supply a hundred examples of the 'mestizo' savage. I select for illustration that specimen which most irritated and amused me at the time.

He was, and very likely is still, the parish priest, the *cura* of a little mountain village. On the map hanging against my wall, this hamlet, which I recollect so well, is marked in big letters as a town of the second class. The fact does not surprise me; our geographers are so utterly ignorant, scientifically, of Central America, that, where they have traced the course of big rivers, I have tramped along dry-footed; in a morning's walk, I have crossed mountain chains of theirs higher and broader than Helvellyn; I have eaten 'papyas' and 'zapotés' in the midst of their deserts; and shot fish on the cone of their volcanoes. It does not at all astonish me, then, to observe that this little oasis in the Sahara of trees, lost as it is and stifled among the eternal leaves, should be raised by our well-intentioned topographers to the dignity of a borough.

We had reached it late one evening; and never, I recollect, was traveller more glad than I to gain his journey's end, for my feet were full of *neguas*—jiggers, as West Indians call them. I never examined this little pest with a microscope; but, on Mr Waterton's authority, I accept the fact that it presents the appearance of a flea in miniature. Unlike that lively creature, however, the negua prefers an underground life, burrowing beneath the skin of man and beast, and under that shelter, marrying and giving in marriage. If undisturbed, it will breed and breed in its hiding-place, till a permanent lameness is caused, and amputation of the part attacked—generally the feet—becomes necessary. I have seen the most horrible, most incredible deformities produced by this tiny plague, which is not bigger than a pin's head; and never, after the experience of that day, did I fail to have my feet examined each night, to arrest in time the proceedings of the enemy.

We found shelter in the hut of a carpenter; and next morning, after a painful extraction of the jiggers and their brood, I crawled across the plaza, under guidance of my host, to find the parish priest; for we had heard of notable antiquities, earthworks, and tombs, and ruins in this neighbourhood, and wanted his encouragement in exploring them. Under the shadow of a little church, built of mud, roofed with sunburned tiles, and flanked on either side the entrance by a ghastly, wide-mouthed idol of stone, a remnant of the old times, which it would scarcely have been safe or wise to remove now, we found the 'parsonage,' a filthy den of two apartments. Its roof, like all others of the village, sloped out beyond the house-wall, supported on four posts of wood, and thus formed a sort of piazza. Therein hung a hammock of twine, in which was suspended the cura's body, between heaven and earth; but much, much nearer, now and at all times, to earth than heaven. Three ill-looking fellows lounged against wall or post around him, smoking cigaritos, and half-dozing, though the sun had been up two hours. There was a bad smell about the place and about the men; not merely the sensible odour of drink, and dirt, and unhealth, but an odour morally unwholesome. A mean and wretched spot enough was that plaza outside, its faded grass strewn with rags and broken shards, a dingy little church on its one side, a dingy *presidio* on the other—with naked ruffians of soldiery lounging about the door—and a row of kennel-like huts around. But the sun beat broadly down upon it, the diamond-bright air quivered, parrots and blue jays fluttered across it, returning from the river to the deep forest shade; whilst under the gloom of that portico, of which the shadow fell keen and blue as a steel blade upon the ground, the three men blinked and muttered like unclean things; and their spiritual guide, hanging in the centre, poured out rings of smoke from his swollen lips, and grunted in dogmatic monosyllables. This scene we beheld, walking up the colonnade before the huts.

On coming nearer, one of the clerical *compadres* turned, hearing the unaccustomed sound of boots

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upon the hard clay floor. At his low exclamation of surprise, the *padre* raised himself, and stared, in a brutally silent fashion, at ourselves. After a moment's examination, he sank back again along his hammock, with a muttered remark, at which the three friends laughed aloud. We came up and stood beside him. While the carpenter humbly explained our wishes, the priest regarded us with sleepy insolence, until one of my companions, a hot-headed French miner, declared his intention of pulling the *gredin* out of his hammock. Whether the cura understood the threat, or whether he was influenced by a hint of possible profit to the church, judiciously dropped by our host, I don't know, but he rose in a languid manner, with the assistance of all his three friends, and descended. Then we perceived that a vicious life, and not years or privation, had swelled the priest's face and limbs. He was probably not more than twenty-five years of age. His face had the fleshy bloated roundness that tells of brutality; his eyes and lips that moisture and unsteadiness which continual indulgence brings. It was not an ugly face in feature. The dark and brassy skin, the hair curling slightly in dank tresses, the prominent eyes and cheek-bones, plainly revealed his 'mixed blood;' but the unnatural combination is not always uncomely. He was dressed in a long and filthy *soutane*, and trousers of the very brightest pea-green. Round his neck were twisted several coils of blue glass beads. A little pouch of feather-work, adorned with a fringe of mouse's teeth, hung upon his chest, beside the crucifix. What it contained, the owner only knows, but it looked suspiciously like a charm-case. His feet, of course, were bare, and the pea-green trousers only reached to the ponderous calf of his legs. Such was the figure that descended from the hammock, and stood sullenly staring before us. A more savage, wicked-looking face, for all its rude proportion of features, never saw I in my wanderings. 'These English gentlemen have come to your town to find "Carib" antiquities,' began our French companion.

'*A su disposicion*,' blundered the padre, with an air of utter bewilderment.

'They hear that a great castle of the "Caribs" exists near this, and many graves where the "Carib" kings were buried.'

(All through Central America, Indian remains are called 'Carib.' This designation has not, of course, any connection with the mahogany-cutters of Honduras, who now bear the old title without much justice or reason.)

'*A su disposicion*,' muttered the padre.

'They want you to help them in finding the Carib remains.'

Then his savage blood broke out. 'I 'm not a Carib!' shouted the cura, his thick skin puffing with rage. 'I 'm not a prying devil of a foreigner (*un curioso entremetido de los diables!*). *Soy caballero Catalano*, ah! There 's no one here cares a "monkey's grin" about your heretic charms, your devil-stones, and unholy things! Ach! Go to the French brutes across the mountains then! Perhaps they 'll help you to your soul's destruction!'* Then turning his back on us with unspeakable contempt and hatred, he snatched a mule-whip from the hammock, and addressed one of his friends: 'How goes the lame mare, Guleërmo mio?' he said.

Our French companion seized the insolent scoundrel by the trailing skirt of his soutane, and twisted him sharply round. It was a face perfectly fiendish which this priest turned on us. He raised his heavy whip; and the three worthies made an ominous movement of the right hand towards their macheté hilts; but we, throwing back the loose edge of our jackets, quietly displayed the revolvers on our hip. With that quickness to apprehend personal danger which is characteristic of the savage wherever I have met him, and that equal disregard of personal dignity, our padre, on the instant, changed his expression to one of sulky complaisance, and said: 'What can I do for your service? I know nothing of Carib remains. We are very poor here, in this town; very, very humble. It is with difficulty that my sheep support their miserable existence, and provide for the eternal safety of their souls. You see, señores, they have no time to search for old stones and Carib rubbish. They are not Caribs or heretics here, thanks to the good St James; and they know that honest people do not care for such things, if they exist—that is, not honest people of this country, you see, señores! For my own part, caballeros, rely upon me to do all that is possible to assist you; but there never were any Caribs in this neighbourhood, nor other *mala gente*, until the gold was discovered on the other side the forest. But'—and here his sudden change of tone was delightful for the cynic to perceive—'twenty leagues further over the mountain are plenty of Caribs even to this day. I know nothing of them myself, but our bishop endeavours to convert those poor heathen, at great cost of prayer and money: if any of your dignities feel the Christian spirit, and desire to advance their eternal welfare, *I* am the unworthy receiver of such contributions as your benevolence may choose to offer. Any sum, however small, may, by the good St James's blessing, be instrumental in rescuing a soul. Let me pray of your dignities;' &c. We tossed him a dollar, and left, hoping never again to behold his face, so expressive of a brutal hypocrisy. And even while we passed from off his portico into the wholesome sunshine without, he proceeded rapidly to gather up the long skirts of his garment for riding, to roll them round his fat waist under the girdle, and thus to display all the length, and more especially the breadth, of his pea-green trousers.

Two days afterwards, we left the village on our way to the gold-diggings. There we passed our Christmas as merrily as is possible in the most extraordinary settlement of an extraordinary country; and a fortnight after, rode back to the hut of our carpentering host. In the evening, while we sat without his door, watching the red sunshine pass swiftly up and up from bough to bough of the great forest trees on the opposite hill-side—ah! those days, those sights of my past wanderings, how divine regret stirs within me in recalling them!—a clamour in the street above disturbed our meditations. We looked up, and beheld our foe, the padre, staggering towards us, yelling out the equivocal ditty: 'De Guadalajara vengo, lideando con un soldado,' &c. The villagers stood at their doors, looking without surprise or

* I have softened the padre's language considerably. His metaphorical anathema was very picturesque, but untranslatable.

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apparent disgust at their pastor, who, with his soutane kilted, and all his pea-green trousers displayed, rolled along the street, keeping time to the music with furious cuttings and crackings of his mule-whip. He approached, and halted in front of us. After pausing a while in deep consideration of our appearance, the padre lifted his broad straw-hat, and spoke with drunken solemnity. 'Machitos caballeros,' he said, and paused. Then the brilliancy of this witticism, of addressing us as 'little he-mule horsemen,' overpowered him; he laughed long and very loud.

'Don Emanuel,' I said, 'what will your congregation think?'

'They!' he replied at the top of his voice. 'They are beasts, pigs, and are all doomed to perdition as Indian idolaters. Machitos, I wish to speak with you.'

We went inside, and he followed. When safely anchored upon a smoothed cedar 'knee,' which served for a chair, he said: 'You gave a ball, machitos, up there, over the gold mountains?' We nodded. 'There was present a young girl, *muy linda*, very beautiful, an Indian witch, a limb of the devil, with black hair reaching to her feet, eyes like mirrors, and mouth like a purple fruit, the loveliest girl in the five republics! Her name'——

'We recognise her,' interposed my friend; 'the prettiest and most virtuous creature in all your country. What of her?'

'I have spent your dollar, señores, in supplication to the saints on your behalf. May the prayer be heard!' piously continued the creature after a while.

'The prayers of a good man avail much,' observed our French companion gravely.

'A su disposicion!' modestly replied the padre, unconscious of his sarcasm. 'Did this Indian sorceress draw you into her net?'

I answered: 'We fell in love with her, as should every bachelor caballero with each pretty and good girl he sees. But we did not think of taking her to our home across the ocean. Her French lover is our friend.'

'Ha! Her French lover! The long-limbed heretic, the'—— A string of epithets followed.

'What do you want, Don Emanuel?' asked our companion, rising from his hammock.

'I am speaking to these noble caballeros,' he retorted savagely. 'They love the church, and they will hear me.'

'Make haste!' we exclaimed.

'You are rich, gentlemen, and you love the church. I have prayed for you, more than the full price of the dollar, much more. See now! That girl has bewitched me. Her face is always before me, and her voice in my ears. I never loved like this before. It is not human fascination. Caballeros, my soul will be lost because of her! Oh, sirs, have pity, and help me! Her mother is very poor. For one hundred dollars she would sell all her children. Give me the money, and I will intercede day and night for your miserable souls,' he went on. A something of real pathos in the drunken wretch's prayer restrained our indignation.

'What would you do with her?' I asked.

'I would marry, and keep her with me as long as she lives. Write down what conditions you like before the alcalde here, and I'll sign them.'

'Can you not write?' asked my friend.

'O yes. I can write my name with ease—Don Emanuel Blank,' he replied with dignity.

'You, a priest, marry!' we objected.

'Yes, yes; I will perform the ceremony myself at night, in the presence of the alcalde.'

We knew such strange abuses obtained throughout these countries, but were amazed at his openness.

'And what is to become of our friend, her lover?'

'He will not wed her; or, if he should, when his luck changes at the diggings, he will run away and leave her, as do all *machos;*' which is but too true of the wild mining population.

'This has lasted quite long enough,' said our French companion. 'Don Emanuel, we pity you, and for other reasons besides this infatuation for the Indian girl—reasons which you probably would not understand. It is not worth while to explain why all gentlemen would refuse your application with disgust, for that also lies beyond your comprehension; enough to know that you weary them. The lover of that young girl you have dared to look at is my dearest friend. The cloth which removes you from the rank of common men, the cloth you disgrace and dare to outrage, will protect you from Eugène; but I am not so gentle, priest, nor so orthodox. Out of our house, traitor alike to man and heaven!' The good but rough old digger appeared almost majestic as he ordered out that poor savage creature. We did not interfere, and, growling, he slunk away, and stumbled up the street.

So it ended at that time; but six months after, lounging in the doorway of the Howard House in Colon, I saw Eugène approaching from the wharf. I seized him by the hand.

'And the other turtledove?' I said, looking round—'the little *fiancée* with whom I danced on Christmas Eve?'

He laughed hard. 'I was over-weighted, compadre. My rival had the good things of heaven to offer besides those of earth. The fiancée is married long since, and her own husband read the service!'

'Ah,' I exclaimed, 'married to a priest! To the cura of ——?'

'To him, my friend. He bought her for eighty dollars "strong!" They offered her to me at an advance of fifty cents! Ha, ha! And she's very happy, compadre; and I—I'm going to crack *huacos* [Indian graves] on the Chiriqui!'

PLAYING THE MOLE.

THAT dreary old edition of a double-barrelled wine-cellar continued from shore to shore, the Thames Tunnel, has at length found a purpose, and as the sub-fluvial way of the East London Railway, may prove in its old age a useful and respectable member of society. Every one remembers its troublous birth, and dissipated youth and maturity. Classed amongst the sights of London, country cousins in search of excitement were often taken down into its gloomy shades, where, lit by feeble gas-lamps, a few wretched stalls struggled to assume the aspect of a bazaar in the last stage of consumption; and after a quarter of an hour in this damp whispering-gallery—for its depressing effects were such that no one ever dared to speak aloud—the aforesaid country cousins requested to

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be taken out, and walked back to the entrance, peering between the pillars, as if expecting to see piled-up coffins, or skull and thigh-bone designs, built up in the last style of catacombical art.

The old Thames Tunnel is in a transition state; with the engineering knowledge, mechanism, science, and scheming of the present to back up the experience gained in tunnelling, a new company has been formed, whose project, attracting little notice either in the past or present, is being carried forward in a most unpretending but rapid fashion, so that now, while this paper is being written, the engineer has moled his way from the London Bridge side of the Tower half way beneath the Thames; and unless unforeseen accidents should delay progress, in the course of a few months the new Tower Subway will be an accomplished fact.

Leaping the bridge of Time, or tunnelling it to the extent of those few months, let us rush into the To Be. We are at the end of Lower Thames Street, and at the foot of Tower Hill, our aim being not to take tickets for armory and regalia, but to cross over to the Bermondsey side of the river. Enter we, then, this little structure of a dozen feet in diameter—no larger, for the land upon which it was built cost the company at the rate of two hundred thousand pounds per acre. We are in a circular room, as it appears, but in reality a 'lift,' which rapidly descends a spiral shaft—the shaft turning while we retain our position. In a few seconds we stop; enter, fourteen strong, a roomy omnibus-like carriage, well lit, and padded; the door is closed, and then, with a rush, we are spun along a tram-way to the Surrey side, passing beneath barge, lighter, steamer, and clipper-ship, to where another little room awaits us, into which we step, ascend rapidly, and the next minute we are in Tooley Street, Southwark; and all for, most probably, that immortal coin that has taken the shine out of Aladdin's lamp a thousand times over—all for the sum of one penny.

Those are the plans for the future; but we will return to the present, and you shall perforce accompany me, this bright summer morning, to the works.

Here we are; and at first sight, you might pass by, under the belief that those inevitable sewers, or gas, or water, or telegraph pipes are 'up,' for there is a slight hoarding, from behind which a thick plastic clay is thrown up; a little steam-engine puffs and snorts; and a railway van unloads pieces of iron segments, evidently of a moderately sized tunnel. A few words with the courteous engineer of the undertaking, whom we find in his little office; and then, as if about to visit a mine, canvas trousers are produced; and in a few moments, we are in a mud-encountering costume, ready to descend the unprotected iron-lined shaft which yawns close by, and up which, as we look, comes a square bucket of clay, which is emptied, and then we are asked if we are ready.

Some people are never frightened; for our part, we do not belong to that class, and hence we do feel alarmed at the prospect of descending some sixty feet into a dark well with one leg in a bucket, and the other swinging over the side. But we scorn to shew our terrors; and declaring our readiness, place the left foot in the bucket, cling to the rope with fingers that seem to grow into it; and then—oh!

We do not utter that ejaculation, but we feel it; for the bucket swings over the black depth, and then begins rapidly to descend, while we experience sensations of being a Leotard performing some last new feat. The descent occupies but ten seconds, but they might have been as many minutes, so long did we have to ponder upon the distance to the nearest hospital, amounts connected with life-assurance, and sudden death.

Bump! We are at the bottom; the bucket is unhooked, and a clayey man places it upon a trolly running upon a narrow tram-way. We are invited to *sit* in the bucket this time, and we do, gazing forward at some tiny spark-like candles, set here and there in a long dark vista, from which comes a hollow rushing roar.

Is it? Can it be? Has the water mined its way through, and shall we be swept out, drowned out, as were Brunel's men with the old tunnel? Accidents are rather given to occur at inopportune times! But the men around seem perfectly cool and unmoved; a few warning cries are given, and then, the tunnel dipping towards the centre, we rush in our bucket-car away and away beneath the bed of the murky Thames; farther and farther into the thick darkness, till a faint glow appears ahead, apparently at a great distance, but only to prove to be quite at hand, when our muddy car stops, and we step out, to begin crawling about in the confined space, extricating our feet at every step from the adhesive clay, like subterranean beetles in progress over a fly-paper.

And now we begin to look about, to find that we stand in an iron tube seven feet in diameter, fitted together in segments, four of which complete the circle or band, two feet wide—rings, which as the work progresses are fitted in, bolted together, have cement forced behind, and then are calked at their seams with oakum and Stockholm tar—the whole forming a vast watertight pipe, whose perfection is favoured by the strata through which it is being carried, progress so far having been through a tenacious clay, so impervious to water, that the supply needed for mixing the cement has had to be carried down.

So far we are told there has not been a check; and we peer forward into the circular shield, like a vast iron big drum, which is forced forward as the work progresses, to make room for another, or another, band of segments; while the men employed delve on and on, tunnelling away in complete safety; for should there be an influx of water, they have but to step out of their shield, close its sliding doors, and the tunnel end is sealed up almost hermetically.

But though guarded against, no such danger is apprehended, especially now that the nearest point to the bed of the river has been passed. Where we now stand, about the middle of the river, we are, it seems, twenty-eight below the bed, that is to say, with that number of feet of earth, mud, and clay between us and the water flowing swiftly over our head.

'What is that rushing roar behind?' we ask. 'Only a returning trolly rattling over the tram.' But do we feel it warm? We confess to the air being slightly oppressive, and our companion, Mr Barlow, the engineer, goes to the tunnel side.

'Ting, ting!' an electric bell sounds, and a signal is telegraphed along the wire laid down to the shaft mouth: 'More air!'

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'Rush-h-h-h! hiss-s-s!' Here it is on the other side, pumped down through a pipe, to come in a soft pure refreshing stream; when candles seem to burn brighter, and we gaze about at finished sides and roof.

But in the dim light shed by the candles, it almost seems as if we had penetrated to where the cherubic portion of the inhabitants of gnome-land were at work; for here and there we see yellow faces moving about, and hear blows given by invisible, tool-armed hands. Perhaps there are bodies, but we see them not—only flitting yellow faces passing the candles stuck against the wall.

And now we learn that nine feet of the tunnel are completed daily, so that, without let or hinderance, a few weeks will suffice to reach the Surrey side; and pondering upon the application of the system to the Dover and Calais project, we peer about at the handy way in which, bit by bit, the iron tunnel is put together; but all the same, feeling no unwillingness when a hint is given respecting our return; for in its present unfinished state, a hole below the bed of Thames is not a confidence-inspiring spot.

We walk back very slowly over the tenacious flooring of clay upon which the tram is laid; the darkness is not even visible, and the candles are so distant that once our feet glide from under us, and we fall—not painfully, and our clothes *are* canvas.

Daylight at last, even though it be at the foot of a shaft; but there is the bucket ascent on one leg, a trifle to the initiated, but a real peril to the nervous; and here once more we are hanging halfway down, performing a pleasant leg-of-mutton and bottle-jack movement: the upward progress is so slow that we appear to stand still as far as ascending goes, while our companion shouts to the brakeman to arrest the roasting motion.

It is with something like a sense of having been reprieved that the surface is reached once more; we assert that we have been delighted with our visit, declaring it to have been most interesting, but with a private resolve that we will wait, before paying another visit to the new Tower Subway, until its completion.

NODDY'S SITUATION.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

'I GIVE my daughter Julia three years. You understand? If she makes a good match within that period—well; if not, I have done with her: I wash my hands of her completely.' Mrs Muciller gently chafed her left hand with her right, arranged her rings, and replaced her fingers upon the lace handkerchief in her lap, as though the operation were completed.

'Amply sufficient, my dear Mrs Muciller, for a young lady who doubtless inherits her mother's tact for improving a favourable opportunity;' and Mrs Sharing took a comprehensive glance at the drawing-room of Braithfield Villa. The room was handsome and tasteful, as even a neighbour would allow. A cool green light shimmered in through the jasmine-covered verandah, and played in wavering little pools of subdued sunshine upon the carpet. A soft green fernery had taken the place of the winter fire-grate, its beauty reproduced in a plate-glass background. The furniture modern, and doubtless elegant, but swathed up in holland coverings, as though it were dead furniture, shrouded and laid out, waiting to be buried. A tiny fragile stem of frosted silver depended from the ceiling to carry the Greek lamp branches, hung with silver chains, and the perfect globes of egg-shell glass. The piano was Broadwood's grand; and displayed on dainty little tables, was the correct quantity of drawing-room stores.

As Mrs Sharing mentally appraised the effects in her friend's room, she was not unmindful of the favourable opportunity that had been improved. It was not so many years since a Mrs Cray, a widow with one daughter, had been a fashionable teacher of music and painting, and had found Mrs Sharing one of the most useful of patrons. It was at Mrs Sharing's house she had first met Mr Muciller, a successful speculator, who experienced little difficulty in tracing back his genealogy an extra generation for every ten thousand he netted. Mr Muciller was a rich man when he married Mrs Cray; but he went on speculating, as people will, and the crash came, and he was nearly ruined in fortune, and quite in health; for he took it to heart, and died, leaving Mrs Muciller a widow for the second time, with a handsome house and a very slender income. Still, it had been a favourable opportunity for Mrs Muciller, late Cray, all things considered.

'At least,' Mrs Muciller said, in reply to Mrs Sharing's remark, 'I can rely on Julia's discretion. She is not likely to be betrayed into an undesirable match. My daughter is not flighty, like some girls.'

When Mrs Sharing had taken her leave, Mrs Muciller thought a few minutes, and then touched the bell.

'Send Miss Noddy to me,' she said to the servant.

Norah Cray, for that was Miss Noddy, can hardly be described as a relation of Mrs Muciller, being nothing more than a kind of connection—in fact, a step-daughter, the child of her first husband, to be precise. She was a little thing for her age, which was quite two-and-twenty. She had smooth brown hair, neatly dressed, but rather odd-looking, as it actually shewed the shape of the back of the little head, without any chignon at all to improve it. She had bright brown eyes too; but you could not say she was pretty. Hers was a plain face, but good tempered and pleasant to look upon. She came into the drawing-room, in answer to Mrs Muciller's summons, in a print dress, not fashionable nor new, though neat and becoming, and her hands white with flour.

'Noddy, what *are* you doing, to come into the drawing-room in that state?'

'Pies,' said Noddy laconically, and smiling.

'You might have waited till you had finished your work,' said Mrs Muciller, 'as I wish to speak to you on something of importance.'

'They said you wanted me directly, so I came,' Noddy explained.

'Very well; as you are here, you may remain; but please, don't sit down, or you will be sure to soil the chairs with your floury hands. —I need not remind you, Noddy,' Mrs Muciller said with a smooth and rather pretty lisp, 'that I have sought to discharge the onerous and unthankful office of step-mother to you in two families to the best of my ability. You have too much good sense to feel hurt at not having been

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placed on a precise equality here with my daughter Julia. You well know that, had your poor father, Mr Cray, still lived, you would, in all probability, have been required to take at least as active a share in household duties as you have done with me. You have therefore no reason, nor, I feel sure, any desire for complaint on that score. But it is needful I should inform you the time has arrived for a change in our mutual relations. You are aware Julia returns to-morrow from finishing her education. It is my intention to make great personal and pecuniary sacrifices, with a view to her advancement in life. It is probable we may entertain more company than we have been in the habit of doing, and consequently we may require more domestic assistance. But this and other expenses will involve pinching. I must pinch, you must pinch—we must all pinch, in fact. Under these circumstances, I am not disposed to continue to employ you in a subordinate capacity in the household, for people to make remarks about, and I cannot afford to retain you in any other. You will therefore see it to be your duty at once to look out for a situation as governess in some respectable family. I will not hurry you to a few weeks, and I shall do my best meantime to help you find such a situation; but I name three months as the time at which our present connection should cease.'

'O dear,' said Noddy, her usually cheerful face becoming quite blank—'I'm sure I'm not fit for a governess. I don't know nearly enough to teach.'

'Perhaps not. No one does. What of that? You are quite as competent as many young ladies I know who go out. No girl is expected to be competent in her first place. You learn at your first situation what you want to teach at the second. It is the same in all businesses. Now, let us see what we can say in the advertisement—French, German, Italian, and the usual accomplishments, I suppose; that is the customary thing.'

'But I scarcely know a word of French, not a syllable of German, and can't even understand an Italian song,' objected Noddy; 'and as to accomplishments, I can only play hymn tunes, as you call them, on the piano.'

'Very well, miss; and pray, what of that? Nobody will ask you for more, will they? You will go with young children first; you can teach them English, and spelling, and that, and what little French you do know, and their notes on the piano; and if their parents wish for more, you can tell them it is not advisable to overfill little heads too soon, can't you?'

'But I should be so ashamed,' pleaded Noddy. 'Please, don't say all that, for indeed I couldn't teach at all when it was found out how ignorant I was of all I had professed; and people would despise me when they found me out.'

'Nonsense; nobody will find you out. Why, how do you think I began as a drawing mistress? The same as other people do. I bought my specimens of a lady artist, and always took care to bring my pupils' drawings home to be corrected by the same lady. My drawings were admired, so were those of my pupils, and I obtained a connection. I forget what became of the artist; but you may be sure she never came to any good. You see she had a certain order of talent for production, whilst I possessed the superior ability to render her commodity marketable. As to advertising anything short of what I have told you, it would be useless; every governess does the same, for the reason that every other governess does so too. If people believe it, that is their affair; mine just now is to get you a situation; and when I have done so, I shall consider myself relieved from further responsibility.'

Noddy went back to her pies; but a heavy heart won't make light pastry, and Noddy's wouldn't rise.

The next day, Julia returned—a tall showy blonde of eighteen, with the languid air of completion which a finishing school so successfully imparts. Julia Muciller was an accomplished girl; she had learned all the last new tricks of musical execution, and shewed peculiar facility in the performance of pieces of the *Bubblings at Morn* and *Dribblings at Eve* order. These she could rattle through with an air of easy superiority to the instrument, to the music, and even to her audience, as though such trifling feats of sleight-of-hand were the most easy of accomplishment in the world, as perhaps they are when once you know the trick. She was on singing terms with most of the gushing songs of flimsy sentiment of the day. She 'knew an eye,' belonging, it appeared, to some party who had had the other one made into a star, or had lost it in some other way to provoke admiration not quite so clear. She 'saw two leaflets floating down a stream,' and expressed regret at one having to 'float onwards all alone' after its fellow had stuck in the bank. She aspired to be a bird—she 'breathed for wings'—she sighed for 'a fairy's life in an elfin grove;' but of the passion and suffering of humanity, and its loves and tears, in a world that is in earnest, Julia did not sing. She could paint groups of impossible flowers, chatter boarding-school French, embroider in beads and wool, dance, and read novels on the sofa. In a word, Julia was finished.

Poor Noddy's little heart quite sank when she was admitted of evenings to the drawing-room (when there was no company) to hear the rehearsal of Miss Muciller's accomplishments, for it made her despair more than ever of being able to lay even the groundwork for such a display. But the advertisement was already sent to a weekly paper, spite of all Noddy's entreaties, detailing her proficiency; and so she could see nothing to be done but to borrow some of Julia's early school-books, and try, in spare moments, to gain a little knowledge of what she was expected to teach. It was with some difficulty that she could even do this, for Mrs Muciller did not like to see her reading, observing that her duty was to devote her mind exclusively to household affairs, and there would be plenty of time for study when she went to her first situation. 'You have only to keep yourself one lesson in advance of your pupils,' Mrs Muciller said, 'and you are safe. It is very strange if a grown person of average ability cannot manage to compete with children to that extent.' So Noddy would get up early, and get all her dusting done, and manage to make an hour at least for study before breakfast.

Within a week of Julia's return from school, Mrs Muciller received this letter by afternoon post:

London, *June* 27, 18—.

Dear Mrs Muciller—You will be surprised to hear I'm just home from Bombay—more so, perhaps, to learn I'm tired of India, and mean to

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settle in England. I shall run down and pay you a visit in a day or two, and shall probably stay till you turn me out, as your cool country scenery will be a relief to eyes that still have the glare of the Indian sun in them. Don't put yourself out of the way. You need not reply, as I shall not be in London after to-morrow.—Yours,

FRANK GEOGAGAN.

'Well, that 's cool,' said Julia.

'It certainly is,' replied Mrs Muciller; 'but he must come. In the first place, he is a nephew of the late Mr Muciller, and I suppose fancies he has some right in his uncle's house. In the next place, I am not disposed to dispute the point, for he has been making a deal of money in India in connection with a Reclamation of Land Company. He must have turned a pretty penny, or he would not think of settling down yet. Those Geogagans are a money-making family, and always were, and not satisfied with a little. I should have invited him myself, had I known him to be in England. I consider his visit highly desirable. You must look your best, Julia, when he comes.'

Julia languidly smiled obedience. 'But he does not say when he is coming, mamma?'

'No; just like the Geogagans—always thoughtless. However, we need not trouble about that to-day, as it is time for you to dress for Mrs Sharing's croquet party.'

So Julia rang the bell for Noddy to come and do her hair.

CHAPTER II.

The 28th of June being the anniversary of Coronation Day, is kept holiday at most country places. Both Mrs Muciller's servants had hurried to get their work done early; and as 'their people,' to wit, Mrs Muciller and her daughter (for Noddy didn't count) were going out, they were given the afternoon as a holiday.

It was a real treat to Noddy to get a spare afternoon all to herself, with no work to do, and no one to find fault with her. Noddy made up her mind she would spend the time in trying to learn how to teach music. So she went in to the piano in the drawing-room. I don't like digressions, but pardon me for a moment. I would not have you think Norah Cray an ignorant girl simply because she owned herself consciously unfit for a governess: she was not that. Her opportunities had been scanty enough. She left school at thirteen to 'make herself useful.' But Noddy had read a great deal, and possessed besides much intuitive knowledge of the right and wrong of things, though without being at all times able to reduce it to such a rule and science as would properly qualify for a teacher. She at least had this wisdom, that when she did not know anything, she would make no secret of her ignorance about it; and if all of us did the same, we might none of us seem quite so wise as we do. Noddy had picked up a fair knowledge of music, though not of a showy sort. Fireworks on the piano completely baffled her; but she could play some of Mozart's quieter sonatas with taste and real feeling, and they delighted her heart, though they were utterly unsuited for display. But what Noddy was now anxious to learn was how to teach. So she began at the beginning of her Pianoforte Tutor, and went slowly on till she came to the scales, which she commenced practising.

It being very hot, all the doors and windows of the house were thrown open to get the breeze, and the fragrant breath swept in through the hall door, and along the passage, and to the drawing-room, bearing the scent of roses and jasmine to Noddy, as she sat there practising scales. It is rather monotonous work, but Noddy's whole mind was in it. She was indeed so absorbed in her occupation, that if a person had come up the gravel-path, and across the lawn, and straight into the room where she was, it is doubtful if she would have noticed it. Of course, it would be unlikely; but I say if a person had done so (the piano was at the farthest end, in the shadow of the large room), Noddy was so preoccupied, that it is not probable she would have observed the intrusion. She had been grinding away at the F minor scale, up and down, down and up—*one* and two and three and four, and *one* and two and——

'Oh, bother!' said Noddy, flinging her hands on her lap; 'what an awful little goose you are! You haven't a bit of gumption, nor a mite of common sense. As to being a governess, and can't play scales, you must be a noodle to think of it—a dreadful noodle!'

'You're about right there!' said an unmistakable masculine voice from somewhere by the door. Noddy started as if she had been shot; then she came over red and hot at being surprised. But the owner of the voice walked boldly into the room. Noddy being left in sole charge of Braithfield Villa, and seeing an entire stranger march in like this, did not like the look of it. *His* looks were nothing to provoke dislike, be it said—a tall, fine-bronzed man of thirty, with a tawny moustache and handsome sunburned features. She resolved to challenge him.

'What do you want?' she said brusquely.

'You,' said he—'you are Miss Muciller, I imagine?'

'No; I am Noddy—Norah Cray, that is,' she stammered, correcting herself. 'Please, what is it?'

'Cray?' the stranger said—'Cray? Any relation to Mrs Muciller?'

'Yes.'

'Oh, I think I know, then. So you are Miss Cray, eh? You will see who I am from this card; and as you have not offered me a seat, I 'll take one, after shaking hands with you.' He held out his hand frankly, and Norah could not refuse it.

'I don't know who you are,' said Noddy. The stranger had lounged himself on the sofa.

'Then, perhaps, you 'll look and see.'

'Mr Frank Ge-Ge-Geog-a-gan?' asked Norah, puzzled.

'*Ga*-gan, if you don't mind. It 's spelt heathenish, but it reads easy. You 've heard of your cousin, Frank Geogagan, in India, surely? That is, he might have been your cousin, if Mrs Muciller's marriages had not mixed the relationships so confoundedly.'

'No,' said Norah.

He whistled. 'Didn't Mrs Muciller tell you I was coming?'

Norah did not wish to expose the precise state of things between herself and her step-mother, and did not choose to tell an untruth; so she replied: 'Mrs Muciller received a letter just before she went out this afternoon, but she was hurried, and I did not know its contents.—So you are expected, then?'

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'I said I was coming, but not exactly when.'

'That 's awkward,' said Noddy.

'Why?'

'Because we are not prepared to receive you. Mrs Muciller would have been home, and Julia, had they expected you to arrive to-day.'

'You are very plain.'

'You are not complimentary,' retorted Noddy.

'I didn't refer to your looks; but I wonder if you would insist on my saying they were anything different?'

'You can say what you please,' said Noddy; 'it is a guest's privilege.'

'Whew!' Mr Geogagan whistled softly. 'Nettled, eh?'

'No; I justify your remark, that is all. You called me plain.'

'So you are going out as governess, I heard you say. Pray, are you competent to teach?'

'I don't think so.'

'Then why do you go?'

'I think you have no right to inquire.'

'Gracious! Why, you forget I 'm your cousin, and take a family interest in you already.'

'If you do, you won't ask,' said Noddy.

'But I do, and still ask.'

'Then I can't tell you.'

'Well, you are the coolest little baggage of a cousin to welcome any one home from abroad one could well expect to find. Are you not glad to see me?'

'Well, not particularly,' said Noddy. 'How should I be, never having seen you or heard of you before? Besides, you come at an awkward time, when nobody is at home. And for aught I know, you may be an impostor, and have watched your opportunity to enter the house when it is unprotected. I don't think you are that, though—you are not polite enough. But one never knows.'

'Upon my word, you are not flattering. Still, at anyrate, I think you might have offered me some refreshment, as I have just come off a journey.'

'I am very sorry,' said Noddy; 'but Mrs Muciller has taken the keys with her. I can only offer you a cup of tea or coffee, and some bread and butter. Everything else is locked up.'

As Mr Frank seemed to think that would do very well indeed, Noddy went out to prepare it, and presently returned with a tray of tea and coffee and a single cup.

'*Two* cups, please,' said Mr Frank. Norah was not generally accustomed to take her meals with the family. She was certain Mrs Muciller would not like this arrangement, but divining a refusal might prove embarrassing, she brought a second cup, and joined Mr Geogagan at tea. When they had finished, Mr Geogagan said he should walk up to the station to arrange about his luggage being sent, and on his return he should insist on Noddy giving him some music. No sooner was he fairly out of the house, than Norah hastened to Mrs Sharing's, to let Mrs Muciller know of the arrival of a visitor. However, Julia was in the middle of an exciting game at croquet, and learning that Mr Geogagan was gone out again, she prevailed on her mother to remain till it was finished. Meantime, Noddy returned to Braithfield Villa. In five minutes, in walked Mr Frank again, clamorous for his music. Now, Noddy was never in the habit of playing for anybody's amusement but her own, and was quite certain if Mrs Muciller heard of her taking the liberty of playing to please a visitor, it would be considered a deadly offence. Moreover, she expected Mrs Muciller to arrive every minute.

But Mr Frank insisted with such vehemence that a refusal seemed like palpable affectation; so Noddy risked the consequences, and began to play Mozart's *Ah Perdona!* She had only got half way through it, when Mrs Muciller and Julia appeared at the window. Noddy shut up the piano, threw down her music, and fled.

'What impertinence!' ejaculated the widow. She was so fairly astounded at Noddy's barefaced impudence, as to be betrayed into making this remark aloud—and Frank Geogagan heard it. She had the tact, however, at once to divine it, and to correct her mistake. 'What impertinence, Mr Frank, of you, to be sure, to come and take us all by surprise without a word of warning! However, we must try and overlook it, as it is your first offence. I 'm sure I hope it will not be the last. We are delighted to receive you, although, had you told us when to expect you, we might have given you a better reception.'

'Well,' said Mr Frank (but he detected the artifice), 'I thought I told you pretty exactly. I said "in a day or two," if I remember right, and I came in "*a* day" instead of "two," to shew my anxiety to pay my earliest respects to my aunt—and her daughter—for I presume this is Julia?' Julia made a most finished *révérence*, and offered her hand in the most approved style. Julia was well and carefully dressed for the croquet party. 'That is fortunate, at anyrate,' Mrs Muciller thought. 'We might have been surprised at greater disadvantage. So much depends upon first impressions.'

A few interchanges of courtesies from the ladies, with commonplaces from Mr Frank, and Mrs Muciller and her daughter retired to remove their bonnets — if the little bits of flowers and lace adorning their hair might be so designated. Mrs Muciller took this opportunity of administering a severe rebuke to Noddy upon her boldness, forwardness, and presumption in attempting to entertain their visitor in a manner so unbecoming. It was not couched in gentle terms, but in words that sting the more from having truth in them. She reminded Noddy of her dependence, of her prospects as a governess, of her own father's position (he was Mrs Muciller's first husband, be it remembered), and contrasted these with her behaviour not to *her* guest, but to Mrs Muciller's. If the sting of a rebuke be any criterion of its deservedness, Mrs Muciller's was richly merited, for poor Noddy went away to cry where there were no eyes to triumph over her distress.

But Mrs Muciller was a student of expediency. She felt it would be undesirable (a favourite word of hers) that Noddy should continue to take her meals apart from the family, with a visitor in the house. The continuance of such a course would convey an impression, not so much false, as undesirable. She therefore 'desired' Miss Norah's presence at supper, and made known her wishes for the future. But Noddy pleaded headache as excuse for that evening, and remained in her room, hearing the sounds of music come faintly up from the drawing-room when the door was opened, till bedtime.

Next morning, Noddy was up and about soon after the lark. As blithely as he, she was singing

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about her work, for there is nothing in all the world like cheerful work to prevent any one feeling dull and unhappy. How strange a drawing-room looks in the morning-light, in all the disarrangement of only a 'little music' of the night before! The piano heaped up with songs—songs on the floor—songs on the tables, on the chairs—here and there—everywhere. Furniture untidy and displaced—antimacassars to be newly smoothed and arranged. Confusion that the sun lights up into chaotic disorder, but which candlelight eyes do not notice. Nobody ever dared touch the drawing-room to 'tidy' it but Noddy—that was her particular province and her pride. There she was, that bright June morning, sweeping and sweeping away, and singing, as her mind, like the lark's, soared above the dust.

'Bravo! Cousin Noddy!' It was Mr Frank, who had been strolling about the lawn with a cigar in the fresh morning air, and who had walked up to the window.

'Oh, dear,' said Noddy, 'please, don't tease me. Don't you see I 'm busy?'

'I 'm coming in to see,' said Mr Geogagan, entering the casement.

Noddy looked pleasant enough as she was surprised in her print morning dress—her brown hair neatly arranged close to her head, where it could not stop without struggling out into little curls here and there; and a faint blush on her cheeks—partly shy, partly vexed at being caught, and partly ashamed of being vexed. 'Oh, please, go away—do—or I must sweep you up,' she entreated; and 'Oh, please, go away,' she added more seriously, remembering Mrs Muciller had cautioned her respecting her behaviour to Mr Geogagan. So Mr Frank went and finished his cigar by himself.

THE CROW.

Shakspeare tells us that snowy purity itself need not hope to escape the shafts of calumny; that being the case, it is only according to the nature of things that Slander should empty her quiver when the object of her unkind attentions is as black as a crow. Luckily, her arrows are not so deadly as her malice would have them, or the crow would long ago have been extinct as the dodo; but, like his relative, the priest-banned jackdaw of Rheims, he is not a bit the worse for all the hard words levelled at him, merely because he happens to have a good black coat to his back.

Pliny calls the crow a bird of ill-omened garrulity, most inauspicious at the time of incubation, or just after the summer solstice. The appearance of a flight of crows upon the left of their camp sufficed to cow the courage of the soldiers of old Rome, since they looked upon it as a certain sign of defeat, as certain as when the birds hovered or passed over their standards. So Shakspeare's Cassius presages misfortune at Philippi:

> Ravens, crows, and kites
> Fly o'er our heads, and downward look on us
> As we were sickly prey; these shadows seem
> A canopy most fatal, under which
> Our army lies, ready to give up the ghost.

The Cingalese to this day draw auguries from the movements of these birds: the direction of their flight, the numbers in which they assemble, the tone in which they croak, their choice of roosting-places, are all held ominous of evil or prophetic of good fortune. In many parts of Europe, the fact of a crow croaking thrice as he flies over a house is considered a sure prognostic of the death of some member of the family. An astrological writer declares pestilence and famine are infallibly at hand when the crows desert the woods, 'because these melancholy birds, bearing the characters of Saturn, the author of famine and mortality, have a very early perception of the bad disposition of that planet.' Rutty, the Quaker doctor and diarist, pays the crow the compliment of the following comparison: 'A physician in high reputation is like a carrion crow, he thrives on the diseases and impending death of his brother; he appears only in the time of calamity and distress, and very often when all dependence on him is like on a broken reed of Egypt.' Without discussing the justice of the comparison as regards the doctor, it certainly is an absurd one as regards the bird, for the crow puts in an appearance at all times and seasons. Birds possessing an undoubted prevision of atmospheric changes, the crow may have some claim to the character of weather-prophet. Virgil says its croaking forebodes rain; an old English writer says foul weather may be looked for when crows make a hoarse, hollow, sorrowful noise as if they sobbed; if they stalk into the water, or become very garrulous towards evening, rain is coming; but hot and dry weather is to be expected when they gather together in great companies, or call loudly and clearly in the early morning. A shrewd Scotch observer remarks that crows have a very keen and correct perception of changes in the weather, and that stormy winds may be presaged when they feed greedily, and fly speedily along the lower edges of the glens; while, if they betake themselves to sheltered places when the tempest begins, it is a certain indication that it will increase to a hurricane. Still, their weather-wisdom does not suffice to save them from coming destruction. In 1839, thirty-three thousand dead crows were counted on the shores of a lake in Westmeath, after a violent storm; a few years ago, the beach of Crow Island, a favourite resort of the Ceylon crows, was strewed with the remains of the birds killed by a thunder-storm; and when Pea Patch Island was inundated one night, the shores for miles were blackened by the bodies of thousands of unlucky crows, as the streets of Calcutta were filled with them after the last great cyclone swept the Indian continent.

Our sable subject owes no little of his evil reputation to the fact, that nature has not cursed him with a fastidious palate; but if he can make a meal off what a bird of nicer taste would rather starve than touch, he only does so when nothing better is to be got. There is no doubt that when the choice is given him, he prefers dining upon a tender leveret or young rabbit; and he will work hard enough at unearthing grubs and worms where he can earn a fair wage for his labour. It must be admitted the crow has an unfortunate liking for poached eggs, combined with a blissful ignorance of the sacredness of a partridge's or pheasant's nest, while he will not hesitate at appropriating stray ducklings or chickens, if they come in his way. When stealing eggs, he generally impales them dexterously on his bill, but not always; Mr Weir frightened a flying crow into dropping his burden, and found it was a wild-duck's egg, perfectly whole. Another crime of which this bird is, upon very

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strong evidence, accused, is that of putting sickly sheep out of their misery; and, as Mr Hogg puts it, of descending to the most dishonourable dodges to maintain himself in good condition. That gentleman personally complains that while at other times his farm was only favoured by the patronage of a single pair of crows, in the lambing-season the hills swarmed with them, ready to take advantage of the ewes in their hour of trouble, and destroy both them and their offspring. The crow is by no means a one-idead bird. Small feathered game he strikes as it flies; sheep, and such-like victims, he first disables by picking out their eyes; if he gets hold of a nut, he cracks the shell by dropping it again and again from a great height. One was seen to kill a young duck by laying it upon the ground, and then walking backwards and forwards over it until its life was trodden out of it; and the Roman naturalist tells us of a thirsty crow heaping stones in an urn containing rain-water it could not reach, until it brought the draught to a convenient height.

Somebody, however, has said a good word in behalf of the crow; Friar Glantville deposing: 'In Exameron, it is said the mildness of the crow is wonderful, for when the old crows in age be both naked and bare of covering, the young ones cover them with their feathers and feed them. And when they wax old and feeble, the young crows undersit them, and rear them up with their wings, and comfort them to use to fly to bring their members that be diseased into state again.' Although it is hard to believe in such filial affection on the part of the young crows, we may say that the old birds deserve every kindness from them, seeing they tend upon their offspring long after they can fly, instead of, like most other birds, leaving the youngsters to their own devices at the earliest possible period. Indeed, the crow is a model parent. When Mr Weir had deprived a lady-crow of her liege lord, he was astonished by finding her provided with a second mate before three days had elapsed. Determined to get rid of the family, he next shot the hen bird; but even her death did not suffice, for the male bird continued to feed the motherless brood, and persevered in performing his paternal duty until he paid for his constancy with his life.

The note of the crow is said to have twenty-five modulations. He possesses the capacity of imitation in an extraordinary degree. 'At the moment I am writing this,' says Pliny, 'there is in the city of Rome a crow, which belongs to a Roman of equestrian rank, and was brought from Bætica, able to pronounce several connected words, and repeatedly learning fresh ones.' There is nothing very surprising in this, considering that the corvine family is famous for its possession of the often worthless gift of the gab. This imitative faculty makes the crow an amusing pet; he is easily tamed, being of a sociable temperament, and may be taught many tricks, while he is not incapable of attachment. Mr Weir kept one for some time, which flew round about the neighbourhood in the day, and roosted at night in his shrubbery. The sound of his master's voice was enough to bring him to him immediately to receive his caressings, but he sharply resented any stranger's making free to stroke his back. This bird's favourite amusement was to peck the heels of barefooted urchins. His memory was astonishing. One Monday morning, after being satiated with food, he picked up a mole in the orchard, and hopped with his prize into the garden, where he buried it so nicely, that his master, who had been watching his proceedings, could not discover where he had put it. As his wings had been clipped, to prevent him flying over the garden-wall, he was unable to get into the garden again until the Saturday evening, when, seeing the door was open, he hopped at once to the very spot where the mole lay hidden, and disinterred it in the twinkling of an eye. In 1807, a gentleman told the following story in a magazine: 'In spring 1789, a boy brought a nestling crow to my house, where he remained until the harvest following, when he disappeared. In June 1790, I observed a crow approaching near the house, and suspected it might be my old bird. I threw a piece of bread to him, which he immediately picked up. From that time he paid regular visits, and is known by the name of Wattie. After pairing, he brings his mate with him, who waits for him at a distance until he returns with his allowance, which they eat very lovingly together. In breeding-time, he comes very often, and when his young take wing, brings them to a little distance from the house. If he finds the door fast, he first caws, then thumps on the door with his bill, and if still unsuccessful, utters a pretty loud sound like the barking of a little dog. If he meets me at a distance from the house, he comes up to me, and if coming home, accompanies me all the way, either hopping or taking short flights. He once recognised me three miles from home, and I was obliged to beg some bread to pacify him!'

Some writers credit the corvine tribe with possessing an organisation unheard of among any other members of the ornithological kingdom, actually averring that they hold regular assizes for the trial of offenders who have set at nought the laws of the black community. Edmonston declares the crows of Zealand seldom associate, except when they meet together for the purpose of holding a crows' court, when numbers of them assemble on a particular hill or in a particular field. All the delegates having arrived, proceedings are opened by a general croaking, and after a while the whole body fall upon two or three individuals, and put them to death, dispersing immediately afterwards. It would seem the crow, like Coventry Patmore, believes

> That penalty is best to bear
> Which follows soonest upon crime.

Landt not only corroborates Edmonston's story, but pretends he was able to distinguish the judges, jury, council, and accusers!

A belief was long current in England that it was penal to kill a crow within five miles of London. The crow has certainly been honoured with the notice of parliament, but rather by way of proscription than protection. In 1532, an act was passed to encourage the destruction of choughs, crows, and rooks, because they bred and increased too fast in the realm, yearly consuming and devouring marvellous quantities of corn and grain of all kinds, and destroying the roofs of barns, ricks, and stacks, threatening thereby great undoing of the tillers, husbandmen, and sowers of the earth. After this terrible indictment, by way of preamble, the act ordered all landowners to do their utmost to exterminate the criminals, upon

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pain of being heavily amerced. It also directed that every parish should provide itself with nets for crow-catching; while the farmers and tenants were to meet from time to time, to take counsel together as to the best means of destroying their supposed foes. Moreover, every occupier of land was bound to give any one asking for it a day's sport over his land, allowing the sportsman to carry away all the crows he succeeded in capturing, and paying him at the rate of twopence a dozen for his trouble; but every one was warned against making the act a pretence for killing doves and pigeons. It is evident the legislature had no faith in the prescription of those wise men of old, who, Lupton tells us, taught that crows were to be kept at a distance by burying a new earthen pot tenanted by a toad in the middle of a field.

The Carrion Crow makes itself at home in every climate habitable by man; it is found everywhere in Western, but is rarer in Eastern Europe. Well-wooded countries are its delight. Plentiful in England and the southern parts of Scotland, the carrion crows are seldom seen in the central and northern portions of the latter country. They are not very sociable together, more than two being rarely seen in company. About February, they set about constructing their nests of twigs, lined with moss, hair, and other soft material, and fenced externally with half-rotten twigs; and when they have settled down to housekeeping, they are very particular in carrying away the refuse of their meals, depositing it a considerable distance off. Suspicious in the extreme, they give humankind a wide berth, especially if they perceive anything in the shape of a shooting-iron; but they are as bold as they are wary, and will make a good fight of it against much bigger birds than themselves. The Royston Crow (*Corvus cornix*) differs little from the common crow, save in the colour of its plumage, which is ash-gray tinged with purple. It is a graver bird than its relative, but has the peculiarity of leaving its quarters in some parts of England in the summer-time. White of Selborne says: 'Royston or gray crows are winter-birds, that come much about the same time with the woodcock; they, like the field-fare and redwing, have no apparent reason for migration, for as they fare in the winter like their congeners, so might they, in all appearance, in the summer.' What makes this conduct more inexplicable, is that in Scotland the birds remain stationary all the year round. Mr Jesse infers that the gray crows seen in England during the winter only, are visitors from Sweden and Norway.

The rector of Ousby, Cumberland, writing to Mr Urban in 1709, advocates the protection of the crow as a national benefactor, doing his part towards providing material for England's navy, when its ships were hearts of oak. Mr Robinson says: 'About twenty-five years ago, coming from Rose Castle early in the morning, I observed a great number of crows very busy at their work upon a declining ground of a mossy surface. I went out of my way on purpose to view their labouring, and found they were planting a grove of oaks. They first made little holes in the earth with their bills, going about and about till the hole was deep enough, and then they dropped in the acorn, and covered it with earth and moss. This young plantation is now growing up to a thick grove of oaks, fit for use, and of height sufficient for them to build their nests in. I told it to the owner of the ground, who took care to secure their growth and rising.' A belief in the planting propensities of the crow, led the Dutch to take him under their protection, when they became masters of Ceylon and its cinnamon groves, and inflict severe punishment upon any one interfering with his life or liberty. Bold enough naturally, the small glossy Ceylon Crow (*Corvus splendens*) has, thanks to years of impunity, become the most impudent and audacious of birds. Colombo swarms with these black citizens, ever on the watch to enrich themselves at the expense of humanity; and doors and windows being oftener open than shut, they have every opportunity of indulging their thievish proclivities. Nothing portable is safe from them. Workboxes, baskets, paper parcels, are all deftly opened and overhauled, and anything taking their fancy quickly carried off, though what use crows can find for lace-bordered handkerchiefs, Paris kid gloves, and similar plunder, it is hard to conceive. So little fear have they of being punished for their larcenies, that they will join a dinner-party without invitation, pounce upon any tit-bits they spy on the table, and wing their way out of doors to enjoy their booty at their leisure.

The common black crow is unknown in America, although that continent owns a member of the race sufficiently like it to have been long held identical; but the American Crow (*Corvus Americanus*) is now generally admitted to be a distinct species, being less in size, and having a very different voice, but in all other respects closely allied to his European brother; possessing his courage, sagacity, and omnivorous appetite, to which vegetables, fruit, seeds, snakes, lizards, grubs, insects, eggs, and carrion are alike welcome. Mr Lord found this species more than abundant in British Columbia, and bears emphatic testimony to its vocal capabilities. 'If birds,' he writes, 'are gifted with ventriloquial powers, I should say the Barking Crow was at the top of the profession. Wandering through the forest encircling the prairie, one's ears are dinned by the extraordinary sounds made by these crows. Sometimes it seems as if these hidden polyphonists were making all sorts of disagreeable fun of you, and chuckling hoarsely at their own jokes; then one goes in for a bit of song, and others readily taking it up, they manage between them to raise a combination of discords, compared to which the parrots' screams in the Zoological Gardens is whispered melody. They shriek, yell, laugh, shout, whistle, scream and bark, driving one to wish all the crows in British Columbia were consigned to the depths of Hades.' We have given the American crow the benefit of this panegyric, because the naturalist of Vancouver's Land calls it *Corvus Americanus*, but we feel doubtful as to whether he is not describing the fish crow; a doubt strengthened by his admitting the strong resemblance between it and Baird's North-western fish crow, while he accords that diminutive bird the dignity of being a species, on the ground that it builds a domed nest, which the other never does.

The Fish Crow proper (*Corvus ossifragus*) is peculiar to America, and was first observed by Wilson on the Georgian sea-coast. It abounds at all seasons in the maritime districts of the Southern States, a range beyond which it cannot be said to extend, although it is found in spring as far north

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as New York, and is known to breed in New Jersey, returning southward as soon as cold weather sets in. Like the common crow in appearance, but much smaller in size, the fish crows fly in flocks, keeping in pairs as they fly. They haunt the river-banks, salt-ponds, and marshes, hovering watchfully over streams, on the look-out for dead fish, floating carrion, or small fry, which they secure with their claws as the water hurries by. They will dive after small crabs or water-lizards, and often force the gulls to drop the fish they have caught. Not being able to feed upon the wing, the fish crows retire to the nearest trees, to discuss their meal conveniently, and indulge in a congratulatory *ha, ha, hae* over it. Partial though they be to fishy diet, they are not above robbing the nests of other birds, even such big birds as the cormorant; but they take good care to see the owner off the premises before committing a burglary.

Audubon mentions a case where more than six hundred crows were shot on the carcass of a horse placed at shooting-distance from the stable, by which the farmer got enough feathers to fill a bed, besides making as much money by the premiums and the quills as the horse was worth when alive. Somebody relates that a planter, living at a place called Caney—should it not be Canny?—Creek, sowed his crops in peace, by adopting the following ingenious plan of circumventing the crows without destroying them. Before sowing a field, he set some negroes at work running a long horsehair through every grain of a bushel of Indian corn, previously soaked and softened. This prepared seed was scattered over the field, and picked up by the crows, who found the horsehair more than they could swallow. The ends dangled from their beaks, and irritated their throats, causing the victims to make such an immense to-do, and express their disgust in such eloquent terms, that not only themselves, but their luckier comrades, took especial care to avoid the scene of their discomfiture for some time to come.

A COUNTY FAMILY.

CHAPTER XXIX.—MRS BLACKBURN SEES A GHOST.

THE winter was over and gone, and still the great Blackburn vault remained without the prey for which, in all men's eyes, it seemed to have yawned so long. The Squire was yet alive; and even, as the wise doctors said, who had come again from town to visit him, better—at all events less restless and discomposed. They had recommended change of air—removal to some convenient distance; and it was in contemplation, when the days grew warmer, to transport the invalid to that sheltered cottage on the Curlew of which we have already spoken. There was no more chance of his recovery than of Fisherman Richard, who had built the place, coming back to claim his own again. But there was so far an improvement in the sick man's state, that it was now wholly passive; there were no more yearning glances, dumb appeals. He had never suffered bodily pain, and now his mind seemed still and quiet as his limbs.

None but his wife and son, and Stanhope, guessed the cause. Even Ellen, seeing his eyes often fixed upon the pedigree (which had been transferred from the old place to his chamber-wall), believed that it was that which so contented him. He saw the seasons change in the great mirror—the snow dissolve, the green appear; the awakening life of bud and branch—but without pain or pleasure. He watched the familiar faces about his bed with the same listless look as he gazed on the motes in the sunbeams.

Heaven only knows what he thought. We who live and move can scarcely picture how looks the world to those who only have their being in it.

The outside folk—his friends and neighbours—did not speculate upon that matter, but counted him for dead already, except that they did not call upon the family with 'kind inquiries.' Even to those about him it sometimes seemed so. The prayers which Ellen never omitted to read to him, night and morning, fell on deaf ears, and might have been the service for the dead.

William, though he well knew he was not the heir, began to exercise the rights of heirship, and rode and strode about his father's lands as though they were his own; and whether he rode or strode, a 'beggar on horseback' was what the people called him. Mere power, such as is neither influence nor authority, was very sweet to him, as it is to all brutal natures; and he misused it sorely. And yet it angered him to know that he was hated. He was jealous of the respectful salutations with which Ellen was welcomed by the meanest hind, as she passed by; although all the village, and the poorest most of all, had cause to like her, as he knew, and more or less had cause to *dis*like him. He was jealous of the kindliness with which Stanhope was universally regarded, notwithstanding that the young Squire of Curlew Hall had not the means to 'do his duty by the land,' that is, by those who lived by it. He was jealous of the cheery looks which Mr Waller, always chatty, always gay, inspired. He was jealous, even though his rival in her affections was in the grave, with respect to Lucy; and had had the meanness, on some pretence, to get dismissed a gardener whom he had overheard talking to her about 'young Squire Richard as was dead and gone.' He hated the county generally, partly because his presence in the hunting-field had not been received with enthusiasm by the other red-coats, and partly because he had not been made a magistrate. The Blackburns had always been put upon the bench as soon as they were of legal age, and his father had had that responsibility conferred upon him directly he had succeeded to his inheritance. Why, then, was he left out in the cold? The cabal against him, it seemed, had not been confined to his own home.

It was curious how this denial of the mere *insignia* of respectability—since for the thing itself he cared nothing—rankled in his mind. In reality, only there is nothing so unreasonable as intense selfishness, William Blackburn had had every opportunity of 'getting on' in the neighbourhood afforded him. Country-folk are the last to judge men of their own class upon their own merits, or he would have had small chance indeed; scores of welcoming hands had been held out to him, but in return he had only shewn the cloven foot. His behaviour to his parents, and especially to Lucy, was resented; and besides, notwithstanding the shortness of his sojourn at Redcombe, he had openly, more than once, shocked a by no means fastidious public opinion. As to the magistracy, Stanhope, though the lord-lieutenant was

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personally known to him, had declined point-blank to move in the matter, and had even expressed himself to be, 'under the circumstances, astonished at such a request.' Mr Waller (who would himself perhaps have found a difficulty in getting J.P. tacked to his name, had not M.P. been there already) had recommended patience, and hinted that there would be a better chance of such promotion when he had formed some matrimonial connection with a county family; at which William's brow darkened visibly, for reasons best known to himself. He had received a letter on the very morning on which that remark was made, and had it then in his pocket, which, besides its intrinsically unpleasant nature, reminded him bitterly enough of how far off was that consummation of his hopes, his marriage with Lucy Waller. This communication ran as follows:

My dear Mr Blackburn—I daresay you will scarcely remember this handwriting; and yet it comes from one who is a sort of kin to you [here Mr William winced and swore a great oath]. Some men might take it ill that you never wrote a line to tell me of my poor niece's death; but it is likely enough, not being an habitual correspondent of yours truly, you did not know my address, which indeed is generally pretty changeable, as at present. If I had chanced to see the notice in the *Times*, I should certainly have come, no matter what distance, to pay my last tribute of respect to your late wife's memory [here Mr William expressed incredulity in the strongest language]. However, as business is bringing me northward shortly, I will do myself the pleasure of just looking in at Blackburn Manor. It was only quite by chance, and within the last day or two, I heard of your *luck*. What a pity it is poor Bess never lived to see it! Richardson also joins with me in felicitations [never did 'felicitated' man wear so incongruous a look as William Blackburn wore as he read that word] upon your position and *prospects*. Still, you must not forget old friends.—Yours very sincerely, John Dean.

This unwelcome letter was no doubt intentionally unfurnished with an address, so that Mr William Blackburn was unable to indulge himself in what would have been an immense relief under the circumstances, the sending an appropriate reply by return of post. 'He wants money, this impudent scoundrel,' ejaculated William. 'He and Richardson, they think to put the screw on, on account of that confounded Chester business. But not one penny of hush-money do they get out of me. I had rather they told the whole story than not indeed, for it would set me free of this fellow Stanhope; *he* would have no hold upon me then, except that—curse him!—he has got that will in keeping. He took it to Curlew Hall that very day, I know he did. Yes, I must not break with *him*—just yet—whatever happens.—But why does this fellow prate so much about Bess? He uses her as a stalking-horse, of course. He dared not shew his face here but for that. And yet it is clear he suspects nothing. If he only *knew*—why this man would be a stone about my neck for all my days. I must see him, I suppose, since I cannot prevent his coming. But I will not give him a shilling, not a sixpence—let him do his worst. I believe if he told all, that Waller is so deeply dipped, that it would make no difference now as regards Lucy. But what is her father's consent, or even hers, to me' (and William Blackburn ground his teeth), 'while there is that woman at Formosa!'

It was in vain for him to recapitulate what an out-of-the-way place Formosa was, and all the arguments he had so often used with himself against the probability of Bess turning up to trouble him. The very thought of the risk he should incur, if he married while she was alive, brought the perspiration out upon his forehead.

It may be judged whether this was a propitious morning for Mr Waller to hint to the young Squire that an eligible matrimonial connection was the only thing to set himself right with the county and the lord-lieutenant.

Another annoyance chanced to arise that day from the same source, although of a very different and quite unsubstantial kind; but then annoyances are often irksome in inverse proportion to their substance. Just as he had contrived to put that letter of Uncle Dean, with the bitter recollections it evoked, out of his mind, his mother, of all people in the world, must needs awaken them again. She had driven out with Lucy to 'The Fishery,' to give certain final directions there for the reception of the family, and had come back, to use her own expression, 'much upset;' by which she meant, not that she had been frequently thrown out of the carriage, but was seriously indisposed. Perhaps, as Lucy suggested to Ellen, the idea of leaving Redcombe under such sad circumstances, since it was out of all human probability that her husband would be brought back thither—save to the churchyard—had overcome her; she had borne up wonderfully all day, however, until on their road home, when she had given way in a rather unexpected, and apparently uncalled-for manner in Redmoor fir-grove—'Just where it is so steep, you know, that one always gets out and walks; your grandmother and I were walking, and she bade me go on at my own pace, since waiting for her made her nervous; and although loath to leave her, I did so; but finding she did not appear within a reasonable time, and since the coachman feared that the horses, being heated, would catch cold waiting too long on the brow of the hill, I went back, to give Mrs Blackburn my arm to help her up the steep. I found her leaning against a tree, not out of breath, but very pale and trembling, and she said something had given her a turn.'

'Ah, then I know what it was, Lucy,' interrupted Ellen sadly; 'I can guess why that particular place should affect poor dear grandmother: it was in that very fir-grove, as she once told me, that she and grandfather had a last interview with his mother. He was but a few weeks married, then a young and handsome bridegroom; and I daresay the sudden recollection of him as he then was, involuntarily contrasted itself in her mind with his present woful condition.'

'I think that must have been it,' assented Lucy, 'for she said something, I could not quite understand, about a warning and your poor grandfather. I am sure it is a miracle to me that Mrs Blackburn gives way so seldom, considering her trials.'

Indeed, the stout old lady, notwithstanding that tenderness of her heart, which evinced itself in such culpable weakness with respect to her son, was by no means easily cast down, but went about her household duties bravely, and nursed the sick

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man in true wifely fashion night and day, the only one about him who in her heart of hearts had had even until now some hope of him yet. She was one of those who have faith in the doctor while he prophesies smooth things, but when he shakes his head, who comfort themselves with a 'Well, well, science is often mistaken, and after all we are in God's hands;' as though we had not been there before. But all that evening good Mrs Blackburn kept sorrowful silence, and more than once considerably embarrassed Mr Waller by bursting into tears. To weep in public was, in that gentleman's eyes, an unpardonable solecism ('Good Heavens,' whispered he to Stanhope on the second occasion of this ebullition, 'are we in the Forest of Bondy?'), an impulse which, if generally indulged in, would make the ordinary transactions of life impossible: the idea of some meeting of ruined shareholders, instead of stigmatising one as a scoundrel (against which one might bear up), dissolving into tears! As to Mr William, full of his own personal troubles, he doubtless wondered what the old woman had got to cry about; but sympathy did not prompt him so far as to make inquiry. He had got his greatcoat on, and his cigar in his mouth, about to visit the *Blackburn Arms* as usual after dinner, when his mother beckoned him into the deserted dining-room.

'O Willy,' said she, 'I have been wanting to speak to you all the evening, but could not get you alone. I have had such a shock to-day as you cannot imagine; and I am only thankful that it did not happen to you.'

'Shock; well, I'm not easily shocked, and I daresay I could have stood it,' returned William gruffly. 'What's happened now?'

'A very dreadful thing, Willy. I have had a message from the grave. I have seen a ghost.'

'Oh, I *say;* come now. You must have a talk with Mr Allcase when he comes to visit the governor to-morrow. These sort of fancies—for I've heard him say so—are all stomach.'

'But this was not fancy, William, I am very sure. Now, do you sit down and listen.'

'But I want a cigar, mother; and Bill Dykes and Harry Willing have got a match on to-night at four corners.'

'Never mind *them*, William,' returned Mrs Blackburn gravely; 'and have your cigar here if you please. If you had seen what I have seen this day, you would be in no humour for games or smoking.'

'I will just light up, however, in the meantime,' said Mr William contemptuously, for he had drunk his fill, and was by no means in a condition favourable to superstitious fears.—'Now, then, I'm all attention; fire away.'

'I daresay you have heard, Willy,' began his mother slowly, with her hand upon his knee, 'of that old legend about the Blackburn folk, that before they die they have each a warning of their end sent from the other world, that the *last* dead Blackburn returns to tell the doomed one of his race that his time has come to depart also.'

'I have heard some twaddle of the kind,' said William carelessly. 'They say in the village that young Richard's dead mother was seen in the park the night before her son popped off the hooks so suddenly; but it's all rubbish of course. And indeed she did not happen to be a Blackburn at all.'

'That is no matter, Willy; she was a Blackburn by marriage, if not by blood. Your grandmother walked on the terrace the night before her wicked husband breathed his last. It is always the last dead that gives the warning.'

Mr William, lying back in his arm-chair at ease, expelled his tobacco-smoke in rings, an accomplishment of which he was unreasonably proud, and inquired scornfully: 'Well, what then? Have you seen this young gentleman to-day?' and he pointed to the picture of his cousin Richard that hung above the mantelpiece.

'No, Willy; but I have seen your wife—poor Bess.'

William Blackburn bounded from his chair with a fearful oath.

'Don't swear, Willy—don't swear, for Heaven's sake; you don't know how soon you may be called to answer for such words. What I saw was a warning for one of your race; but who shall say for whom? At first, of course, I only thought of your poor father. He is the likeliest to go, dear soul, and the fittest for it. Ah, if you could but see him lying day and night, night and day, patient and gentle-faced as the stone angel over the church door! I know by his look that he has forgiven me for meddling with his papers, though, indeed, it was very wrong of me to do so; and I do think, if you were to go and see him once again, Willy'——

'Never you mind me and father. You tell me about what you saw, mother; tell me everything.' He had sat down again now, and had hidden his eyes behind his hand, but his features worked beneath it restlessly.

'I knew it would move you, my dear boy—I knew it would touch you; and I hope it will work for good. I know you are not wicked, as some believe, but only a little wild and thoughtless. Yet, O remember, that it is not always the old and ailing that are taken first, but oftentimes the young and strong. Think, if this should be a warning sent to you, my darling—to you, instead of'——

'Will you tell me what you saw?' broke in her son with savage impatience. 'That first, and what you think of it afterwards. What, in the Fiend's name, did you *see*, mother?'

For a moment, the poor lady's speech was choked by sobs. For the first time, perhaps, it was borne home to her that this son of hers had indeed a heart of stone; but he muttered something by way of an apology for his tone and temper: he had been put out, he said, by an infernal business letter that morning. And her hand once more rested on his knee as she resumed her story.

'We were walking—Lucy and I—up the short-cut through Redmoor fir-grove, while the carriage went up the road. I had sent Lucy on before, because I like to go my own pace, and not feel hurried; and presently she had left me far behind, and I was quite alone. It was the very place where fifty years ago, Willy, your father and I met Russell Blackburn's wife for the last time, and the thoughts of old times crowded in upon me, so that I stopped and lingered more than I needed to do, though the way was steep.'

'You had your mind, then, full of the past, and death, and such like?' observed William, with interest.

'No doubt, Willy; and I may have also even thought of Bess herself, as I certainly did of you, dear boy. But if I did, I thought of her less than

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any. Then presently, in the silence of the grove—for you know there was not a breath of wind to-day—I heard steps behind me. I was not surprised, for the path is used by all folks on foot coming from Mosedale to Redcombe, nor in the least degree agitated or alarmed. As the steps grew nearer, I moved to one side of the path, in order to let the person pass me, for whoever it was, she was a faster walker than I.'

'But how did you know it was a woman?'

'Because I heard her dress brush against the trees.'

'She was so close as that, was she?' inquired William hoarsely.

'She was at one time, but not when I looked round. I walked on and on, expecting every instant that she would pass me; but finding that the footsteps ceased, I turned about to see why she had stopped.'

'Well, and what then?'

'Then I saw that it was Bess. It was growing dusk, but I am certain that it was she, and no other. She was a deal older, and more white and wan-looking than when I saw her last; but, as sure as it is my voice you hear, Willy, it was your dead wife.'

'Did you speak to her?' As William put this question, he shot through his fingers an eager glance at his mother's face: it was a careworn and wrinkled one enough, but as honest and open as the smoothest; he need not have been afraid of any concealment there.

'Speak to her? No, indeed, Willy. I was much too skeared. My limbs seemed to give way, and I sank down trembling all of a heap against a tree-trunk. Indeed, for a moment, I shut my eyes for fear, yet not so long that if it had been anything but a ghost, it could never have got out of sight; and yet, when I looked again, Willy, there was nothing there.'

'No; and there never was anything there, mother,' said William, forcing a laugh, 'you may take your oath of that.'

'I tell you, Willy,' answered Mrs Blackburn solemnly, 'I am not more certain that I see you now than that I saw Bess to-day. Moreover, she saw *me*, for which, indeed, without doubt, she had been sent. O Willy, Willy, I cannot keep the terrible thought out of my mind that it was about *you* she came. It seems so strange else that she should have looked so wan and sorrowful about your father. Oh, repent my darling, for we have all something to be sorry for, and be a good lad while you have yet time. I have never troubled you with such talk of late, Willy; I have been afraid of your ill looks and your tempers, but it has been often in my thoughts to speak of such things.—Kiss me, darling, kiss me. Pray to-night. Oh, how I have prayed *for* you, Willy! Pray to be a good man.'

'Yes, yes, all right,' said Mr William, submitting, if with no very good grace, to his mother's impassioned caress. 'I will do all that if you on your part will promise me to hold your tongue about this matter. In my opinion, you have been misled by your feelings; you were tired and full of melancholy thoughts, and your imagination has built up the whole affair. It was a mere delusion.'

Mrs Blackburn shook her head, and smiled sadly.

'Well, that 's my opinion, I repeat,' said William coldly; 'and I think most people will agree with me. On the other hand, you think you have seen a ghost. In either case, I judge the thing had better not be talked about. You never said one word of this to Lucy or Ellen, of course?'

'Not a syllable, Willy; and I never shall. This is a secret between you and me—a secret much too sacred, much too awful, to speak to any ear than that which it may concern. Your father, alas! is deaf to every voice, even though it be one from the tomb; but you, Willy, oh, lay it to heart—lay it to heart! You will not go out to-night, darling, among those rough rude men?'

'No, I will not. I promise you that, mother. Good-night. I will just have another cigar, and then to bed.'

But William Blackburn remained in that room for hours, now sitting by the fading embers with moody brow, now starting up to pace the floor with restless steps. Not till the morning light found its way through the closed shutters did he retire to his own chamber; yet after all this counsel with himself, he could come to no more satisfactory conclusion than to hope that all these pains of thought might be in vain. 'The old woman must have been deceived,' he muttered, as he threw himself on his bed. 'It could never have been Bess herself; she would not have dared to come.'

CHAPTER XXX.—MR WILLIAM ENJOYS SOCIETY.

That heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning, was certainly not written of the vicious. To them the beginning of the day more than any other time brings the reproof of Nature. It is then that she chiefly resents upon the wrong-doer his contravention of her laws, and, until he has commenced his daily round of life, hidden himself from her among his base companions, or forgotten her in strong liquors, her presence is irksome and hateful. It was at breakfast of all meals that Mr William Blackburn appeared to least advantage; and on the morning succeeding his long vigil, he was a piteous sight to behold. Mrs Blackburn regarded him with unfeigned terror, as she thought of that mysterious vision of the previous day, and what it might portend.

'I shall be glad indeed,' said she, seeing him heap this and that upon his plate, until it was like the 'Douglas larder,' and yet scarcely swallow a mouthful, 'when the time is ripe for our going to the cottage, for your sake, Willy, almost as much as for that of your poor father. I am sure you want change of air.'

'I don't know whether I shall go to the cottage at all,' answered her son gruffly; 'and, at all events, I shan't go yet.'

'Not go, Willy?' pleaded she. 'Why, you surely would not stop here alone?—What *can* you have to keep you at Redcombe?'

'Something that women understand nothing about,' growled he—'business.' And with that scanty information she was fain to be content.

It was certainly a business of a light kind, and one that did not keep Mr William within doors. It was his habit to lounge about the grounds, and park, and village all day, the very type of a loafer. But he now confined himself to the grounds only. Instead of his old listless look, his eye seemed ever on the watch, his ear upon the stretch, for some one coming; he would break off suddenly in his speech to listen to sounds that heralded nothing, to stare with eager looks into the distance, where

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nothing shewed itself. He was alert, and yet distraught. Doubtless unwilling, for good reasons, to be from home upon Mr Dean's arrival, which would probably occur at some reasonably early hour, he was awaiting that gentleman's visit; for when the dusk began to thicken, he would set out none knew whither, but for such a distance—and it was observed that his steps always took the direction of Mosedale—as often brought him home long after dinner was finished. On one occasion, being later than ever, his mother ventured to remonstrate with him: 'You should consider, dearest Willy, there are guests in the house, and your poor father is not here to do the honours. I do not like to see Mr Waller sitting opposite to me instead of my boy.'

'Very well, mother,' said he, 'it shall not occur again.'

In spite of herself, Mrs Blackburn could not but feel amazed at her son's ready obedience. His tone, if not tender, which perhaps it could not be, for voices lose their tenderness through long disuse, was not rough, but hollow and nervous. His face was deadly pale, and his brow damp, and his whole appearance shewed that he had been walking far and fast.

'How ill and tired you look, Willy; you overfatigue yourself; and do make haste to change your things, for see, your boots and leggings are quite wet.'

'I came through the furze, and it was heavy with dew,' said he, 'that's all.'

'But how hungry you must be, darling. I will bring my knitting and sit with you while you eat.'

'Yes, do, mother,' said he. It was almost the first time he had expressed a desire for her company, and the poor lady was in raptures. At the same time, this change in his behaviour, which had during the last few days been even unusually brusque and surly, really alarmed her. It struck her that he must surely be ill. The apprehension of the warning vision having had reference to him, recurred to her with redoubled vehemence, for, curiously enough, it had never even entered into her mind that it might be Ellen's life that was imperilled. She had had his favourite viands kept in readiness for him, but he ate scarcely anything, though he drank freely; and this did not tend to make her less anxious. Yet she did not dare to recur directly to that subject, for which he had shewn a particular distaste.

'Mr Allcase called while you were away, Willy, and he thinks the weather is now quite mild enough for us to leave home; and Mr Waller tells me that the Fishery is looking so bright and comfortable, with everything ready for our reception.

William laid down his knife and fork. 'Has Mr Waller been over yonder to-day?' asked he earnestly.

'Yes, darling; he had business in Mosedale this afternoon, and so very kindly he rode over to see how things were looking at the cottage.'

'When did he go? When did he come back? I mean at what hour?'

'He started after luncheon, and he was home again by six at latest, my dear. I wonder you saw nothing of him upon the moor.'

'I did not go to the moor to-day: I walked in the opposite direction.—How is father?'

'Well, no worse, at all events. Mr Allcase says he can quite bear the journey, and oh, dear Willy, I do so hope you'll go with us. There will be the fishing, you know; and though there is no billiard-room, Mosedale is quite close; and Lucy and Mr Waller will be almost as much with us there as they are now, although we have no sleeping-room for them in the cottage. Mr Stanhope, too, has kindly promised to stay on with us. I don't think you need be very dull there. Come, dear, it is not often that I ask a favour of you, but for *my* sake, if not for your own—and I am sure you need the change—do promise me to go with us to the Fishery.'

'Very well, mother; I will go with you, since you make such a point of it.'

'You good, dear boy, you have no idea how happy you make me!' murmured Mrs Blackburn, with dim eyes. 'And now I will leave you to have your cigar in peace upon the terrace.'

'No; I shall not go out again to-night; I have been out enough.—Where are Waller and Stanhope?'

'They are not in the smoking-room, so that you can have it all to yourself, dear. They are playing a game at billiards.'

These two gentlemen were wont to have their cigars together in the Squire's sanctum, unhonoured by Mr William's presence, who found companions more suited to his nature in the saddle-room, or at the public-house. But on this occasion, notwithstanding that he might have had the little room all to himself, he joined their company, and even volunteered to keep their score for them; this he did as usual, with the rest; and the way in which that instrument rapped against the marking-board, through the trembling of his hands, made the two players look at one another significantly: the one remarked in a whisper 'that their friend was like the Cock Lane ghost;' and the other, under cover of a canon, expressed his belief that they were going to have D. T. in the house again before very long. When invited to play himself, Mr William protested he was much too tired; and yet, when the others were about to put away their cues, he persuaded them to have one more game, and still another, until Stanhope declined point-blank. Never had the young Squire shewn himself so docile to his mother, so affable to his guests, as upon that night, nor, it may be added, so disinclined for his own unimproving society. Was it possible that Mr William Blackburn had taken his mother's words to heart at last, and was about to turn over a new leaf?

THE NATIONAL GALLERY.

Loud roared the tide of life, rapid and vast,
That eddies ceaseless through Trafalgar Square,
As o'er the threshold, up the accustomed stair,
I entered the hushed chambers where the Past
Lingers, its transience caught, its forms made fast,
Its thoughts eternised by the cunning care
And wonderful fine skill beyond compare
Of Art's great masters. And as there I cast
Long loving looks upon each well-known face
Of monarch, sage, poet, and priest, and saint,
And sought with busy critic brain to trace
The secrets lurking in that world of paint—
The Past in all its grandeur filled the place;
The tumult of to-day seemed far and faint.

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HOSPITAL-VISITING.

NOT long ago, finding time to spare, I agreed to assist a friend in visiting a London hospital, at least once in the week. This seemed a small affair. I mean to shew what it came to, rather in the hope of inducing others to help, where much help is needed—help of so many kinds almost all within the reach and the power of *some* one. The chief contributions required are these—time, money, old clothes, tea and sugar in very small quantities, oranges, old toys, old newspapers and books. These are not always in the power of individuals to give; but out of many, each one might give a part, however small—an ounce of tea one day, an old shawl or worn linen garment another, a few oranges. I need not go through the list. How many could at least give the *time* that often hangs heavy upon hand and heart—that could be well spent, a single hour of it, once or twice a week; not in preaching or praying with the sick—that is not always needed or desired—but in simply sitting by the bed of some poor hospital patient, who has no friend in London to come and see him on the visiting-days, and who looks wistfully at the more fortunate ones whose families and friends come to them regularly enough on the days and at the hours allowed.

It was on a visiting-day, a Wednesday, that I paid my first visit to the hospital of this district. I knew nothing of the rules and regulations, and passed in with the patients' friends unnoticed. The great entrance and hall marked the centre of the building, crossed at right angles by a wide and long stone corridor, with a stair at each end—the women's wards to the right, the men's to the left: the four stories exactly alike. A pleasant-looking woman, evidently nurse or matron, was knitting at a door, over which the names of three wards, to which it led, were painted in large letters.

My only shyness was the lack of a direct reason or excuse for speaking to any *one* patient in particular; but I thought there might be a child somewhere, and I had oranges in my bag, and went on. There *was* a child in the first ward I entered—a white, thin, wizened creature, close to the door. There were about a dozen beds, almost all filled. A long, lofty room, well ventilated; almost too well, I have often thought since, when sitting in a thorough draught between that wide open door and the high north window open at the top.

Most of the patients had visitors—the child had none. I sat down on an empty bed next her, and asked her how long she had been there. Three weeks, she thought—it was a long time. She had disease of the hip-joint. Did it hurt her? 'Yes, when she moved, dreadful; and they moved her so many times.' Had she had any one to come and see her? Yes, her little brother had been. Mother couldn't, not to-day; she had hurt her arm, and it was very bad, and Johnny had come to tell her. She was eight years old, and Johnny was seven. Yes, father was at work in the country, and mother did charing and washing; and she had three more brothers and a sister. I peeled an orange and gave it to her to eat, while I took a survey of the other patients. A quiet, sad-faced girl, with a bandage over her eyes, sat knitting slowly near the fire; the ball of worsted rolled off her lap close to my feet. I picked it up, and went across to her. It was as good as an introduction; we were friends directly. She was nearly blind from small-pox, and neglect and cold afterwards; the eyes were constantly under treatment, and covered entirely from the light. Nobody had been to see her that week. 'Father was terribly *down*,' she said; he had been out of work for two months. He did odd jobs: watching empty houses, &c. for the builders—only stray work now and then; and he was bad with rheumatism, and terribly low. Her sister told her he would sit for hours staring right at the wall—she thought he fretted for work; and they had no other way of living, now she was in hospital. Her sister was married, and her man had work, and she was very good to father. 'But it frets me sadly, ma'am,' she said with quivering lips, 'thinking of father by himself, and so low as he is—it does fret me, indeed. He hasn't the heart to come here, ma'am, unless he'd got something to bring me; and if he does bring me a little tea or sugar, I feel

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he's given away all he's got;' and the tears rolled down from the poor hidden eyes.

We talked of hope of work, of hope of cure for herself, or chances of better days for the poor father. I could have staid longer talking to the gentle little soul, who spoke so quietly of her troubled life and home, with an accent and manner far above her class; but I had more to see even that first day. The other beds seemed to have plenty of visitors, and I went into the next ward. Finding one excuse or another, I got into conversation with several patients; one, a bright-looking woman, recovering from rheumatic fever, whose husband and children arrived while I was talking. She told me she did washing and charing—the old story—and the husband was out of work these two months, and was losing heart. His face said that much as he came up and sat down at the bed foot with a weary sigh. 'Have ye heard nothing?' she said anxiously. 'Nothing at all,' he said; and his head drooped. Such a worn, anxious, weary face. The children were clean and cared for. 'There's only him to do it, you see, ma'am, and he's that careful of them; and they go regular to the school. I'll be glad to get home, God knows; but he can't get work, and it's telling on him, ma'am, that it is—he seems to lose hope, he do.'

A little more talk, and a shilling and a little tea and sugar to the poor mother; and I went slowly down the ward, and stopping near the door, two very wistful eyes, and a very thin haggard young face stopped me. 'Have you no visitors to-day?' I said as a beginning. 'No, ma'am; I've no friends in London at all.' She was nineteen, she said. Her husband was at sea; her baby was with a poor neighbour; 'and they don't feed him, nor care for him, and they haven't brought him to-day;' and she broke into sobs, and hid her face upon the bed. 'He won't live, I know; and they don't allow me to have him here except on visiting-days, and to-day they haven't brought him.' Poor little woman; I thought, even hospital rules might have been stretched to allow her to keep her own baby. But so it was; and she was crying her anxious heart out when I went away.

I spoke to many more that day—cases more or less sad, more or less poor, and friendless: many of them of hopeless illness; and some that would be turned out in a week or so, scarcely better, to return to their poor homes, to miss the warmth, and the nourishment, and the care which for a few weeks had made sickness less hard—some to go out into the pitiless streets, homeless. 'I'm to go out Tuesday, ma'am,' said one poor woman upstairs; 'that's one week more.' 'And where do you go?' I asked, for she did not speak complainingly. 'God knows, ma'am.'

There were plenty more like her. 'Where should I find you?' I said to one to whom I had promised a petticoat. She was to leave next day, and I was not able to return to the hospital for a day or two more. 'Where would a note or parcel find you?' She grew crimson. 'Well, ma'am, it's the truth, I've nowhere to go, and I don't know in the world where I'll go first. There was a poor woman I lodged with once; but she's gone away, and I haven't anywhere to go. Maybe I'll get a night's lodging near where I was before. Ye see, ma'am, it would be nothing at all if I was well, but I'm not fit to work these three weeks yet.' Fit to work! Ah! my fine ladies, if you could have seen her—you who lie in bed for a cold, and silence the house and darken the room if you have a headache. This poor soul, racked with cough, aching in every limb, both lungs diseased, worn to a skeleton, thinly and barely clad, going out with scarce a complaint into the cold streets—homeless, friendless, without food, and without fire in those cold March nights! Strange and sad enough it is to know how many scores of these poor creatures exist, somehow and somewhere in London, seemingly belonging to no one—without relations, or home, or ties of any sort or kind.

The women and girls who sell oranges and apples on the street are generally of this class—mostly Irish, they have not a link in this wide London world.

I do not need to speak of half the patients in the hospital wards with whom and with whose histories I became somewhat acquainted that first day—but I will mention one more; a plain, fair, intelligent-looking woman sent the nurse to me, and asked if I would speak to her. 'You see, ma'am,' she said, 'I thought you might pass me and not speak, and I haven't had a soul to speak to but the patients since I came; and it does feel so lonely seeing the other folks with their friends about them, and not one have I to come near me.' After this single speech, I could get little out of her. She seemed to draw back and regret having spoken. I was going away, and asked her if she would care to have a newspaper. Yes, she would; she liked to see about the theatres. 'I used to belong to the profession,' she said, half shyly, as if expecting I should be surprised. Seeing I evinced only interest, and not a pious horror, she went on to say she had been a dancer, and then taken different parts, chiefly comic, and done pretty well till she married a surgeon; 'but he was a gentleman, worse luck,' she said, with a considerable Irish accent; 'and his father was a gentleman, and a member of parliament; and a terrible life I had with him.' He had lived upon her for a time, till her health failed, and then went off one day with all the money she had—about ten pounds—returned and sold the furniture, and left her with a few shillings and her clothes. She believed he was in Canada; but he had been away two years, and she did not know that he would ever come back—'and if he did, if I ever saw the face of him'—— And she broke down. 'Was he not kind to you?' I asked, more for something to say. 'If he did return, would it be any good?'

'No, ma'am,' she said sadly—'little good. I know that. I believe I'm best off without him; but I did love the very shoe-strings of him. And if he was to kill me—well'——

It was the old story—the old sad story, that has been and shall be acted out while men wrong and women forgive—injury, neglect, cruelty, absence, desertion; but his place was kept. Poor woman! I was thinking all this, when a slim girl came up and took the teapot from the shelf above the bed.

'Double allowance to-night, Mrs Dean,' she said with a smile. 'Mother's left me some tea.—We always put our tea together, ma'am; it goes further so,' she explained. 'And we that's better, and can go about, we wait on them that's abed, you see.'

'She's been very kind, that girl has,' said Mrs Dean. 'I shall miss her. She's going to be sent

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to the convalescent home to-morrow. I wish I was going too.'

I thought this might be managed, and said so; and asked further what her plans were when she went out.

Plans—she had none. If she were only well enough, she could get work at the theatres, where she was known; but to shew herself in such clothes as she had left would only injure her cause, she said. She must go respectably dressed, or they would not give her employment. She was to go out in a week or so. She had not a change of linen, or anything but the poor clothes she had come in, such as they were. 'And, O ma'am, it 's degradation to be so dirty. Think of it—not a change these two weeks; and I can't even stay in bed and get them washed for want of money—and I lived like a lady once,' she said, and burst out crying. 'Oh,' she said bitterly, 'and me crying for the clean clothes I can't have, and never a tear for the grief that 's killing me. Ah, well.'

Visions of a 'bag' for the hospital flitted across my brain, collected from every friend and acquaintance I could muster; old clothes or new linen, and cotton under-garments and night-dresses for these poor creatures, even if only for use during their stay here. The vision flits there still, for though I have supplied a few such things, I am as yet no further on with the 'bag' which I hope still to realise. But of this by-and-by.

I returned to the hospital, or rather to my share of it—for I have nothing to do with the *men's* wards, and only some of the women's—the following Friday. I felt quite at home this time. Looking into the first ward, I saw the poor blind girl lying half across her bed sobbing violently. No one seemed to notice her; but at that moment a kindly looking person went past me quickly, and took the poor girl in her arms. 'I know, my poor child, I know,' I heard her say; and I left them together, and told the nurse I would look in on my way back. My little lame girl was lying patiently behind the door, her face brightening with the hope of a picture-book I had promised to bring next time. She gave awe-struck looks at the sobbing girl and the pleasant-looking lady, who, I afterwards heard, was a district visitor, and knew the blind girl before.

'She 's cried like that all day,' the child said in a whisper, 'ever since they told her.'

'What did they tell her?'

'They came and told her her father was dead, and wasn't coming to see her any more.'

'Yes, ma'am,' said the nurse, coming up and stroking the child's hair: 'that 's not the worst of it;' and as I went out with her, she said: 'They should never have told the poor thing—there was no need. He hanged himself, ma'am, only last night. Hanged himself, O my God! for want of a day's work! A day of hard toil, hardly paid, would have saved his poor life; or rather, please God, his reason, for that must have gone first.'

I said so to the poor daughter, later, sitting by her on the bed, trying to bring her to my own feeling, that he was past responsibility for his own death; and that so she might think of him as at rest—no more need for work, no more waiting for what never came, no more hopeless seeking. The married sister came presently, crying and shaking, and I feared the effect of it all upon the poor girl's eyes and nerves; but when I saw her next day, she was quiet and calm, and not crying. The poor soon face their sorrows, and cease to bewail them aloud. In their own poor homes and busy toilsome lives, they have little *time* to grieve—well for them, perhaps, in some ways. But it is hard to be sorrowful and cold—sorrowful and hungry—not with the mere good appetite which disappears with anxiety and grief, but with the gnawing of exhaustion and long fasting; to weep and work—weeping over wash-tubs and wet floors, and on their knees, and scrubbing with sore and bitter hearts—what must it be?

I had found a little work for the mother of a consumptive child in another ward, and the news was received joyfully. I met the poor broken-down husband of the woman I saw last week coming down-stairs with his little girls, clean, decent, and orderly, but with another week's hunger and hopeless failure of work written on his sad white face. Since then, I have been to several builders, and decorators, and house-agents, begging for work for this man. The answer is always the same: 'We have dozens of our own hands unemployed, and if work came, we must give them the preference.'

I have quoted a few cases, and given but a faint and imperfect sketch of one kind of help that is greatly needed amongst the poor. In visiting hospitals, there is not only comfort and kindness to many sick and friendless people—men, women, and children—the kindly word, and the listening to the talk of their illness; their troubles, their difficulties; their future plans, and hopes, and fears; the giving of newspapers and books; of any old toys or picture-books to the children; of tea and sugar, or snuff, to the old people; a few pence for their washing—all of which costs but little, and contributes greatly to their consolation. Besides this, there is the religious reading, talking, or teaching, if there be inclination or need; and then comes what, as I said at first, widens the work—the inquiry into their home circumstances and troubles: the brothers in trouble, in jail, in scrapes, in service; sisters in sad straits, sickness, want, sorrow, degradation; mothers and fathers out of work, or past work; children in bad health, untaught, or wanting schooling.

So much might be done, if *many* would do a *little*. Ah, if only a hundred people would give *a shilling each*, I could send poor Mrs Dean to a convalescent home, where she could rest and get strength, and get her decent clothes to wear, when she applies for work at the theatre. It would not take a hundred shillings to do this; and the rest would take poor Green down to the country, where he could get work; and the change of air would give him fresh strength and hope. A few more shillings would give some wine and good food to a consumptive girl of fourteen, just turned out, but, alas, no better. A few more would pay for a decent lodging for a poor girl of twenty, whose soldier-husband is in Canada, and who broke her leg in two places falling down some steps. She will be turned out in a week, cured, which means that the bones are mended—too lame to walk alone, too weak to work, and penniless—no house and no friends in London—Irish again.

And then my vision of a bag, such a bag as is well known to district charities and mothers' meetings—under-linen of all kinds, old and worn or new, coarse or fine. If only each family would

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give *one* garment, the bag would soon be filled. They should be marked 'Hospital,' and be claimed by the nurses when the patients leave the ward. Let them at least be clean and fresh while they are *there*—while they are ill and weak. It might give some of them (who can afford it) a taste for cleanliness when they go home.

In a few weeks, as one of three or four regular visitors at one hospital—amongst the women alone—I find my hands full. I cannot quite lose sight of the patients who leave, and new ones come in daily: this must go on increasing. My companions are of course in the same position. As I said before, we want help; and many could help us. The requisite items are money, time, tea and sugar, newspapers, books, toys, and old clothes. Those who can give nothing else can give their *time;* and almost everybody has old clothes to give away some time or other. Let them remember the bag. And, besides the bag, the patients are often in the direst need of clothing to take away. They have perhaps been ill for weeks before entering the hospital, and pawned all their available clothes for food, lodging, and medicine.

There are many charitably inclined, who, willing to give, do not know *where* to give. If they are in doubt, let them take to visiting a hospital, or give help to those who do. I would have such places visited, not because it is *hospital-visiting*, but because it is a means of discovering the wants of many poor.

Perhaps the greatest want as a charity now in London is a free convalescent and incurable hospital. No such hospital can be really useful and available that entails *waiting for votes:* to be serviceable it must be free. There are such places already, and most useful and excellent they are; but they are few and small, and totally inadequate to the need. Would that Mr Peabody would dedicate his next gift to this purpose. For want of such a refuge, I have searched London and the 'charities of London' in vain for a shelter for Mrs Dean, the poor actress, and several others this very week. Of some of these charities I may have occasion to write again. If any reader of this paper should feel disposed to assist in contributing in any way, however small, to the relief of these poor people, they may hear all particulars by writing to the initials 'S. D. H.,' care of Mr Hayes, bookseller, Lyall Place, Eaton Square. *Any* help will be most acceptable. *Pence*, old clothes, a single garment, a pair of old boots—anything that can be spared, will be most thankfully acknowledged.

NODDY'S SITUATION.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.

Six weeks had come and gone at Braithfield Villa. The advertisement had been inserted five times—but still no answer. A situation as governess is not the easiest thing to obtain. It is something like that of prime-minister—there are always plenty of candidates for the office, and most of the candidates (poor things) are about as well fitted for it.

Mr Frank had more than fulfilled Mrs Muciller's most sanguine anticipations. He had proved a most attentive cavalier to Julia. He paid respectful deference to her piano performances and to her singing; indeed, he seemed particularly impressed with her rendering of *Twilight Twitterings—a Reverie*, by some noodle or other, that sounded very like fairies hammering in tin tacks. As for music! I am only surprised at Mr Frank's taste; but I suppose it came new to him on his return from India. He would lounge about, smoking, whilst Julia painted flowers or embroidered him a smoking-cap. He accompanied her in walks and rambles; he was her attendant at croquet parties, and picnics, and morning calls. Julia received these courtesies with artful unaffectedness, and her mother remarked them with inward satisfaction. Nothing afforded Mrs Muciller more sincere delight than when people began to couple Julia's name with Mr Geogagan's. They were not actually engaged, however; indeed, beyond the courtesies referred to, Mr Frank had made not the slightest attempt at anything more decisive. But still, people will talk, and Mrs Muciller liked to hear them. People began vaguely to suppose that Julia had made a fortunate hit, and that it was in all probability an accomplished fact; but they hesitated to do more than hint their belief, without something like foundation. Mrs Muciller, fully aware of the important part gossip plays in the history of daily life, determined to turn it to account. She reasoned thus: Mr Geogagan is evidently impressed with Julia, but he is a little shy, or dilatory, in coming to the point. In either case, a favourable rumour may do much in bringing about a desirable result. It may encourage him: it *must* stimulate him.

With this idea, in the course of her next private conversation with Mrs Sharing, when that lady inquired, with certain friendly nods and elevations of the eyebrows, if she might venture to offer congratulations on a certain fortunate event, Mrs Muciller gave her unmistakably to understand that she might, although perhaps expressed in that coy language of partial reserve with which women like to enhance the value of private communications.

Now, thought Mrs Muciller, I know Mrs Sharing to be the greatest gossip in the neighbourhood. She will be certain to spread the news of Julia's rumoured engagement far and wide. It will undoubtedly get round to Frank Geogagan, and will lead him at once to make that proposal for which he seems so ready. So the rumour shall make the fact, and the fact keep the rumour in countenance.

Meantime, the subject of Mrs Muciller's design appeared to be in most genial ignorance. He continued to pay the same respectful attentions to his charming cousin Julia. He took little notice of Noddy, as a consideration for the lady of the house indeed dictated, for he had more than once observed that any slight attention to Miss Cray was visited on *her* with a glance of disfavour from Mrs Muciller when she thought he was not looking. But Frank Geogagan had very quick restless eyes that could see round a corner.

As for Noddy, if she owned to herself one feeling at all about the matter, it was just one of sadness that a school-girl should render a *man* so artificial and constrained, and unlike his real self, as she

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thought Mr Geogagan was becoming. But there was another feeling at the bottom of her heart, that Noddy would not own to herself. The wind bloweth where it listeth: you cannot tell whence it comes or how. There were Phæacian ships with sails ever set that carried their owners without oar or effort whithersoever they listed. And in these six weeks Noddy had come to love Mr Frank. She would not have confessed it to herself: she would have despised herself had she believed it. How was it? Dear soul! Is there any better reason to be given for loving anybody than the child's reason—Because I do? Must we not all come back to that? Noddy had seen few people; few people had ever taken notice of her, or seemed to think of her as worth talking to or caring about. Mr Frank always had a word of some sort for her. Many a morning he would chat pleasantly to her as she dusted the room; many a time he would refrain from speaking to her, or of her, before Mrs Muciller, for her sake. Well, you may say this, or you may put it how you will, but you will have to come back to the little child's reason at last, for all the wiser people in the world who have tried to give any better explanation have talked nonsense, and, what is more, owned it.

Frank Geogagan had made many friends in the neighbourhood, and it was not long before one of them congratulated him on his engagement to Julia Muciller. It staggered him at the first; but, bless you! Mr Frank had his eyes about him. He took it as coolly as possible; never said a word to contradict it. He saw it would not do, as this would be a palpable reflection on Mrs Muciller, by whose tacit endorsement at least he ascertained such a report had obtained currency at all. He just smiled, and thanked his friends, and so gave renewed credence to the report, which now had received the final stamp of veracity. Mind, I do not defend Mr Frank's conduct; I only state what he did: and now I am going to tell you what came of it.

Dear reader—you who have followed me thus far—do you think I am telling you fiction? If so, I ought not to make Frank Geogagan a party after the fact to a deceit. There was once an audience that thought the squeak of Archippus more life-like than that of the real pig. Remember this.

The latter end of August, a picnic had been arranged to Cherleigh Lake—a most delightful jaunt, and Mrs Muciller, Julia, and her Indian lover were to go, of course. It so happened, however, at the very last minute, that important business required Mr Geogagan's attention in London. I need not further relate the nature of the business than to say it was understood to be something in connection with the Indian Reclamation of Land Company, and that it was urgent. It was not a letter that summoned Mr Geogagan, but a printed notice, stating that, in consequence of the sudden depreciation of shares (which had previously gone up many hundred per cent. above their paid-up value), a heavy call was to be made on the shareholders.

Mind—once more. It is not for me to defend Mr Geogagan. I take the facts as they come. I cannot apologise for facts, and won't. It was settled that Mrs Muciller and her daughter were to go to the picnic, while Mr Geogagan went to London to transact his business. Mr Frank never went near the metropolis at all; he just marched over to Mr Sharing's to smoke a cigar. And when the house was clear, Noddy sat down at her books to study teaching.

It has been said Mrs Muciller knew Mrs Sharing for a gossip. Mr Frank also knew Mr Sharing for one. With this knowledge, how it was he went and confided to such a man the state of his affairs, I must leave you to guess.

Over their cigars he stated something like this to Mr Sharing: 'The fact is this. Every penny I could get together I put into this Indian Land Reclamation scheme. The shares went up fabulously, till a hundred pounds became worth thousands. The scheme was feasible, and likely to succeed and to pay at any premium the shares could go to, it was so good. I had every confidence in it. Suddenly, a panic comes, the shares drop nearly to par before we in England can get the intelligence, and we are called on to pay up our amounts. Now, I know you are accustomed to advance money on security—will you lend me three thousand pounds on a deposit of shares to twice the amount?'

'Ah, my young friend,' said Mr Sharing, 'you see that's your way and the way of yours, always. Here you go and mix yourself up in the rashest of speculations without a chance of success—as independent as you can be, all the time—you're all alike. Then you get into a hole, as we say—and you come to me to help you out. Look you; your shares are not worth that'—and he snapped his fingers—'not worth the paper they are printed on. Three thousand pounds? Three thousand fiddles, sir.'

'But,' said Mr Frank, 'it is only a temporary depression, owing to a panic: the scheme is a good one—the shares will go up again.'

'Yes, like a gunpowder mill! The whole affair will explode—that will be the next rise, and the only one. I'm sorry for you—sorry for you, sir:' Mr Sharing gently emphasised his sorrow by tapping it out with his finger-points on the table—'thought you had better judgment. You are just like a moth. You have been dazzled with a glittering prospect, and rushed straight into the flame. Now you complain that your wings are singed.'

'Pardon—I have not complained. I do not believe my case so bad as you represent, and I do not yet despair of making you see it in a different light. Rumour may have informed you that I have been so fortunate as to secure the affections of Miss Muciller. I have not made minute inquiries as to the amount of that young lady's fortune, not wishing to appear mercenary, but I have every reason to suppose, from the style in which her mother and herself are living, and from the fact of her being an only daughter, that she will receive a handsome portion on her marriage. If you take this into consideration, you may be disposed to look upon my security as at least sufficient to cover the loan I seek.'

Mr Sharing was silent for a minute. 'That is how the wind blows, is it!' he thought. 'So you fancied you had got hold of a fortune, my fine fellow; and Mrs Muciller, on her part, was of very much the same opinion respecting you. Why, the girl won't have a penny! As if the style in which a woman lives, who has a daughter to marry, could be the least criterion of her means! *You* know very little of the world, Mr Frank.' But he remarked aloud: 'I have certainly heard of your

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happiness in that respect, but you will bear in mind you are not yet married to Miss Muciller. There 's many a slip, you know. And in addition to this, I have every reason to believe that whatever may be the extent of Miss Muciller's fortune, it would be placed beyond her husband's control.'—'That 's about the neatest way I can put it without injuring the young lady,' he thought. 'For that matter, her fortune is beyond *any*body's control!' And he smiled and tapped the table again.

'Well, sir?' said Mr Frank.

'Well, sir?'

'Then am I to understand that you refuse to entertain the question?'

'Entirely. I don't discount possibilities, but only extreme probabilities. It is not in my line.'

'I need not remind you, at anyrate, that the subject of our conversation is private,' said Mr Frank.

'And confidential. Certainly.—May I offer you another cigar?—No?—Well, if you must be going, *good*-morning, sir.'

'Private and confidential—stuff and nonsense!' Mr Sharing observed to himself, as soon as he was alone. 'That is all very fine, young gentleman—but it is right Mrs Muciller should get just a hint that her great catch is a very little fish, that had better be thrown into the river again. I will tell Mrs Sharing, and trust her to make use of the information.'

Mr Frank went back to Braithfield, and found Noddy sitting in the window, trying hard to perfect herself in the mysteries of the accordance of French *participes passés*. She was huddled up with her book in her lap, her elbows on her knees, and her head in her hands.

'Noddy!'

'What, not gone to London? Have you missed the train, Mr Geogagan?'

'No—neither: I was not going. Put on your bonnet, and come out for a walk.'

She hesitated.

'Come, put away your books. The walk will do you good, and Julia will not be jealous.'

Still she hesitated: she thought of Mrs Muciller.

'Come, Noddy; I am in difficulty and some trouble, and I think you can help me. So, put away those books.'

Noddy hesitated no longer. In two minutes, she was ready, and came down with a calm, wise expression on her little face, ready to help.

They set out, and walked for nearly half an hour without a word. Noddy remembered she was wanted for help or advice of some kind, and so was quiet, waiting to hear. Through pleasant cornfields, glistening like seas of restless gold, while the warm summer breath passed over the ripe ears, and bowed them in long fleeting waves, whereon the cloud-shadows floated—wide, swelling waves that calmly rolled the sunshine along to cool reedy music, as the breeze played on the heavy grain—and burning poppies were upheaved or borne under by the chasing waves. By hedges, bright with summer flowers, and cool with ferns and creeping green. Along paths patterned over with the moving shadows of oak, and elm, and willow.

'Noddy, what would you say if I told you I was ruined?'

'I should say I didn't believe you.'

'All the property I have in India is in the "Anglo-Waddy Company" for the reclamation of land from the sea. I doubt if I shall ever see a sixpence of it again. Mr Sharing told me to-day the share certificates are not worth the paper they are printed on.'

'Well,' said Noddy, 'I thought you said you were ruined. Is that all?'

'All?' he returned, rather sharply. 'Is it not enough to be ruined? Not a sixpence of it, not a penny-piece, shall I see again!'

'Oh,' Noddy said, half talking to herself, 'is that ruin? It seems to me a man is never ruined while he has life, and health, and strength, and cheerful courage.'

'It is easy to talk. You never had any money to lose.'

'No; not much. But I have a little property for all that.'

'Indeed. And, pray, how much?'

'Thirty pounds in the savings-bank, which my father left me.'

Mr Frank laughed, despite his own trouble.

'Dear me! I didn't know you were an heiress before. How you would grieve to lose your money!'

'I should be sorry.'

'Then you can't find fault with me for being the same at losing so many thousands.'

'The amount makes no difference. My thirty pounds is my all, and I should be just as sorry to lose it as you are at losing your all. But though I 'm only a woman, I shouldn't say I was ruined—that is absurd.'

'You are a Job's comforter, at all events.'

'There are very few comforters *like* Job's, in these days,' said Noddy—'very few persons who would sit down in silent sympathy, the deepest of all sympathies, for three days and three nights with a friend.'

'So you look upon me as a friend?'

'Yes,' said Noddy, blushing a little, but displeased with herself for doing so, on account of an avowal so innocent.

'And can you give me any better advice than Job's friends?'

'Perhaps not.'

'Tell me what you think I ought to do.'

'Do?' said Noddy quickly. 'Go and work. It 's a brave thing, work is. You will forget all about being ruined, and only remember you are a *man*, doing a man's work. I don't know what I should do without work myself; it is the most soothing and refreshing comfort I know, even to me, and it must be better to a man. But your case is nothing like Job's. If it had been only his money Job had lost, his friends would just have staid at home, and sent messengers offering to help him to work, and Job is just the sort of man who would have been content to take it.'

'Noddy, I really believe you 're right.'

'I 'm sure I am. Haven't you seen me sweep?'

'Yes,' laughed Mr Frank; 'but that is hardly in my way—digging would come more natural than that.'

'Then dig. But there 's plenty of work for earnest workers with brains without digging. I don't pretend to tell you the exact direction in which it lies, because that is out of my province; but I am sure you will find it, if you are in earnest.'

'I will,' said Mr Frank, and he was quiet again for a little.

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And Noddy was quiet too. She had something on her mind she wished to say, but hardly liked to mention it. However, she began: 'If you mean what you say, you will not remain much longer here.'

'I shall not remain much longer here,' he echoed abstractedly.

'You will begin at once to strike out a new path, as a brave man should; and you will walk as straight, and feel as proud as a man ought who feels he is neither ruined nor disgraced when he has only lost his money.'

'Gently, Noddy. People don't like to see much of this sort of thing in any but the rich.'

'Then people are wrong, and must be shewn so. But what I want to say is this: If you have lost all your money, you may have expenses to meet, and one thing and another that may harass you, and prevent your beginning clear.'

Mr Frank nodded. 'Quite so,' he said, and shook his head gravely.

'Well, would you mind—that is, if I lent you twenty pounds of my property, would you be certain sure to pay it back to me again somewhere? I can't spare more very well, as I want ten pounds of it to get myself ready for the situation I am looking for. But I thought it might come in handy.'

'Just so,' said Mr Frank, and shook his head again gravely: 'there's no doubt about it.'

'You see, I should not have proposed it, but I should charge you interest, and that would do away with all obligation.'

'Entirely,' Mr Frank coincided: 'that would be a regular commercial transaction. And the interest would be?'

'Three per cent.—the same as the bank gives.'

'And you would require my note of hand for the amount?'

'No,' said Noddy, laughing at the idea as absurd; 'I can trust you for that.'

'What! for nearly all your property?'

'Yes; because it would not ruin *me* if I lost it.'

'Well, I will take your money, Noddy—it will be very acceptable—and I won't cheat you.'

'No,' Noddy said; 'I hope you won't, for I look upon it as safe as the bank.'

Mr Frank laughed.

So it was settled that Noddy should draw her money from the bank on the following day.

'You are a good little friend, Noddy,' Mr Frank said, as they walked home.

'No,' Noddy said; 'I hope I should have done as much for any one.'

Noddy meant to tell the truth. Maybe she 'hoped' she would; but I am not at all certain she would. However, she had never before felt so rich as at the prospect of helping Mr Frank. Her twenty pounds seemed to her quite a large property, and she almost jumped to the conclusion that it would go a good way towards making a prosperous man of Mr Geogagan again.

Mrs Muciller and Julia returned from the picnic party rather bored. It was 'awfully slow,' Julia decided; and 'so many stuck-up girls that it was quite horrid.'

Mr Geogagan spent the evening listening to Julia's music with as much apparent appreciation and interest as though he had not been unsuccessful in his attempt to raise the loan he wished from Mr Sharing.

CHAPTER IV.

One day passed—two days—three days, with little worthy of remark. Then Mrs Muciller, becoming impatient at receiving no replies to the advertisement respecting Norah Cray, made a call on Mrs Sharing to consult her about some immediate steps for getting Noddy out. At the close of her visit, Mrs Sharing imparted the bit of news she had been burning to tell, but yet treasured up for her last communication—namely, that on the most reliable authority, her Indian nephew was not worth a dozen rupees; and that he had actually attempted to raise a loan on his prospects of marriage with Miss Muciller.

'Quite absurd, you know,' said Mrs Sharing; 'but it just shews what he is worth.'

'But I know he has money,' Mrs Muciller protested indignantly. 'I'm certain of it. That Reclamation Company is a wonderfully good thing, and I know his money is in that. I have made every inquiry.'

'Exactly. But that is the very reason. The Anglo-Waddy Company has gone to entire ruin. My husband says the shares are not worth sixpence.'

This was a great blow for Mrs Muciller, especially remembering that she had only herself to blame for promulgating the report of Julia's engagement to this adventurer. The one little bit of comfort she had remaining was, that Mr Geogagan had been as much deceived in thinking Julia had expectations as she had been with him. But that did not mend the matter, which presented itself to her mind in the light of a most atrocious take in, and she said so.

'Well, but,' said Mrs Sharing, 'the company was prospering when he left India, and there is no reason to suppose he has been guilty of intentional deception.'

'What has that to do with it? How does that make any reparation for the injury it has caused to my daughter's prospects? Everybody knows of the engagement, and people will talk. Oh, how they will talk! It is abominable! It will be most prejudicial to Julia to break it off now; but it must be done at any cost. And a most fortunate escape it will be.'

Mrs Muciller returned to tea at Braithfield Villa, outwardly calm and cool, but, as may be imagined, in not the most placid serenity of mind. She made not the slightest alteration in her behaviour to Mr Geogagan, who appeared in very fair spirits, and entirely unsuspicious of the coming storm.

Mrs Muciller was a woman of quick action; a course once resolved on with her was put into execution immediately. When tea was finished, she blandly requested Noddy and Julia to leave the room. Her manner of doing this was so marked, that had Mr Frank not been deeply interested in a book he was reading on the sofa, he might have had his suspicions aroused.

When they were alone, Mrs Muciller commenced: 'Mr Geogagan, will you do me the favour to pay attention to a few words I have to say?'

'I am all attention,' said Mr Frank, dropping his book, and drawing himself comfortably on to the sofa-cushion.

'When you invited yourself as my guest, I had

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not the slightest idea that you would place me in a false position.'

'Nor I,' said Mr Frank resignedly, his hands languidly crossed, with the air of a martyr.

'I had no idea that you would avail yourself of my hospitality to betray the confidence naturally reposed in a visitor.'

Mrs Muciller paused, expecting an answer; but Mr Frank was silent.

'Or,' she continued, 'I should not have extended towards you that hospitality. You will excuse my being plain, but it is my duty to be so.'

Mr Frank extended his hands and bent his head, as deprecating such an apology.

'Your conduct towards my daughter Julia has been most heartlessly cruel.'

'Excuse me,' said Mr Frank.

'Pardon me; I don't wish to be interrupted. Most heartlessly cruel. You have paid her marked attentions at home and abroad, and have given currency to a most undesirable report that you were engaged to her, without any reference whatever to my wishes or feelings. I do not, of course, pretend to know the extent to which you have influenced her mind, or the hold you may have succeeded in obtaining over her affections; but I must say you have no right to promulgate a report that, in my opinion, is injurious to my daughter's prospects.'

'I have paid your daughter no more attention than ordinary courtesy to a relative would dictate. As to an engagement, I have not thought it needful to make a reference to you on the subject, Mrs Muciller, not having had the slightest notion of such a thing, until I heard the report you allude to, which certainly did not originate from me.'

'It is most singular how such a report could have obtained currency had you given no occasion for it,' said Mrs Muciller.

'There I agree with you; and significant also,' said Mr Frank.

'And significant also. Had your attentions to Julia been restricted to home courtesies, it might have been less so. But when you seek, on the strength of such a report, previously disseminated by you, to use your rumoured engagement as the security on which to borrow money, it becomes still more than significant, it becomes conclusive of something that is detestably disgraceful.'

Mrs Muciller paused, wishing for an answer to a shot that combined truth and falsehood so deftly that she knew it would tell; but there was only one answer Mr Frank could have given at the moment. If it had been a man who had stung him like this, Mr Frank would have knocked him down; but as it was a lady, he was silent.

'In entering my household,' Mrs Muciller proceeded, 'you led me tacitly to understand that you were at least in as prosperous a position as I had reason to believe you were some years ago. It is useless to say you did not actually state this in so many words; you led me to believe it, and took no pains to dissipate such a belief. Such conduct I can only characterise as the basest duplicity. You then sought, by the cunning artifice of a hinted engagement with my daughter, to mortgage her expectations as well as to injure her prospects. Such a proceeding I can only stigmatise as contemptible and systematic villainy. Your future course, whilst you remain in my house'——

But Mr Frank just walked into the hall, took his hat, and scribbling a pencilled address on an envelope, gave it to the servant for Miss Cray, and walked out, leaving his luggage and personal effects to be sent after him.

The note contained only an acknowledgment of the sum of twenty pounds borrowed from Norah.

SOLDIERS AS LABOURERS.

THERE is a problem waiting for solution, the decision concerning which will have much influence on the well-being of our people—namely, how can we most suitably treat our soldiers, so as to make them good members of society? In days not yet beyond the memory of persons now living, the British soldier was regarded as little better than food for powder; if he did his work well when fighting, the nation asked but very few questions concerning his behaviour or his treatment at other times. His trull was always ranked among the most worthless of her sex; while his oaths and his drunkenness, his ignorance and his brutality, were almost regarded as things of course. Happily, a great change has taken place in the tone of public feeling on these matters—due, in a marked degree, to the publicity which the press gave to the shortcomings of our military system in the Crimea. Fourteen years have passed away since that dreadful winter on the heights between Balaklava and Sebastopol; and they have been years of wonderful activity in all that concerns our army. Regarding the troops simply as fighting-men, the improvements in the belligerent appliances have been immense. New breech-loaders, new repeating-rifles, new revolver pistols, new conoidal bullets, new cartridges carrying their own detonating composition, new artillery of vast power and range, new projectiles of unprecedented hardness and efficiency, new time-fuses acting almost with the precision of clockwork—these have tended to make one soldier equal to many under the old régime. Then, the soldier, when on active service, has much to do besides fighting. For marching, his knapsack and accoutrements have been improved, and are likely to receive still further improvements. For the bivouac and encamping, many useful novelties have been introduced either in the materials or the construction of tents, huts, substitutes for beds, waterproof coverings, &c.; while the drainage and the water-supply receive an amount of attention which never used to be bestowed on those subjects. For barrack-life, sanitary arrangements are more and more sedulously studied—especially in the adoption of the Rev. Mr Moule's invention of the earth-closet, which the authorities in India describe as being almost invaluable in that hot and ill-drained country. For dress, the soldier is in better trim than in the old days of the 'clothing colonels,' when greatcoats were very spongy and boots very shaky. For food—thanks chiefly to improvements in the army cooking apparatus—he can have hot meats and fresh meats to an extent that he never used to dream of, and a larger allowance than formerly of warm and wholesome beverages. For his health, there are medical arrangements and comforts which gradually lessen the number of his sick days in the course of a year.

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All this applies to the soldier on active service. Much of it is also applicable to the soldier in barracks; with several important additions. The barracks, one by one, are gradually being supplied with good gas-lighting, good warming arrangements, good ventilating, good draining and water-supply, good recreation and gymnastic rooms and courts, good reading and news rooms. Then, again, soldiers' wives are treated as respectable women. It is true that the state does not give quarters or rations to more than a limited number of women for each regiment; but when that number has been selected, the way in which they are treated is productive of vast improvement; the soldier can really have some of the comforts and ameliorating influences of a home, the magic of a tidy woman's handiwork replacing many of the rough and coarse ways of barrack-life. His children, too, share in the improvement, for the regimental schoolmaster (or schoolmistress) teaches the little ones, and instils into them habits which tend to their well-being.

Of course, all this cannot be done without expense. The English soldier is very costly, as our army estimates clearly enough shew; and the cost, too, is increasing; seeing that most of the ameliorations are a little more expensive than the older systems which they supersede. Nevertheless, the much-tried British taxpayer seldom objects to the charge, if it can be clearly shewn that the soldiers themselves, the rank and file of the army, are improved in health and efficiency and moral conduct by the changes gradually introduced. And, after all, there may not be more real expense in the end; for the nation can assuredly get more work, and more useful work, out of a soldier whose health and general conduct are well attended to, than out of a neglected, diseased, dissipated fellow, who is no comfort to himself, and no credit to anybody else.

There is another matter, quite apart from all those noticed above, which has an important bearing on the well-being of the soldier—this is, the profitable employment of some of his time when in barrack or camp during periods of peace. The artilleryman has his guns and gunnery apparatus to attend to, in addition to his own uniform and accoutrements; the cavalry soldier has his horse to attend to, and a somewhat onerous duty it is; but the foot-soldier of our line regiments has not much to do beyond attention to himself, in his dress, kit, accoutrements, drill, &c. A question arises, whether some of his spare time could be profitably bestowed on handicraft employment, either as an artisan or as a labourer? Many of the men had been apprenticed to, or engaged in, mechanical trades before they enlisted; while all could do something or other as labourers. This subject is not altogether a new one to readers of the *Journal*. Six years ago, we noticed it. We passed in review certain plans which had been partially carried into effect for employing soldiers in useful works. A military commission, two years earlier, had gone into the matter pretty fully, with a view of reporting on the practicability of teaching useful trades to soldiers, their sons, and their daughters, and of furnishing employment for the persons thus taught. The commissioners were asked to collect such information as would enable them to express an opinion—'whether the system pursued should be garrison or regimental; at what garrisons or dépôts it should first be tried; what buildings it would be necessary to provide, at what cost, and how to be defrayed; what tools should be provided, and how paid for; how materials should be purchased and accounted for; what rate of payment the trade-teachers should receive, and out of what fund; what prices should be charged and paid for work done; the kinds of trade to be taught and practised; the kinds of encouragement best to be given to induce soldiers to learn; the best mode of disposing of the profits; the keeping and auditing of the accounts; the degree to which such artisan-soldiers might usefully be employed upon barrack repairs and other public works; and the general regulations that would be necessary for carrying out the whole system.' The officers of every military district in the kingdom were applied to for information on the subject; they almost uniformly viewed the scheme favourably; and we gave* an epitome of the plan which the commissioners recommended. The progress made by 1863 was limited to barrack repairs at Aldershot. Since then, troops stationed in India have done most effective work in road-making; they have made long mountain-roads in the important strategical region between the Punjab and the Afghan frontier, available for armies and heavy guns in time of war, and for merchandise traffic in time of peace. This work, it was clearly ascertained, was done more cheaply by the troops than it would have been by private contract; while the men themselves were more healthy, more cheerful, and provided with a pleasant addition to their small supply of pocket-money.

It is satisfactory to find, from information recently made public by the War Office, that the military authorities continue to employ soldiers in barrack and in camp in a useful way, for barrack repairs and new works of moderate extent. Not much has yet been done in the way of actually teaching trades to the men; but such as already shew some tact as artificers, especially in the building trades, have been employed to a considerable extent. The Sappers, as may be supposed, are more serviceable in this way than the rank and file of the foot-regiments; for the Sappers are, almost to a man, good artisans, and are remarkably steady and intelligent fellows.

Let us see what some of the Reports say. Colonel Lothian Nicholson, Adjutant-general of Royal Engineers, speaking of the operations at the Curragh Camp in Ireland in 1868, says: 'The employment of the labour of soldiers at the Curragh Camp during the past year has produced the most satisfactory results. The barrack incidental repairs of about half of the buildings have been well and expeditiously performed by soldiers of the Royal Engineers (Sappers) and line regiments, at a saving of nearly forty per cent. of the total cost to the public. Soldiers have also been employed on new works; and it has been found that in large services, where the work is of a straightforward character, a great percentage of saving can be effected. My opinion is, that such a system as that now in full work at the Curragh, when in the hands of thoroughly capable officers of Royal Engineers, assisted by trained non-commissioned officers of Sappers, may be extended to all barracks in occupation, with the sole proviso that the moves of troops

* *Journal*, October 31, 1863.

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take place at rare intervals.' This and another proviso are dwelt upon with some force: 'As long as the troops remain in any particular barrack only for a short time, it would be impossible to extend the system; and I would further remark that it would not be possible to carry out the system of military labour fully, unless the skilled labour supplied by regiments of the line can be supplemented by Sappers, and superintended entirely by officers and non-commissioned officers of Royal Engineers.'

There appear to have been many varieties of work included in that which Colonel Nicholson here speaks of—such as external painting, repairs prior to painting, field-officers' quarters, canvasing and papering officers' rooms, repairing the angles and sills of huts, renewing drying-posts, alterations in the sergeants' mess-rooms, repairing machicoulis, additions to the postmasters' quarters and the chaplains' quarters, reading and recreation rooms, providing pack store, ventilation of cells, married soldiers' quarters, incidental barrack repairs, incidental hospital repairs, repairing targets and rifle-ranges, repairing roads and improving the surface of the Curragh.

Colonel Chesney, reporting as to Aldershot, dwells on the importance of employing Sappers as skilled artificers, and soldiers of the line as labourers. Of the former he says: 'Under proper superintendence, at a station like this, their employment should save from twenty to fifty per cent. It has saved fifty on some large jobs performed here during the period of my observation.' Of the line soldiers, serving as labourers, he adds: 'Their labour in this form has effected a saving varying from ten per cent. on incidental repairs to fifty per cent. on some new works.' He offers grounds for believing that it is not so well worth while to employ Sappers as labourers or line soldiers as artificers.

Lieutenant M'Hardy, in relation to the military establishment at Parkhurst, tells us that 'the result which has attended the employment of the labour of soldiers on barrack incidental repairs has been very satisfactory; the works have been properly performed, and with expedition. The percentage would be thirty-five per cent. of saving by employing the soldiers instead of a contractor.' He confirms the opinion of Colonel Nicholson that the system is most usefully adopted when a regiment is stationed for some considerable time at one spot; it is not so well adapted for battalion dépôts, where the men come and go frequently.

Lastly, Colonel Driscoll Gosset, reporting on the operation of the system at Woolwich, says: 'The saving due to the employment of soldiers on incidental barrack services at Woolwich has been about twenty per cent., compared with contractors' charges. The works have been as well and quite as expeditiously performed as if done by a civilian contractor's agency. On new works, the saving has been about twenty-five per cent.' Until June 1868, it appears, only Sappers were employed at Woolwich on such works; but since then soldiers of the line regiments have been added, with a thoroughly satisfactory result; and Colonel Gosset remarks: 'A continuance of the system on a larger scale will, I am certain, develop its advantages in a higher degree.'

There is thus every reasonable ground for satisfaction at the result of the industrial employment of our soldiers. The nation, unless all the above-named officers are strangely in error, saves money by it; while the men are unquestionably more orderly, cheerful, and contented in their position.

A COUNTY FAMILY.

CHAPTER XXXI.—UNCLE DEAN.

The next day Mr William's conduct still shewed signs of grace. He was silent; but then in his case silence was indeed golden, though his speech could scarcely have been described as 'silvern,' but rather as small change in brass. He not only made no objection to the family migration to 'the Fishery,' which it was arranged at breakfast should take place on the ensuing day, but evinced a strong desire to depart at once: 'Why couldn't they go that very afternoon?'

This could not be done at such short notice, because of certain arrangements necessary to be effected for the invalid; but it was suggested by Mrs Blackburn that all was ready at the cottage, if William liked to precede the party by four-and-twenty hours, and establish himself there alone. But this he would by no means listen to; he would wait and travel with the rest. His sociability was so extreme as to become almost oppressive to poor Mr Waller, to whom he chiefly attached himself. 'I like to hear you talk, Waller, you have got such capital stories: be lively, there's a good fellow, because I feel rather down in the mouth, and as if, somehow, I was going to be ill.'

It was rather difficult to be lively under such depressing circumstances, and especially as his companion did not exhibit the slightest appreciation of his efforts, or indeed appear to listen to one word he said. His eye was on the watch, his ear was on the stretch, for that expected some one, more than ever.

Yet, when the footman came into the room where they were sitting late in the afternoon, with: 'You are wanted, if you please, sir, by a person in the front hall,' Mr William seemed by no means relieved by that indefinite summons. On the contrary, his lips grew white, and his jaw fell, so that he could not utter a word; and it was ready Mr Waller who put the question for him: 'What sort of a person is it, John, and what is his business?'

'Well, sir, he said he wouldn't give his name, but that Mr William knew all about him. I think he's some sort of a horsey gent.'

'Yes, yes,' said William with a testiness which the sharp eyes of the ex-M.P. at once perceived was assumed to conceal a sense of relief, 'I know the fellow. I have been expecting him this long time. It's a disagreeable business.—I am afraid I must see him alone, Waller.—John, if there is no one in the drawing-room, shew him in there;' and in a few minutes the young Squire was face to face in that gorgeous saloon with the man who had known him in his least prosperous days, and who knew his secret, but to whom, as we have seen, he had made up his mind not to give a sixpence of hush-money, and to carry matters with a high hand.

Still, Mr William's manner was far from that of one who wishes to pick a quarrel, or even to maintain a frigid isolation, as he rose and shook hands

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with Uncle Dean. This gentleman, whom circumstances had associated with horse-flesh, and whose tight-fitting trousers and sporting scarf-pin had doubtless led the footman to that just conclusion, had certainly not been intended by nature for the saddle. He was upwards of six feet high, and of great weight, if there is any truth in the adage: 'It is bone that weighs;' but, whether from the constant habit of physical 'jockeying'—that leaning forward to hustle with the reins—or from that moral 'jockeying' which requires an earthward vision and a close inspection of one's fellow-creatures, his back was bent into a bow, which, assisted by the quick, searching glance that he bestowed upon his nephew by marriage, made him look one huge note of interrogation. He had placed a deep band of crape round his hat, in token of his sorrow for the loss of their common relative; but his long waistcoat was bright yellow, his trousers green, and his scarf a brilliant blue. Perhaps the poetry of his nature, forbidden an outlet through the usual channel, exhibited and expanded itself in colour, but certainly he was very highly tinted; nor was it his own fault, but Time's, that the hair which had been red was now quite gray.

'How are you, Dean? It was kind of you to come and look me up. I am only sorry that the house is full, so that I cannot ask you to take a bed.'

'Don't mention it, Mr Blackburn, don't mention it. I had no idea of sponging on you to that extent, I do assure you; but being in the neighbourhood, and wishing to hear about poor Bess'——

'That 's a sad story, Dean,' broke in the other hastily, 'and I don't wish to talk about it. Take some wine—take some gin.—Here, what 's your name? bring this gentleman some gin and hot water.—That used to be your tipple, did it not?'

'Why, yes, and yours too, in the old days,' said Mr Dean slily; 'but there, I suppose with the run of the cellars of a place like this, you never touch anything worse than champagne and brandy. Dear, dear, what a change it seems! Richardson and I were talking over it only the other evening.'

'Richardson is an infernal scoundrel,' observed Mr William bluntly.

'Well, he does run a little near the wind at times, no doubt. But so we all do, for the matter of that, or *have done*, eh, Mr Blackburn? As he was saying, only think of your being here a squire, and a magistrate, I suppose, and all the rest of it; sending poor folks to prison. Lor, what a game it is!'

'Yes, Mr Dean, and it 's a game that I have taken care shall not be spoiled by any man,' said the other slowly. 'I felt, of course, that I need never fear any molestation from *you;* but knowing what sort of a man Richardson was, and how like him it would be to hold over my head, as it were, for the purpose of extorting money, that trouble I got into at Chester, I made up my mind, upon assuming my position here, to make a clean breast of it at once.'

'You don't mean to tell me that all these fine folks about here know that you were in that horse-job, and got' (Mr Dean looked cautiously round the room, and the shining faces of the inlaid cabinets and gilded mirrors seemed to make him more cautious, for his voice sank to a whisper)—'got put into quod?'

'Yes, I do,' said Mr William boldly. 'I don't say that the servants and village people have been told, but everybody with whom the knowledge of such a circumstance could do me harm was put into possession of it at once. Of course, it did do me harm, but the worst is past, and the ground on which I stand at least is firm.—If you still doubt me,' for the other wore a very incredulous look, 'ask Mr Herbert Stanhope, whom, I suppose, you know, and who is staying here at present.'

As Uncle Dean sat rubbing his chin with his large hand, you might have thought that his face was made of india-rubber, and that he was pulling it out inches at a time, so obviously did it lengthen at these words. It was evident to him that the moral lever which he had brought with him to work upon his nephew-by-marriage would have no mechanical force.

'So Mr Stanhope is with you, is he?' observed he slowly. 'I know of more than one "party" that would be glad to know where he was.'

'Owes money, does he?'

'Money! He owes a fortune. *Gazeebo* must have cost him twenty or thirty thousand pounds at Goodwood; that is, he would have cost him, if he could have paid it. The idea is that he is gone abroad for a time, and that when he comes back he will settle everything; and Sporting Dawlish sticks by him in that story. But, there, since Mr Stanhope is a friend of yours, I 'm mum.—What a fine room this is, Mr Blackburn, and what a fine place! Lor, if my poor Bess could but rise out of her grave—— What 's the matter, sir?'

'Matter, man!' cried Mr William, trembling violently—'did not I tell you not to talk about her, not to speak upon that subject? If she happened to be alive, I couldn't stop you; I am quite aware of that. You would have been coming over here a dozen times a year to borrow money of me, upon the score of our relationship. But, mark me! if ever I give you a farthing—and I don't say I will, mind—it must be upon the distinct understanding that you never breathe a word about—about your late niece.—The fact is,' and here Mr William began to whine and whimper, 'you may believe it or not as you please, Dean, but I was not altogether a good husband to that poor girl; I was harsh and rough with her at times; and now she 's gone, I can't bear to think about it.'

'And she was a delicate creetur too,' said Mr Dean, shaking his head. Poor Bess had been really his own niece, and perhaps his conscience pricked him in that he had not been altogether a good uncle to her; or perhaps he only wished to exaggerate the case, as a question for damages. 'As delicate a creetur as ever I saw.'

'Just so,' said Mr William. 'She died of a consumption, with which she had long been threatened, out in foreign parts. The whole matter is one with which all my people are well acquainted, but of which they do not speak, because they know it pains me. You will oblige me, therefore, Mr Dean, by being silent also. There is nothing to be gained by speaking of it, either to me or any one else, you understand *that*, I suppose?'

Uncle Dean nodded assent; he had carefully gone over that idea, with an eye to business, and had been obliged to come to the conclusion, that no profit could be made out of a relationship that had become extinct. It had afforded him an excuse for his present visit (the real object of which had

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been precisely what his nephew had foreseen), and nothing more could reasonably be expected of it.

'Very well,' said Mr William, 'you will distinctly bear in mind, then, that any present which I may think fit to make you now, or hereafter, is neither a tax nor a due. I fear no menace, as you may tell that scoundrel Richardson, if you please—and I acknowledge no claim in respect of our late connection by marriage.'

'I see that, sir, all quite plain,' answered Mr Dean deferentially. 'I am quite sure you have no call to help me with a shilling—though, if Bess had been alive, and knew that her poor uncle, who brought her up from childhood, was so devilish hard up as he is just now'——

'There, there; that will do, Mr Dean: I was quite aware that we were coming to that at last. Well, I had a hundred pounds with your niece when I married her, and I don't say but that I may be induced to refund it to you, as her representative, upon a certain condition.'

'I'll take my solemn oath, Mr Blackburn, that I'll never speak of Bess again as long as I live, if *that* is what you want. Of course, if you're going to marry again (as I hear is the case), you don't want people to go tittle-tattling all over the county about your late wife and her humble station just now.'

'Excuse me, Mr Dean,' said the other peremptorily, 'you would seem to imply that your silence is of some material importance to me; whereas no word of yours respecting your late niece could affect my interest in the smallest degree. It is merely a question of sentiment. I have asked you, as a favour, to avoid in future all mention of a certain subject, though I do not deny that you may have hit upon my reason for so doing. The condition I would impose is something quite different. You say that you know more than one party to whom Mr Herbert Stanhope owes large sums, and who would be glad to know of his whereabouts.'

'Yes, Mr Blackburn, I do; but I'll be mum as death for your sake—and in consideration of that hundred pounds you speak of.'

'Be so good as to hear me out, Mr Dean. You say that Mr Stanhope owes in all twenty or thirty thousand pounds. How is it he has not been declared a defaulter?'

'Well, it's all Mr Dawlish's doing, that is. He has the ear of some of our big men, and has persuaded them to wait; but there's others as I know of as have a matter of eleven thousand, or perhaps twelve thousand pounds in all, against Mr Stanhope, and they're hungry enough, I can tell you. They have been told it will be better for them not to press matters; but that don't stay their stomachs, you see, and they would like to know what I know, most uncommon. It's so precious difficult, you see, to get hold of a chap abroad.'

'Just so. I will write you a cheque for fifty pounds, Mr Dean, upon the understanding that you tell them (not from me, of course, but as a piece of information you happen to have obtained) that Mr Herbert Stanhope is staying *here*. Let them press him as hard as they please. Do you comprehend, man?'

'Very good, Mr Blackburn; but'—Uncle Dean hesitated a moment, and it is possible that across his untutored mind there flitted some crude notion of violated hospitality—'I warn you that they'll make it very hot for him. Once they think they have been deceived, they'll be as eager as a pack of hounds who have been thrown off the scent, and suddenly find it breast-high. They'll be fit to tear him to pieces.'

'Let them tear him,' said Mr William sullenly. 'When you have set them on, but not before, I'll send you the cheque for the other fifty.'

'You may consider that as good as done, Mr Blackburn,' said Uncle Dean as he drained his glass and rose from his chair. 'If you have no other commands for me, it is time that I should be off.'

'As you please, Mr Dean. This is a sick-house, or I should have been glad to offer you something more of hospitality. I have guests who, I do assure you, are less welcome. Perhaps, by the way, it will be well that you should see one of them, whose voice I can hear upon the terrace yonder, with your own eyes; you will not then need to speak from hearsay.' Mr William pointed to the window, and bidding the other to look out without being observed, asked him what he saw.

'I see a very pretty young woman, and a young man who has his back to me, but is evidently making himself most uncommon agreeable to her. I should say there was love in the case on one side, at the very least.—Now he turns; yes, that's my man, sure enough; and I confess I'm sorry for it, Mr Blackburn; for Mr Stanhope was ever an open-handed young gentleman so long as there was any'——

'Here is a cheque for the fifty,' interrupted the other coolly. 'And now I will shew you to your vehicle by the back way, since it's just as well our young friend yonder should not know to whom he is indebted for whatever happens.—Good-bye, Dean, and remember the sooner you set about your work the sooner you will get your pay.—Yes, yes,' muttered Mr William as he re-entered the house alone, 'I'll put a spoke in Mr Stanhope's wheel for him: *twice* has he interfered in my affairs; so that I shall owe him one even when these hornets come about him.'

He turned into the little room where he had left Mr Waller; but that gentleman, as soon as he had got released from his companion, had incontinently fled. It was growing dusk, and solitude was so insupportable to the young Squire, that he hastened to join the pair upon the terrace, notwithstanding that they were the two individuals whom, of all the unloved world, he liked the least. But at the open Hall door he stopped, petrified with amazement at what he saw upon the terrace. As Uncle Dean had described it, there was indeed a young man making himself so very agreeable to a young woman that it seemed that love must be upon one side at least: he was leaning forward and speaking eloquently, if not passionately, into her very ear, while she, though shaking her fair head with gravity, by no means had the appearance of inflexible denial. He seemed rather to be excusing himself for some course of conduct which she was reprobating, yet not without holding out a hope of pardon. But what had turned Mr William into stone, as though it were a Gorgon's head, and had also transformed his features into some likeness of a Gorgon, was this, that the object of these marked attentions of Mr Herbert Stanhope was not Ellen, as of course her uncle had expected it to be, but Lucy Waller!

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CHAPTER XXXII.—THE JOURNEY.

Surely it is one of the most extravagant weaknesses of the human heart to set its affections on an object which does not reciprocate them; we may indeed love a child without our care and devotion being appreciated, or indeed any particular regard being shewn to us in return; but in the case of a grown-up *woman*, how *can* a man be so foolish as to press his attentions where they are not desired, and where, therefore, they must needs be unpleasing?

Although one would think that a very little self-conceit, or proper pride, would cause such a suitor to give up his quest at once, it is not usually a symptom of humility to persevere, but rather of a coarse and vehement will. Mr William Blackburn, for instance, as we have seen, was by no means of Sir John Suckling's opinion:

> If she be not fair to *me*,
> What care I how fair she be?

but coveted Lucy all the more that she, on her part, exhibited no sort of inclination for him. The scene he had witnessed on the terrace transported him for the time with rage, and laid up in his mind a third occasion of hatred against Herbert Stanhope, in comparison with which the two already garnered there were but slight. It was likely enough, indeed, that he might have been mistaken as to the cause of that gentleman's warmth of manner towards a young lady who had been his friend and neighbour from childhood, and, on the other hand, Lucy herself had certainly manifested no corresponding emotion; but when was jealousy capable of reflection? Under the circumstances, it was wonderful that William Blackburn was able to conceal the anger that consumed him; but the fact was the spectacle he had witnessed was not altogether without its mitigation: he felt himself tolerably secure of Lucy, since her father's fortunes depended upon her consent; and he was not displeased, for a certain reason, to persuade himself that Stanhope was not personally devoted to Ellen. At all events, Mr William's manner continued as urbane as we have observed it to be for the last four-and-twenty hours, and his inclination for society as strong; of this latter, the following was a curious example. Mr Waller and his daughter had departed the next morning for Mosedale, upon the understanding that they should spend the ensuing day at the Fishery, and Mr Stanhope accompanied them as far as Curlew Hall, where he had business to occupy him for a few hours; so that the Blackburn family were for once left to themselves.

'I suppose, Willy, you will take the mare over to the cottage?' said Mrs Blackburn after her guests had departed. 'You will have a charming ride across the moor.'

'Why so?' inquired he sharply. 'Why should I not drive with you?'

'Well, of course, my darling, we should be only too glad of your company; but then, you see, there is but room for two in the invalid carriage which takes your poor father.'

'Then let Ellen go in that, and do you come with me in the brougham. We have never yet ridden in our own carriage together, you and I.'

Mrs Blackburn hesitated: perhaps it struck her, that if not now, she would probably never again drive with her Anthony, and that it was to him that her duty was first owed; but she gave way as usual, and the brougham was ordered accordingly. Only she did insist upon its following the other vehicle, in place of preceding it. Her son, whose desire to get away from Redcombe seemed to grow stronger every hour, would have had it driven at a quicker rate, 'so as,' said he, 'to be at the cottage beforehand, and get all things ready for the governor.'

But his mother was firm in adhering to her own plan. 'Everything is quite prepared there, Willy, and I will not consent to be separated from your father more than has been already done. Think if anything should happen to him on the way, and I were not close at hand, could I ever forgive myself?'

And so, not unlike a funeral procession, the invalid carriage, with its motionless occupant and Ellen, took the lead, while the brougham followed at the same slow pace. The villagers lined the little street in mournful silence. The short experience they had had of the old Squire's rule had been a favourable one, and they had every reason to expect less good at his successor's hands. As for the report of the estate having been left to Miss Ellen, they did not credit it: the Blackburn land had always gone from father to son. It was indeed a melancholy exodus. It was observed that Mr William was very pale and awed, and exhibited much more feeling than he had been supposed to possess. Singular to say, this not only continued to be the case with him, but he even grew more serious as they proceeded on their journey. In vain his mother endeavoured to console him. 'You must not give way so, dear Willy, although I am glad to see you so deeply touched. It is rather for me to weep, who must soon lose the friend and lover of fifty years yonder. The last time, yes, the very last that he and I journeyed together this way'—— The poor lady could not finish the sentence; the memory of the past was too bitter to be shaped in speech: it was a fact that the last time she and Anthony had taken the Mosedale Road together was on their way to be married, when they were little more than boy and girl. There are probably but few old people, even of the most unsentimental sort, on whom at times some thought of this kind must not intrude, more affecting, surely, than any grief which self-conscious youth imagines or supposes. Perhaps the springs of regret are as fast frozen in their case as those of passion? Heaven grant it may be so.

There was one consideration that certainly tended to Mrs Blackburn's comfort—the universal sense of her husband's hopeless condition confined her own apprehensions to that channel, and removed her anxiety with respect to her son. If any warning of approaching death had really been sent through her to the House of Blackburn, it must surely needs have relation to the poor Squire, whom all men thus regarded as a doomed and dying man. It was in continuation of this idea, so strong in its possession of her mind that she was probably ignorant of not having given it expression, that she suddenly whispered, as they drew near the termination of the moorland: 'We are getting near the very place now, Willy.' Her son had been leaning back with closed eyes, but he opened them at those words, and turned upon her a face of ghostly horror.

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'Don't fear, Willie,' said she, herself greatly alarmed at his appearance, inasmuch as he had hitherto affected to speak of the matter with contemptuous disbelief: 'it is your poor father who has been sent for, if anybody, and not you, darling. I feel quite sure of that, except when you look so strange as you are doing now.—What on earth ails you, Willy?'

'Nothing, nothing,' gasped he.—'Why don't they drive faster? They are stopping, they are stopping, I tell you. What do they see?'

'Stopping?' cried his mother: 'then something has happened to Anthony; O dear! O dear!' and as the brougham pulled up, she opened the door, and got out quickly.

'Stay here, stay with me,' cried William wildly: 'I will not be left alone.'

But she was already out of hearing.

After all, the leading carriage had but stopped on the brow of the steep Redmoor hill to put the drag on; but Mrs Blackburn seized the opportunity to look in upon the invalid. Was it her fancy, or had the passing through the air really revived him somewhat from that long lethargy, and even called up a tinge of colour in his pallid cheeks? Or was it possible that the scent of the fir-grove, or the sight of its gentle waving tops, had in his mind also awakened a reminiscence? Certainly his eyes welcomed his wife with a glance of ineffable tenderness, such as they had not shed for many a day.

'I think he would like you to get in and sit by his side, grandmother,' whispered Ellen earnestly.

'I will, I will,' replied she. 'But do you take my place with Willy. Your uncle is not well, Ellen; look to him.'

Her grandmother and she therefore changed places. It was the first time for weeks that Ellen had been left alone with her uncle, and she shrank from the idea of his rough companionship; but, to her astonishment, he seemed pleased to see her, and scarcely to notice that she was his mother's substitute. She was about to explain why she had left the other carriage, but he interrupted her with incoherent words: 'Quite right. Good girl, good girl. We are moving now. Faster, faster! Why do they linger? Let me hold your hand;' and he took her fingers in his own, and clasped them tight. 'Are we down the hill yet? Have we passed the —the fir-grove? Is the moorland out of sight?' For again he had closed his eyes, as though unwilling to look out upon the landscape.

'We are nearly down the hill, uncle,' answered Ellen quietly, though in extreme surprise; 'the moor is out of sight, and I can only just catch the top of the embankment of the reservoir. Now we are stopping once more to take the drag off. The valley lies open before us, and there is Mosedale Church spire.' She went on talking, not for talking's sake, but with that desire which seizes us when alone with those with whom we are ill at ease, to avoid silence. 'It is certainly warmer here than at Redcombe; it seems as though we were miles and miles away already. How green and summer-like are these fields and woods!'

'Ay, so they are. It looks quite different, as you say. The air is better too; I felt so oppressed just now—it was the warmth of the fir-grove, I suppose —that I could hardly breathe. Did I not look ill? Did I not say foolish things? I think I must have been half-fainting.'

'You looked very pale, uncle, but seem much better now. As you say, the air is delightful, though it is surely not so fresh as on the moorland. Heaven grant it may do grandfather some good!'

'Just so: it's lovely. I think I'll just smoke a pipe. Tobacco always does me so much good. I'm deuced glad we have left Redcombe, for I think the place was beginning to disagree with me; at least I felt uncommonly hipped.'

'It has been a sad house of late to all of us,' sighed Ellen. 'First, the tidings of poor Aunt Bess's death! What a kind heart she had, and how she loved you, uncle! I can scarcely picture to myself that she is really dead; and I sometimes think'—— She hesitated.

'Think what?' interrupted William fiercely.

'Well, perhaps it's wrong, uncle; but I sometimes think that if she had been amongst us, and lived at home, and especially as we live now, no longer pinched and worried by poverty, she might have been spared to us yet. Dear patient, loving Bess, I seem to see her now!'

'Don't be a fool,' cried Uncle William angrily. 'Why do you talk about a subject which you know I detest? That is, one that is naturally painful to me. You are worse than your grandmother: she is always talking about dying people, as if I could help the governor's being in such a bad way. Is it not enough to be with him all day, without coming down-stairs and telling other people all about it, so as to make their flesh creep?'

'You see, uncle, dear grandmother finds it hard to get poor grandfather out of her thoughts.'

'So it seems, indeed. But that reminds me.—I daresay *you*, Miss Ellen, are not so entirely wrapped up in your grandfather's state of health (however much you may be interested by his *death*) as not sometimes to think of other things—such as marriage, for instance.—There, you are turning quite red, which is as good as a "yes." Well, I daresay you think yourself quite sure of your young man—that you have only got to whistle to him when you want him. But don't you be too sure; that's all I say.'

Ellen was indeed blushing scarlet, but it was with contemptuous indignation at her uncle's words. She had for the moment forgotten the very existence of the person to whom he was alluding.

'I say,' continued Mr William, 'you may be cut out by somebody whom you little suspect, if you are not civil to that fellow Stanhope—as civil as I am to Lucy, for instance.'

'How can you talk of Lucy, uncle, in that way,' cried Ellen passionately, 'with dear Aunt Bess scarce cold in her grave?'

There was a long pause; the allusion was certainly not without its effect upon the widower; his face once more assumed a ghostly pallor, and even his lips turned white. Ellen began to think that she had given him too sharp a shock.

'Look here,' said he huskily; 'just mark me, once for all, you slut: you mind your own business. It is about your own affairs, not mine, that I am talking to you. You are not holding this man Stanhope tight enough in hand.'

'Mr Stanhope is nothing to me, uncle,' said Ellen firmly.

'Ay, but he is, though; and he shall be too, at all events for the present. Don't you know what your grandfather wishes, miss, and ain't I here, as it were, in the place of your grandfather? You had better not make an enemy of me, I promise

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you.' He grasped her roughly by the wrist, and wore his ugliest look. 'I am not going to be thwarted by any living soul. Do you hear *that*? If I think it well that you shall have this man, you *shall* have him; and if not, *not*. You are to hold him now fast, now loose, just as I tell you; or, by Heaven! it will be the worse for you. You don't know me yet, or—— Confound the wench, if she has not fainted right off! I'm glad I've given her a good fright, however; and here's the Curlew with plenty of water to bring her round.'

The next minute they had crossed the bridge over the stream; and the Fishery with its little garden lay immediately before them—as fair a dwelling as was ever seen by river-side.

CONCARNEAU.

Last summer, during a tour through Lower Brittany, we visited Concarneau, for the purpose of seeing the sardine-fishery. But though the capture of the sardine, and its preparation for the market, is a sight in itself well worth the trouble of a journey to Brittany, still, we considered the greatest attraction at Concarneau is the establishment for breeding and observing the habits of fish. The *viviers*, as these large aquaria are called, are supported by government—that is, they are under the management of government; but the official who has the charge of them informed us that the sale of the fish more than supported the cost of the establishment. The viviers are a series of large tanks about ten feet deep, cut out of the solid rock. The depth of water in them varies from two to three feet. In the side of each tank there is a flight of steps, roughly hewn in the rock leading down to the level of the water. The floor of the tanks is of sea-sand, and the water is supplied by a pump, which is worked by a small windmill. The first tank which we visited was full of lobsters of all sizes. Into this tank all the lobsters are turned as soon as they are old enough and strong enough to hold their own against their cannibal brethren. Our obliging conductor informed us that the lobster took five years in arriving at maturity, and that the female lobster then, for the first time, took upon herself the cares of maternity. As soon as a female is observed to have laid her spawn, which, as we all know, she carries about with her between her numerous legs, she is caught in a small net, and placed in a separate tank. This tank was partly covered over, most probably to protect the young from the glare of the sun. Here the eggs are hatched, and the young lobsters have plenty of room to grow without running the risk of being devoured. A pail was let down into this tank, and when it was drawn up, we could see that the water was full of tiny lobsters, who, strange to say, instead of being dark blue in colour, like their parents, were bright red, and looked as if they had been boiled. Adjoining the lobster tank is one devoted to the cultivation of the crayfish, and the whole surface of the water was bristling with the antennæ of these formidable-looking crustaceans. In spite of its very forbidding appearance, the crayfish is in some places almost in as great request as the lobster.

The curator next shewed us the turbot tank, in which, he said, there were more than a thousand turbot of various sizes. 'Surely Monsieur has made a mistake: in this tank we can see nothing but a few rock-fish darting about.' But wait a minute; Monsieur is going to throw in some heads of sardines, procured from the neighbouring *usine*, or curing-house, and then we shall see the turbot. And as the first piece of fish struck the water, the whole tank became alive; and we saw that the bottom was literally paved with huge turbot, who, lying with their dark sides uppermost, would have escaped the notice of the sharpest eye, so exactly did their upper surfaces correspond in colour to the sandy bottom on which they lay. Such crowding and pushing for the food! From all parts of the tank, the great flat-fish came flapping to the feast, till the corner of the tank below us was a struggling mass of turbot. The lithe and active rock-fish darted in and out between the unwieldy turbot, and often snatched the food out of their very jaws, trusting to their speed to escape the snap of the ill-treated creatures.

The next tank contained some specimens of the huge angel-fish. These gentlemen were very sleepy in their dispositions, and refused to move even when stirred with a long pole. They spend most of their time at the bottom of the sea, rooting and burrowing in the sand, and swallowing all the fish which they dig out. After this, we were conducted into the building attached to the viviers. The room which we entered was surrounded on three sides by glass aquaria; the fourth side was devoted to a series of square glass basins, all of which communicated with one another, so that a constant stream of water could be passed through them. In some of these basins, a series of curious experiments had been carried on with turbots, soles, and other flat-fish. Each basin was lined with different-coloured sand—black, white, gray, and yellow. The flat-fish kept in these compartments were found, in course of time, to change in colour, until their upper surfaces corresponded exactly in hue and shade to the sand on which they lay. So exactly did they assimilate themselves to the various-coloured bottoms of their tanks, that it was hard to distinguish them from the sand, even in the shallow basins in which they were kept. All these fish were quite tame, and answered to the whistle of the curator, coming to the surface to feed from his hand. So eager were they to seize the food, that one of them actually struggled out of his tank in the pursuit. In one small basin there was a solitary lobster of large size, who, upon being addressed by the curator as 'Fifine,' rose to the surface, and looked out from between his formidable claws, as if expecting some food. He was presented with a piece of sardine; but this had to be put into his mouth with great caution, as the ungrateful creature snapped fiercely with his huge nippers at the friendly hand that was feeding him. In some of the tanks there were invalided lobsters, who had lost one or both of their claws. These were kept separate, for the purpose of watching the very wonderful process of reproduction; for when the lobster loses a limb, he is not a hopeless cripple to the end of his days, but in due time grows a new claw in the place of the lost one. This accounts for the number of lobsters which are brought to the market with claws of unequal size. The lobster parts with his claws with great facility, for he is a very quarrelsome fellow, and frequently loses one of these members in an encounter. Besides this, any sudden noise, such as the report of a gun, will cause the lobster to shake off his

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claws. As soon as the limb is gone, he retires into private life, and in a short time a new claw buds forth from the joint, and grows rapidly. We could not discover whether the new limb ever attains the same size as the other.

In a circular stone basin in the centre of the room were kept a number of conger-eels. These creatures were supplied with several earthenware pipes, into which they crawled. These pipes were supposed to replace in some degree the crannies and holes in the rocks in which the conger-eel delights to hide himself; but as most of the eels were lying with their heads out of one end of the pipes, and their tails out of the other, the concealment was about as complete as that of the ostrich, who is said to hide his head in the sand, and fancy that, 'because he can't see the hunters, therefore the hunters can't see him.' We were told that but little is known of the habits of the conger-eel, more particularly of its manner of breeding, and that this tank was made especially with a view to observing the manners and customs of this species. One of the most curious things that we saw was the egg of the dog-fish. The dog-fish, being a kind of shark, would be a dangerous neighbour to other and less voracious fish, so a separate glass tank of considerable size was assigned to a female dog-fish and her eggs. These eggs are the same as the curious leathery pouches which are so common on the sea-shore, and are known by the name of 'devil's purses.' But the living egg with the young shark in it is a very different-looking thing to the dried horny devil's purse. In the first place, the egg is provided with a long tail-like filament at each corner; these filaments are entangled in and attached to the weeds at the bottom, and serve to keep the egg moored, and prevent it being dashed about by the waves. In the second place, the living egg, instead of being black in colour, like the empty purse, is of a brownish yellow, and semi-transparent, so that the young shark is plainly visible through the outer covering. This dog-fish appeared to be quite blind by daylight, for she took no notice of a piece of sardine that was dropped in front of her, until it was pushed under her nose, when she devoured it greedily.

In another compartment were several of the pretty little sea-horses. The curator kindly shook the weeds to which they had attached themselves by their prehensile tails, that we might have an opportunity of observing their very curious mode of progression. This fish glides through the water in the most curious attitudes, and, at a first glance, one would think without any visible exertion; but upon looking closer, the beautiful dorsal fin can be seen vibrating with tremendous rapidity, and with a curious wavy motion. The extraordinary attitudes assumed by this fish, both when at rest and in motion, together with the strong resemblance in its head to that of the quadruped from which it takes its name, gives it a most quaint and unique appearance. After shewing us these and many other curious things, the curator offered to conduct us to the laboratories, which occupy an up-stair room. We were unable, from want of time, to avail ourselves of this offer, but we were informed that they were fitted up with every convenience, and contained all the apparatus necessary for investigating the natural history and structure of the inhabitants of the sea. These laboratories are accessible to any student of natural history. We were altogether highly delighted with our visit to the viviers.

On coming away from the viviers, we saw that the fleet of fishing-boats was returning from the capture of the sardines. After watching the first few boats pass into the harbour, we directed our steps to one of the usines, as the curing-houses are called. On arriving at the gates, we encountered a stream of boys and men carrying baskets full of sardines. These were carried into a long room, and thrown down upon heaps arranged in rows along the floor. Beside each heap was seated a girl or woman, armed with a sharp knife, whose occupation was to cut off the head of the sardine, and prepare it for the salting. The decapitation was performed by a stroke of the knife from the back of the head obliquely downwards; and in this manner the head and intestines were removed together, and the trouble of cleaning each fish separately was saved. The heads and entrails were thrown into pails, and carried away for manure, and the bodies were passed on in tubs to the salting-room. Here women were again employed arranging the sardines in layers, in large rectangular tubs, and spreading salt over each layer. The fish are allowed to remain in salt from two to three hours, and then they are taken out and arranged on wire-frames. Each frame accommodates a dozen fish, and these frames are lowered into large caldrons of boiling oil for about thirty seconds. They are then carried out, and hung upon racks in the open air, and in about two hours are ready to be packed into boxes, and soldered down for exportation. If the weather is damp or rainy, the sardines are dried before fires in an underground room. The tin boxes in which they are packed, and which are familiar to all of us, are made in the usines, and the copper labels are attached to them afterwards by the different houses who buy them from the exporters. A great number of the sardines consumed in England come from Concarneau, but, of course, our market is also supplied from other fisheries.

A SEA-SIDE SKETCH.

The sun sinks down a round red disc;
And seen against it, tapering thin
(Relieved of all the cares of risk),
The fishing-smacks come riding in.

Slow sinks the orb beyond the bay,
Or so, at least, it seems to sink—
A thirsty charger, shall I say?
Slow stooping in the sea to drink.

And beating shoreward, sea-gray gulls
Come sailing up the Sound in flocks,
Then clean their wings, and seek their holes,
Aloft amid the rifted rocks.

The soft winds play round poop and prow,
Too weak to climb the rocky cliff,
Within whose deepening shadow now
Lie bulky barge and tiny skiff.

And over all the scene anon
A denser darkness draws around;
The village lights shew one by one,
And night comes hushing every sound.

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ANTIQUARIAN LOGIC.

A TRUE STORY.

THE recent discovery of Roman antiquities has been followed by a correspondence, the tone of which occasionally reminds one of the disquisitions of Mr Jonathan Oldbuck. It would be invidious to particularise, where the correspondence is so recent, and where, doubtless, all that has been called forth by a discovery of considerable interest has been written in perfect good faith. But here and there we notice traces of that quality which seems peculiar to the true antiquary—the power of establishing the widest possible inferences upon the narrowest possible basis of fact.

It may not seem malapropos, therefore, to relate, at this time, a circumstance which rather more than a century ago set all England laughing, and has been made the foundation of two of the most humorous episodes in modern fiction—the famous 'prætorium' scene in the *Antiquary*, and the story of 'Bill Stumps his mark' in *Pickwick*. Amusing as both those stories are, they yield in interest to the real event on which they are founded. Mr Oldbuck had but four letters to saddle with a meaning, and although these four (A. D. L. L.) were very amusingly rendered by him into *Agricola dicavit libens lubens*, his views were not met by rival absurdities. The story also halts a little, for it requires a strong exercise of imagination to conceive that one of the 'kale-suppers of Fife' should have been at the pains to carve a representation of 'Aiken Drum's lang ladle,' with the initials of its description appended. There is a similar inconsistency in the story of the stone which bore the sign-manual of the apocryphal Bill Stumps, to say nothing of the forced aspect of Mr Pickwick's attack of archæological enthusiasm, which nothing in the recorded conduct of that famous man would have led us to expect.

To turn, however, to the true story, on which these humorous episodes are founded.

Rather more than a century ago, some labourers at work in a marshy heath in Northumberland discovered a fragment of stone which bore marks of squaring, and on which also could be traced a few symbols which seemed to the labourers to represent letters. They carried this stone to the squire of the parish, who had it cleaned; a process which led to the detection of several more letters, forming with the others an inscription of some sort. But the letters were so badly drawn, and so disfigured by time and ill-usage, that it was not possible to make out very clearly what they were; and as for making any meaning out of their collective force, we shall see presently that that required the exercise of far more learning and ingenuity than were to be looked for from a simple country squire. The inscription appeared to run much in this wise:

K·EEP·O·N·T
H·ISSI·D·E

But the letters, as we have said, were severally indistinct, so that some latitude was permissible in their interpretation.

The squire presently called in the aid of the rector, and together these worthies conned the worn old stone. What theories they formed respecting it, what disputes, perchance, they had over it, history sayeth not; all that is known is, that they were unable to form any satisfactory hypothesis; but feeling certain that the stone was a valuable relic of antiquity, they looked about them for proper authorities to whom they might refer the interpretation of the inscription.

It was at length decided that the parson should take a copy of the inscription, and forward it to the Antiquarian Society, with the request that the members of that learned body would favour the world with their opinion on the relic. Nothing loath, the Society proceeded to debate with their customary acumen upon all the circumstances connected with the stone and its discovery; and not satisfied with this, several members sent in written papers, which were duly read before the Society, published in its Proceedings, and copied into most of the public journals of the day.

The first theory was put forward by a writer

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whom we will call Mr A. His lucubrations are too valuable to bear mutilation, so we shall give them in his own words. 'On the first examination of this stone,' he says, 'I was not able to form any satisfactory conjecture concerning the inscription; but as the identity of the place where it was found ought to be materially considered, I wrote to a gentleman of the district for information, if there were any vestiges of antiquity, such as camps, fortifications, or the like in the vicinage. In answer to which inquiry, I was informed that there was nothing of this kind which he knew of, except the ruins of a priory about a mile distant.' One might have supposed that A. would have been disheartened at this circumstance, since an inscription having relation to the priory could hardly be expected to have turned up at so considerable a distance from the building itself—or rather its ruins. But so far from being disheartened, A. was perfectly satisfied. 'This is indeed sufficient for our purpose,' he wrote, 'and clears up the matter at once. *Clemens* (K·L·E·) *pontifex* (P·O·N·T·) *hic jacet* (H·I·) *sanctus* (S·) *servus* (S·) *dei* (I·D·E·). The second letter of the inscription is clearly an L, and the I·D·E· a transposition of D E I, from the ignorance of the sculptor; the meaning altogether being, that the stone was erected to the memory of one Clement, a dignified brother in the convent. (Literally, Clement the priest here lies, a holy servant of God.) Nothing can be more plain and easy than this.'

It may be worth while to dwell a few moments on this interpretation of the inscription, because it embodies one of the most marked peculiarities of antiquarian logic. We notice, first, that a 'dignified brother in a convent' could never have been called 'pontifex' by his fellow-friars, unless they were remarkably ignorant; and even then, it would be difficult to explain why they should have gone out of their way to adopt a mode of expression which must have been wholly unfamiliar to them. But the coincidence that three letters which can be taken to stand for the name Clement, should be followed by four which form the natural abbreviation of the title 'pontifex' is too much for our antiquary. And when he finds the name and title of the departed brother followed by the usual symbols for *hic jacet*, confidence gives place to absolute certainty. Otherwise, the difficulty in the last three letters would have proved too serious even for a professed archæologist. That a sculptor, however ignorant, having to engrave the letters D E I, should have begun with the last letter, seems to ordinary minds inconceivable; but to an antiquary *who has already formed his theory*, the mistake appears the most natural thing in the world. After this, the *prava latinitas* of the inscription is scarcely worth mentioning as a difficulty.

But A.'s solution was not satisfactory to all his brethren, however plain and easy it appeared to himself. Let us see what B. had to say on the subject. Again we quote the *ipsissima verba* of the ingenious archæologist. 'I was never so much astonished in my life,' says B., 'as at the perusal of Mr A.'s solution of the inscription in question. What a forced construction! What a preposterous idea! I will grant him that K is often found on monuments of antiquity in place of C; but how, in the name of wonder, could he imagine the two following letters to be L E, which are plainly Æ? But the cream of the jest is I·D·E·, a transposition of D E I.' B. is very ready, it will be noticed, to point the finger of scorn at the theory of his brother antiquary; he is equally ready to put forward his own solution of the difficulty. Let us see whether it is as plain and easy as A.'s. We must premise, however, that he had the advantage over A. in having actually visited the spot where the stone had been discovered, and the ruins of the supposed priory. 'On a personal survey,' he writes, 'I have discovered that the stone was found near an old Roman *military road*. Here, indeed, we have a light thrown upon the subject which will clear up all manner of difficulty. First, K is often found in inscriptions for C, and here standing for Cælius—*Æ, ædilis*, an officer whose business it was to see the roads kept in proper order; P·O·N·T·, *pontem;* H, Hadriani (the same person who built the wall to prevent the incursions of the Picts—thence called Hadrian's Wall); I S S I, *jussu*, the first *u* and the former part of the latter *u* being obliterated; D·E, *demolisit*. (In all, *Cælius ædilis, Hadriani jussu, pontem demolisit*—Cælius the ædile, by the order of Hadrian, demolished the bridge.)' Nor does B. fail to assign a reason for the demolition of the bridge, a fact which at first sight might seem surprising. The morass had been drained, it appears, and thus 'the bridge was rendered unnecessary.' As for the priory, that had no existence except in the brain of A., for the ruins belong to the old bridge, says B.

It is possible that, had B.'s interpretation come first, A. would have found as much to laugh at in it, as B. found in A.'s. He was in all probability preparing to demolish the new theory, and to rehabilitate his own, when a third hypothesis was set up by C., who scoffed at the two former views as 'the most ridiculous that ever entered the head of an antiquary.' C. remarks that, in inscriptions such as this one, each letter must be taken to represent a word. Just as Mr Oldbuck found a word for each letter of the inscription A. D. L. L., so C. boldly constructs a complete sentence from the fourteen letters of the Northumberland stone. 'I have taken,' he says, 'the most obvious and generally received meaning of the initials, and find the solution to stand thus: "*Cæsaris ex edicto per orbem nuntiatur templum hic instauratum sacrum sibi ipsi dicatum est;*" that is, "Through the edict of Cæsar, it is announced over the world that the temple here erected is consecrated to himself." Here we find Cæsar—after having, like Hercules, finished the greatest of his labours—after having extended his conquests over the Britons, usually called fierce and indomitable—erecting a temple on the limits of his ambition, and, flushed with victory, assuming the honours of a god! This,' he adds, 'is the most easy and natural construction, and perfectly consonant with the precise terms in which their inscriptions were generally couched. We need no other proof to convince us of the certainty of the fact; but, as a corroborating testimony, if we look into Horace, we shall find a passage, evidently referring to this very circumstance:

> The rank of god Augustus shall obtain,
> With wild Britannia added to his reign.'

C. does not explain how it is that history has omitted to record the fact that Augustus had 'extended his conquests over the Britons, usually called fierce and indomitable,' or had indeed ever

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set foot in Britain. Apparently oblivious of this somewhat important omission, he dwells enthusiastically on the historical value of the antique relic dug up in Northumberland. 'What,' he asks, 'would a Camden or a Holinshed have given to have traced the footsteps of Augustus Cæsar so far as the northernmost parts of the Brigantes (one of the divisions of the country under the Romans), or to have seen him introducing the Roman temple into Britain!' For C., like B., had been at the pains to visit the northern shire, in order to examine the now celebrated ruins, and he had come to the conclusion that both A. and B. had been mistaken as to the character of the stones. 'They bear a much greater resemblance to the remains of an old temple,' he says, 'especially one which has the uncouth figure of a sword upon it.'

C.'s labours were not unappreciated by the learned body to which he had sent them; for we find that he was at once elected as a member of the Antiquarian Society, and without a single dissentient voice.

And now there seemed nothing to prevent D., E., F., and all the other letters of the alphabet, from having their own account to give of the interesting relic. An inscription which had been so satisfactorily interpreted in three different ways might fairly be held to admit of other meanings; and as each new inquirer met with increased attention, there is every reason for believing that the world would have profited by an extended series of labours on the subject of the relic, but for an unforeseen and disastrous catastrophe.

It had not occurred either to B. or C. to make any inquiries respecting the treasure-trove in the neighbourhood of the place where the stone was found; whether they feared that others might step in and reap the reward due to their own labours, or from whatever cause, certain it is that they carried on their investigations with the most profound secrecy, until the time had come to divulge a theory—*totus, teres, atque rotundus*—to the outer world. But the results of their labours were too remarkable to remain unnoticed, even so far north as Northumberland; and thus it came to pass that in the course of time the news of the great discoveries which were being made reached the place where the stone had been found. An aged schoolmaster, amongst others, read in the papers of the day, or heard from some of his neighbours, about all the great things which had been done by the Society of Antiquaries. It is clear from the sequel that he must have been a man lost to all sense of the dignity of science. Had he but held his tongue, the world might still have admired the learning and the acumen with which our forefathers had dealt with an interesting relic of antiquity. But this hard-hearted and unfeeling old man would not hold his tongue; and it unfortunately happened that he was but too well acquainted with the real history of the stone. He remembered, he said, a kind-hearted cottager who had lived near the morass in which the stone was found. This cottager, anxious to warn all whom it might concern of the dangerous condition of the road in the neighbourhood of the morass, had been at the pains to carve upon a stone the injunction, 'Keep on this side.' But, like Bill Stubbs, the cottager was not an adept in the art of chiseling inscriptions, and accordingly the result of his labours was of a dubious character; and being valued rather according to its merits than according to the good-will of the carver, had been presently flung into the morass. Thence it had been dug out, under the influence of some malign star, to bring confusion and ridicule upon the learned antiquaries of England.

A YORKSHIRE COAL-CELLAR.

In the centre of the Yorkshire coal-district, that is to say, in the high undulating land round Barnsley, the usual characteristics of a coal-producing country, smoke, blackness, and desolation, are supplemented by the peculiar scenery of the county. The energy and rugged determination of Yorkshiremen prove them true sons of the soil, to judge from the persevering efforts nature makes here on all sides, that her woods and brakes shall retain their dominion. Let a colliery be abandoned, and nothing but barren heaps of slack and scoriæ remain to shew where busy tramways once ran, and 'hands' clustered round corves of coal; straightway, juvenile woods rise up in this district as by magic, while bluebells and faintly blushing anemones carpet their feet, and hide the cinders with a thin surface of verdure. The immense beeches and aged trees of all kinds that are found in this county, relics of old Sherwood Forest, everywhere look down with encouragement upon such praiseworthy attempts on the part of their scions. These are two distinct features of the Yorkshire coal-district. Then, again, the absence of brawling streams and slaty protruding rocks, the small farm-houses that nestle under every hill, and bring under cultivation at least some patches rescued from the woodland, contrast strongly with the dull-green rounded backs of the waste mountains in the Welsh coal-fields abandoned to bogs, and tenanted only by snipe and cotton-grass. Northumberland pit villages are squalid and wretched to the last degree: the vigorous arms of the 'Pogsmoor folk' suffer no dirty floors or broken windows in their neat rows of substantial stone-built cottages, where flowers brighten every lattice, and the children play, as yet happily unconscious of their doom. Perhaps, too, there are not so many public-houses; and there are certainly more schools here than in any other coal-district of our acquaintance.

With iron and coal, spite of the most rigorous laws, furnaces never seem to consume their own smoke; but in the Barnsley district, although both these substances are largely extracted and manufactured, though every form and shade of volleying, pouring, jetting, puffing, hissing, roaring, and shrieking steam and smoke abounds, the atmosphere is seldom overhung with a dark pall. Owing to its elevation, as compared with other coal-producing areas, these nuisances, together with their smuts and all other kindred abominations, are speedily dissipated. Doubtless Jack the puddler and Tom the collier will occasionally take more beer than is good for them, on exceptional Saturday nights, when their language may not be altogether parliamentary, but temperance and education have restrained much of the immorality in which they formerly claimed a vested right. The 'canny,' reserved, yet hearty character of Yorkshiremen has been tempered by participation in such calamities as have been but too frequent of late years, and of which the Oaks Colliery in its unworkable state, crowded with dead bodies, was of late but too

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awful an instance. Seriousness has largely taken the place of profanity, and steadiness of disorder; while the love of horses, flowers, and fair-play, innate in Yorkshiremen, has not in the coal-district been corrupted to any great extent by the late immoral proceedings at Sheffield, or the low dog-races and similarly questionable amusements which still divert the grinders and saw-filers at that place.

But here we are at 'the bank,' having passed by two or three rows of white-washed houses, where the workmen live, and stumbled with some difficulty over divers heaps of slack and cinders, crossed by tramways, till we mounted the last 'tip' to the pit-head. We will call it the Higher Carton Colliery, belonging (as almost all the country hereabouts does) to Earl Fitzwilliam. Our guide, an old wizened man of seventy-six, but strong and hardy for his age, meets us with a brisk 'Gude morning! I'm thinking ye are rather behind time; but it does not matter'—and leads us to the pit-head. A thick wire-rope, worked by a steam-engine in a house hard by, is drawing up a 'corve' of coal at the same time that an empty one goes down; while active fellows are wheeling the full corves off as fast as they come to bank, on the afore-mentioned tramways. After watching the continuous ascent and descent of the full and empty corves for a minute or two, our guide steps on to the platform just vacated by the ascending corve, and bids us do the same. Though this platform is not much more than a yard square, we three take our places, holding on to two iron bars, which cross the cage somewhat higher than our heads, not without a little inward trepidation on the part of us strangers, and a whispered comparison of ourselves to Calcraft's subjects under the fatal beam. Not a moment is lost, however, and we immediately sink; this act is followed by the same disagreeable sensations in the neighbourhood of the midriff and diaphragm as those which accompany sea-sickness. Rapidly, with an instant's pause perhaps, our cage passes beams of wood and bricks, while the light fades, grows blue, disappears. Down, down, down into darkness we sink, till, after sixty yards' descent, appears a glimmer of light. We drop down by the side of a collier with a lamp, and at the shock of touching ground, are only too glad to jump out.

The sensation of sickness has disappeared, but left us giddy and faint for a second or two, like men who walk a ship's deck in a storm. At length we find our sea-legs, and are ushered into a cheerful white-washed passage, something like those seen in jails, and lighted at intervals by gas. At the end is an office, fitted with forms, desks, &c., where another and younger attendant takes our hats and coats, and metamorphoses us into amateur colliers by the aid of flannel-jackets and low-crowned caps. Providing ourselves with safety-lamps, and a short sharp-pointed walking-stick, we now sally forth to inspect the underground economy of the pit.

From the further extremity of the gas-lighted passage, we are first conducted to the stables. Hewn from the coal itself, and cheerfully lit and white-washed, many a horse on earth might well envy their warmth. They are kept scrupulously clean, and give favourable impressions of care for the comfort of their inmates, which are now, however, at work within the recesses of the pit. A cat rubs herself with loud purring against our legs as we emerge, just as happens in all well-conducted stables above ground, and we notice, with approval, that she is of the deepest black, as befits the locality and all its concomitants. Our preconceived notions with regard to coal-pits receive a shock as we leave the gas-light behind us and strike into the main working. There is no wet dripping from the roofs, and persistently trickling down your neck, as is the case in so many other subterranean abodes; no puddles stand in the gloom before your feet. From the drizzle and mud of a wet day in the upper air, we have all at once descended to a road strewed, it might be, with summer-dust. Dust lies thick on every projection of the black coal-wall on either side; the foot sinks deeply into it; it rises imperceptibly, and fills the eyes and mouth. The most curious sensation, however, is the perfect silence which prevails. It is almost oppressive to the ear—a silence which may be felt; and imagination increases its awe by picturing the many solid yards of rock and coal which lie between us and the active life of the upper world. No wonder that such influences are conducive to superstition with one set of minds, and to the glow of a healthy, if somewhat puritanic religion in another; that the Keltic miners of Cornwall hear the pixies sporting in their levels, and gnomes answering, knock for knock, from a vast distance inside the rock at which they are quarrying; to say nothing of the Cornish belief, which is almost universal, in the divining-rod; while their Teutonic brethren in Yorkshire are regular attendants at church or meeting, earnest-minded as a body, and many of them teetotallers—far too practical to put faith in 'aught like wizards or buzzards.'

As we pass into the darkness beyond the glare of gas, and our eyes are getting accustomed to the glimmer of the safety-lamps in our hands, all at once a strong odour of the country strikes upon our senses, a whiff it might be from a hay-field 'in the leafy month of June.' The mystery is soon explained. A door is opened on one side of the dark wall beside us, and discloses a spacious barn full of hay for the horses employed in the pit. Among the many contrasts of the place, this pleasant summer scent and sight is not the least. And now we commence descending a deep incline, laid with a set of rails, while the roof and sides are contracted till you have to stoop the head, as when walking the under-decks of a man-of-war. Respiration becomes more difficult, and the air is warm and close. At every twenty yards or so of this incline, holes are cut in the coal, by the side of the tramway, to act as 'refuges,' when the train of trucks runs down here. This is done by the order of government, to prevent the numerous accidents which would otherwise occur. Our guides look round nervously, and listen once or twice, but nothing is to be heard. At length, they make us enter one of these refuges, where, on seats cut from the coal *in situ*, we wait some minutes while they eagerly listen. 'I'm thinking, Sammy,' observes the younger one, 'we can make another, eh?' 'Very well,' replies he; and we hurry on to the next 'refuge.' Immediately, a low rumble is heard from the quarter by which we have just descended. 'Keep back, gentlemen,' says Sammy. The rumbling increases, and draws nearer with many a crash and rattle, till in an instant, as it seems, the corves swiftly rush past, impelled by their own weight, in a cloud of coal-dust, and with

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a rattle and shaking which reminds us of an express-train passing through a small country-station in the upper world, combined with all the variations Southey imputes to the Falls of Lodore. These corves are small but substantially built, each holding half a ton of coal; but the impetus with which they shoot past into Stygian darkness, and the resounding echoes they leave behind them, cause us to congratulate ourselves on being off their track and safe in the refuge. On we push, dimly groping our way over blocks of coal, iron rails, beams of wood, and the usual *débris* of a mine, till the rattle of an ascending set of trucks is heard, drawn up by steam-power at the pit-head. Standing aside, we suffer this to pass; and then, after some few more minutes' walking, reach the junction (as the foot of the incline is termed), where we have leisure to rest a short time and examine the corves.

It is eight hundred yards from here to the pit-head, and all around it ramify numerous smaller roads, leading to the different workings. The corves are there filled with coal, and either pushed by boys, or more usually drawn by horses, along minor tramways to this junction. The corves are black and dusty; but a train of them is just starting for a distant part of the workings, and we cannot do better, if we would gain an adequate notion of what labour in a coal-mine really is, than accompany them. Sammy and I accordingly sit on the bottom of a corve, while the other two occupy another in a similar manner; the whip is cracked, and off we go. Our position is in nowise enviable. The heat is intense, the roadway very broken and uneven; we are packed like sardines in their tin box, or slaves during the horrors of a middle passage; and while one hand is busy alleviating the miseries of the frequent jolts (the corves having no springs), the other holds the safety-lamp, to make out where we are being hurried. Rattle, rattle! jolt, jolt! through a cloud of coal-dust we are whirled, along a narrow passage, whose sides and ceiling seem more closely converging upon us each instant. 'Keep your head down!' says Sammy, and we bend almost double. At the same moment, we are aware that a train of coal is passing us. Then comes a shock that sends our heart into our mouths. The corve we are in has broken away from the rest, and run into the wall, covering Sammy with the fragments it has torn off, while a large block of coal, weighing some ten or twelve pounds, drops off the passing train on to my shoulder.

Luckily, we are not hurt, only a little blacker than we were before. Another crack of the whip, a good deal of pushing on the part of our unseen drivers, and we are once more on the rail, and rattling away into what might be the jaws of Tartarus itself. At length comes a glimmer of lamps, and we draw up with a jerk that knocks the little remaining breath out of our bodies, beside several hirsute, semi-naked colliers, who lean on their picks, help us out of our cramped positions, and chaff our conductor. 'Why, Sammy, who'd a thought of seeing you here again!' 'Ah, lads,' he replies, 'I have brought you two new workmen to take your places;' and he points us out to the amused pitmen. A laugh, which apparently proceeds from the ground, causes us to discern a man lying at full length, clad only in a pair of trousers, under a shelf of coal. The lamp under his knee shews him where to direct his blows, his pick is busily plied, while beads of perspiration stand thickly on his muscular frame, as with a lump of coal for a pillow in this recumbent position, he takes his turn at the working. The others fill the corves as rapidly as possible with the proceeds of his toil. It is explained to us that we are now two miles from the pit-head; that each man fills some twenty or twenty-one of these corves daily, thus earning six or seven shillings, but that the work is too hard for more than four or five days a week; and then, with another glance at the dark limited space where so much human energy is expended to procure us warmth, we jump into our vacant corves, and are once more whirled back through heat, dust, and darkness to the junction. We have seen the inner life of a coal-pit, and must now grope our way by another road to the pit-head.

On our walk through a narrow pathway, we pass several deserted workings. These are dangerous, owing to the giving way of the roof, and thus have been disused. Weird, cold, and silent are they, as we penetrate a few yards into them, and with our safety-lamps well elevated, attempt to peer into their depths. Men have been killed or maimed in these horrid dens, ere the instinct of self-preservation mastered the love of gain, and dictated their abandonment. The men's dinners are hung against the side of the passages here and there as we pass; a needful precaution, as the pit swarms with rats. Now we arrive at the 'brattices,' or ventilating doors, which insure a thorough draught in the pit. A stream of cool air meets us, and now we reach the return current of hot and exhausted air, returning after its four-mile circuit from the other end of the pit. It is like the breath of the sirocco, causing our clothes to stick to us, and a perspiration to break out over our faces, and permeates the cooler strata of air much in the same manner as the Gulf Stream winds its long course, like a blue ribbon, unpolluted and unmingling with the colder waters of the Atlantic, for hundreds of miles. Occasionally, we pass a collier at work, with a candle stuck to a lump of clay on his hat. There is no danger of explosive gases in this well-ventilated mine; and both the dreaded fire-damp, and still more dangerous choke-damp, are almost unknown here; though not five miles from where we stood the Oaks Colliery still held its hecatomb of slain colliers, victims to imprudence and bad ventilation.

A little farther, and we reach a huge furnace, kept burning day and night, to secure an abundance of air and a thorough draught. The wooden beams which elsewhere hold up the roof, yield here to a walling of brick, and shew us that our pilgrimage is at an end, as we emerge speedily at the pit-head, from which we are soon elevated to bank. We are black with coal-dust from head to foot: our wives, indeed, would not recognise us. It is not till a week has elapsed that we can get rid of the coal engrained in our face and hands, and clinging to the roots of our hair. Still, it has been a new experience, given us an insight into the mode by which our domestic coal-cellars are supplied from the great natural coal-cellars of the nation; and last, not least, gained a large accession of sympathy for those who labour night and day in the bowels of the earth midst heat, discomfort, and danger, to fill our grates with

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fuel. We gather up our treasures of coal-fossils, many of which we dislodged for ourselves from the roof as we passed along; say a few kind words of parting and thanks to our guides, accompanying the same with a more substantial gratuity; and then emerge, as we came, over coal-tips and tramways.

The sharp air of a spring day strikes fragrantly upon our heated faces. We welcome with delight the sights and sounds of upper life, the singing of the birds, the splash of the reservoir against its barriers, the transition from the chambers of darkness and silence to the bright and bracing atmosphere of earth.

A COUNTY FAMILY.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—AT THE COTTAGE.

It was no 'pride that apes humility' which caused the Blackburns to speak of their residence on the Curlew as 'the cottage.' It was indeed a miniature house, with everything about it, including the scenery, of the same duodecimo description. The river itself, although pretty deep, was but thirty feet across; the banks on each side, albeit quite precipitous, could scarcely be called cliffs; and although at the bridge on the road to Mosedale they diverged, leaving a broad view to the inhabitants of the Fishery, and allowing air and sun to visit it freely, at the spot on which Richard had built his bower, there was but just room for a narrow carriage-road, which led past it through the still contracting gorge to a mill about a mile up stream, after which it became a mere horse-track to Redmoor. On the opposite side there was not even a footpath, the bank descending quite sheer. Had the road not existed, the cottage would have been upon an island. As it was, it stood upon a curved promontory, the small portion of which not actually occupied by the building was devoted to the tiniest of flower-gardens; on to this the windows of the two small sitting-rooms looked, and indeed immediately opened, so that one step from either brought you among the roses, which seemed to grow in mid-stream. If there had been any object of size within sight, the whole scene would have been dwarfed, and made almost ridiculous, from the exceedingly small scale of everything; but being where it was, nothing could be more perfect and charming. It might have been transported, bridge and all, to the stage of Old Drury (on which there would have been plenty of room for it), and used with the lime-light for the performance of *La Sonnambula*. On the Curlew, there was sometimes a moon, which, in its humble way, was also not ineffectual; bridge and stream, cottage and garden, were then bathed in such dreamy splendours as no brush can portray.

There was a boat-house attached to this little territory, looking like a boat towed astern by a ship which is not much bigger; and it was for *it*, or rather its contents, that the whole place had been erected by Fisherman Richard without the slightest reference to the picturesque. For him the Curlew had had no other charms beyond that one caught fish in it. The decorations of the little dining-room were characteristic in a high degree of its former owner, and if not artistic, had a certain quaint and natural fitness of their own. It was a sort of fisherman's sanctum, where everything that is most dear to the lovers of the gentle art was reverently enshrined. Not only did every weapon—net, and rod, and spear—that is used against the finny tribe, find a place about its walls and across its low raftered roof, but even the very fishes were there that had fallen victims to them. Unlike those barbarians who eat the prisoners whom they take in war, Richard had preserved his finest captives and stuffed *them*. The grinning trophies of his skill swam, as it were, each in his ample glass case, round and round the room—here a vast pike with cruel jaws agape, and here a speckled trout, and here a fat round chub; each, too, had the particulars of its capture described with great minuteness upon a written label. 'This pike was killed a little above Curlew Bridge, by Richard Blackburn, Esq., of Blackburn Manor, with this hook' (a very rusty little weapon by this time), 'and part of this line. It weighed twenty-seven and a half pounds;' and so on. Stuffed water-birds, 'Shot by Richard Blackburn of Blackburn Manor,' alternated with their hereditary foes or victims, so that the whole apartment had the appearance of a natural history museum. The drawing-room was destitute of ornament, though literature and art were in a manner represented by the *Angler's Guide* and a book of artificial flies, which lay on the otherwise empty shelves.

Mrs Blackburn's efforts at decoration had been confined to the invalid's apartment, which had, in accordance with a suggestion of Ellen's, been wainscoted with mirrors, so that he could command from his pillow the bridge and all who passed over it, as well as the road and a long reach of river. If the poor squire had been acquainted with the poets, he might have likened himself to the Lady of Shalott, to whom the world was shewn in the same fashion; for he, too, 'saw the highway near,' 'the red cloaks of the market-girls,' the pack-horses of the miller with their white sacks, the farmer 'on his ambling pad,' and all the life that the place afforded. For him, too, 'the river eddy whirled' continuously, and the still pool dimpled, while the stealthy rush of the main stream close by soothed him with its monotone. 'Men may come and men may go,' it doubtless said to him, if not in those very words, yet with their full significance, 'but I flow on for ever.' It was a tender and provident thought that had thus supplied him with visions of a world to which he would have been otherwise blind, and it seemed to afford him pleasure. That very afternoon his eyes were seen to brighten as across the little bridge rode Lucy Waller, who even so soon had come on horseback, doubtless to inquire how the sick man had borne his journey. He saw her stop to look up with pity at his open lattice-window, and to kiss her hand to Ellen standing in the garden beneath.

Lucy found her friend somewhat pale from the shock she had lately suffered, but of which Ellen said not a word. Her uncle's conduct was inexplicable to her. She had often known him dictatorial and menacing, but always with some definite object to be gained. But what could his design be now in bidding her, as he had expressed it, 'play fast and loose' with Herbert Stanhope? As for obeying him, the idea never entered into her mind; but it was scarcely less degrading to have had such a shameful course of conduct enjoined upon her. Upon the

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whole, taking into consideration his behaviour on the previous portion of the journey, she was inclined to think that her uncle's brain was getting disordered through his intemperate habits. But even that was not a comforting reflection, for he was not likely to amend his ways in the seclusion of the Fishery, where there was still less to occupy him than at the Manor.

'What a paradise you have got here!' cried Lucy when she found herself in the rose-garden. 'To me, just come out of smoky Mosedale, it seems too beautiful to be real. I think, as I look at it, surely this will all melt away before my eyes.'

'It is very pretty,' said Ellen sighing; 'and yet, though I have begun to miss you so already, I would not have you here with us if I could.'

'Not have me here! Why not?'

Ellen coloured; for she had uttered that wish involuntarily, with Uncle William's words about Lucy still ringing in her ears.

'Well, it seems so lonely,' said she, 'and so shut out of the world. The river, too, has such a melancholy sound.'

'As one thinks, darling, so the bell tinks,' said Lucy archly. 'What would you say, now, if I made the stream discourse music to you, and the sunshine stay here all day?'

'O Lucy, you have seen John.'

'What an excellent guesser of riddles you are, my dear,' cried Lucy laughing. 'Yes, I have seen him, and that is partly why I came so soon here to see you. I thought it would please you to know that he is so near—that if, for instance, you dropped this rose-leaf into the swift stream, it would float to him in a few minutes.'

'How good and kind you are to think of John and I, when'—— There was something, if not of annoyance, yet of embarrassment in her friend's face that made Ellen hesitate to finish the sentence, as she had intended to do, with some reference to Lucy's dead lover. Something, too, there was in the nature of Lucy's last remark which suddenly struck her and made her pause. Lucy was always kind; but such a tender thought as that of the mere nearness of her lover making Ellen happy, was somewhat uncharacteristic of Mr Waller's daughter. Could love itself, new love, have possibly suggested it to her?

'What's that?' said Ellen, pretending to be interrupted by a sound that broke upon her ear—the slow beat of a horse's feet. 'There is some one coming down the road from Redmoor; I wonder whether it is Mr Stanhope.'

'It is likely enough,' said Lucy carelessly, and turning her head in the opposite direction.—'What a pretty picture might be made of yonder reach, with the arch of the bridge for its frame.' She had suddenly grown pink to the ear-tips.

'And what did you say to John, Lucy? Or, if you will not confess that, what was it he said to you?'

'Well, my darling, the fact is, he has come down again to Mosedale upon the same business as before, it seems; there is something wrong again with the reservoir. You must not be angry, dear Ellen, but I am afraid papa is vexed with Mr Denton.'

'Vexed with John?' cried Ellen, in a tone that would have fitted 'Vexed with the sunshine? vexed with the blue air?' 'What can he be vexed with John about?'

'I can't tell, dear; but so it is. Papa is greatly worried by other matters just now—grievously troubled, I may say—and doubtless he was easily put out. There has been, at all events, some difference of opinion between them; and Mr Denton declines to be our guest. I am more annoyed by it than I can tell you.'

'But what did John say, Lucy? I mean, what were his very words?'

'Oh, of course he said nothing within *my* hearing but what was pleasant: regretted exceedingly that he felt himself unable to take advantage of our hospitality, and so forth. He will be some time in the town, however, and I hope the matter will be made up: indeed, I heard him tell papa that a day or two would decide which of them was in the right.'

'But did he send no message to *me*?'

'Well, papa was with me, darling, so that he could not be very communicative; but when I spoke of you, it was easy to see in whose safe keeping he had placed his heart. I told him, of course, that you had come here, within a mile or two of Mosedale. "What! at the Fishery Cottage?" cried he; and you should have seen how he flushed up. Though you may not write to him, there would be no harm in your gathering a rose, and giving it to him by deputy, would there?'

Ellen plucked a flower, and smiling her thanks, kissed Lucy fondly.

'What! am I to give him that too?' said the other laughing.—'There, how serious that has made you look! What a thing it is to be jealous!'

'No, dear, it was not that; what makes me grave is the thought of there being any quarrel between John and Mr Waller. I can't understand it.'

'That is because you don't understand business, dear. So long as men have nothing to do with each other's affairs, they consort together as peaceably as women, and more so. They chatter and laugh, and tell stories to one another, like school-boys in holiday-time. But directly a question of pecuniary interest arises to set them in antagonism, they grow hard and rude enough.'

'But John is never hard nor rude, I am sure.'

'Well, I don't know Mr Denton so well as you do,' said Lucy laughing; 'but I must confess he was rather excited in his manner this morning—quite as much so as papa: though papa was most to blame, since he was in his own house. But, O Ellen, he is so full of trouble, if you only knew, you would forgive him all, I'm sure.—But hush; don't let us talk about it. Here is some one coming.—Why, how slowly you ride, Mr Stanhope! We have heard your horse's hoofs this quarter of an hour. We thought it was the miller's nag with the sacks.'

'I am glad to hear that any grist comes to my mill,' said Herbert rather ruefully. 'Mr Moffat has just been proving to me that it never does.—How is your grandfather, Miss Ellen, after his long drive? And how do you all like your new quarters? At present, I can scarcely congratulate you upon the change: I have not seen you look so pale these many weeks. I am afraid you had an anxious journey.'

'I am quite well, thank you,' said Ellen coldly; for there was something just then unpleasing to her in the manifestation of Mr Stanhope's interest; 'but we are all a little tired.'

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'Don't you believe her,' cried a gruff voice from the dining-room, where Mr William had been keeping himself private with the object of ascertaining whether Ellen should say anything to Lucy of his recent behaviour, but had only overheard enough of the conversation to make him suspicious. 'We are only moped to death in this rat-hole. Come in, and let's be jolly. What say you to our taking the young ladies on the water? Miss Lucy will come with me in the skiff, and you can take the punt with Ellen.'

'Thank you, Mr William, but I have no time just now,' said Lucy, gathering up the skirts of her riding-habit. 'I promised papa to return home as soon as I had seen how you all were.'

'And I must go up to grandfather,' said Ellen, 'and take him these flowers.—Good-bye, dear Lucy; you will be here early to-morrow, will you not, and spend a good long day with us?'

'As soon after breakfast as I can get papa away, dear; and I will be sure not to forget your message.'

'Message! what message?' inquired Mr William testily, with a mistrustful glance at his niece.

'Never you mind, Mr William,' said Lucy gaily; 'that message is under the rose.'

CHAPTER XXXIV.—THE WARNING.

As is usual with folks who find themselves in new quarters, the household at the Fishery were astir early the next morning, which was a warm and sunny one. Mr William—who had retired late, as was his wont, and kept Stanhope from his bed with urgent appeals for another cigar and one more glass of grog—rose earlier than any. He was heard fussing about the house a little after dawn, and rousing up the old fisherman, who was attached to the premises much as the punt was, without which he rarely moved. He had been Squire Richard's factotum on the river, and had gauged the capacity of every curve, and fall, and pool with respect to fish. The previous night, he had cast bread upon the waters in the shape of a gallon of worms, in a particular spot miles away down stream—from which investment he had promised Mr William great results; and the two were off together, long before the breakfast-hour, on that hopeful expedition. They had taken plenty of provisions with them, and it was understood that they would not return till late in the afternoon. Ellen at her chamber-window heard their gruff voices mingle with the grating of the punt-pole, and saw them glide aslant across the yielding lilies, and into the shadow of the bridge; and sighed. They were going whither she would fain have gone, poor girl; and would presently pass Mosedale, and perhaps see *him*.

The swallows were skimming across the stream, and dipping their wings; the dragon-flies were flitting about like living light; the fish leaped high in air, and sank in widening circles; and all the life of the river was awake and glad. The garden beneath, new dipped in dew, sent up its grateful incense; and the fresh voices of the air seemed to call to her to come forth and enjoy. Ah! if she could only have been free to welcome him to that new home, how fair and bright a place it would have seemed! For a moment she was almost tempted to inquire why that slender skein of duty should bind her hand and foot as it did, and keep her from him she loved, when the least effort of her own would have snapped it. But she put the thought away from her as swiftly as it had intruded, and descended, all the more charming for her victory, to gather a posy for the breakfast-table, and, as fresh and bright as any rosebud of them all, to busy herself with household cares. Then, after breakfast, as usual, to grandfather's room, there to stay for the long morning.

Virtue had its reward for her in at least this respect, that the loving forethought that had supplied the sick man with these living pictures of the world without, now bore fruit for her also. It was almost as good as being out of doors that day—bright herald of the coming summer though it was—to sit in that mirrored chamber, and watch all things move around her; for all things had motion; even the bridge would change from gloom to gray, from gray to gloom, as the light clouds flecked the sun, or left it bare; and the one willow for which the road had room, hanging its disheveled hair in the restless stream, 'shook alway' like a poplar. The feathery reeds in the island below bridge danced like the daffodils, and, like them, made a picture in her mental eye for ever. Suddenly she started up with a muffled cry, and looked towards the window; on the shining wall beside her had been cast the reflex of an approaching horseman; and he is now upon the bridge. His eyes are fixed upon the cottage, upon the window, upon her. He touches the red rose that blushes in his button-hole, and doffs his hat. What can have brought John Denton hither, whom her grandfather has forbidden to visit her? whom she has passed her word she will not receive? The sick man has seen him also, and fixes on her a reproving look. It seems to say as plainly as spoken words: 'I am obeyed no longer, then, being smitten thus sorely, and already half dead; and yet I have loved you so, Nelly, and tended you in the days gone by.'

'You do me wrong, grandfather,' cried she passionately. 'I know that you think I have disobeyed you, and broken my word, but indeed it is not so. I don't know why John is here. If you forbid it, I will not see him—if you do forbid it.' And although her tone might have melted a harder heart than his, he did forbid it. Had he been lying for months with nought to comfort him but the thought of how the Blackburn race might still hold its own and keep its place, through her, to forego his desire now, when all but accomplished—with the very man beneath his roof to whom he looked to have her wedded? Had he not even given him his Will in keeping, in token of that confidence? Was not the world aware and expectant of her matching with him? Had not his reprobate son himself submitted to the arrangement as inevitable? And now, should he risk all being undone by permitting this John Denton to see Nelly? No, no.

'Do not fear, grandfather; since you forbid it, I will not see him; I will stay here;' and she drew her chair behind the curtain of the bed, out of his sight, and listened with pale face, pressing her hand against her beating heart. Presently Mrs Blackburn's hurried step was heard upon the stairs, and she came in looking confused and troubled.

'Nelly,' whispered she, 'I want you a minute; come outside with me.'

'Grandfather knows,' said Ellen quietly. 'He saw John Denton come over the bridge.'

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Mrs Blackburn glanced at the sick man; his eyes were moist, and had an expression in them of unwonted tenderness.

'Has he given you leave to see him?' said she. 'If so, why, of course, I shall say nothing: though it seems a pity, after matters have gone so far with Mr Stanhope; and I am afraid Willy will be very angry.'

'I care nothing for Uncle William's anger, grandmother,' said Ellen proudly; 'but I have promised not to see John, and I will keep my word, since grandfather will not loose me from it.'

There was a knock at the door: a gentleman had come, said the servant, to see Mr William Blackburn on very important business.

'To see Willy? What can John Denton want to see my Willy for? He has no right to pick a quarrel with *him*, you know, Ellen,' said Mrs Blackburn apprehensively.

'John Denton is not quarrelsome, grandmother, whatever folks may choose to say,' answered Ellen resolutely, and piqued by the recollection of Lucy's words the previous day; 'and if he has important business, it ought to be listened to.'

'Well, we all know what the business is about,' responded Mrs Blackburn tartly; 'and, for my part, I won't see him, and that's flat; and I am sure if Willy was here he would say the same.—Go down to the gentleman, Mary, and say Mr William is from home, and will not return till the evening; and say that I am very sorry, but that I am engaged in Mr Blackburn's sick-room.'

Ellen thought, with indignation, that her grandmother might at least have gone down and spoken civilly to John, who had been always so kind to her; but she was too proud to say so. She sat where she was, following with reproachful eyes the movements of Mrs Blackburn, who affected to busy herself about the room, but who was in reality sufficiently uncomfortable. She knew in her heart that she was not acting well; but she feared to meet John face to face, who had always had great influence over her, and whose present grounds of complaint she could not gainsay.

Anthony lay with eyes fast closed, but perhaps listening as eagerly as the others.

The maid came up again with a second message. 'It was impossible,' the gentleman said, 'that he could leave the house without making the communication he was charged with to some member of the family.'

'Then let Mr Stanhope see him,' said Mrs Blackburn, 'for there's nobody else to do it.'

'Stop!' said Ellen decisively; 'that shall not be, grandmother. You may treat John as ill as you please, but not falsely. If Mr Stanhope is to see him, it must be only as grandfather's friend. I have borne enough as it is.'

'You are a naughty, disobedient girl,' said Mrs Blackburn angrily. 'If your grandfather could only speak, you would not dare to behave so.'

'I should be sorry, indeed, for him to think ill of me,' said Ellen firmly; 'but if you persist in your intention to insult John in the way you speak of, I will go down to him myself, and take his hand—and—and you will never see me here again, grandmother.'

'Do you hear *that*, Anthony?' cried Mrs Blackburn with indignation. 'Willy always told me that you were wrong in thinking so highly of Ellen; and yet they say you have left all your money to this girl, who flouts you thus away from him.'

'I do not want grandfather's money,' said Ellen quietly, 'as he well knows. I have never tried to win anything from him but his love.—If you think it is right that John Denton should be told what is not the truth, grandfather, look at me now and say so with your eyes.—See, he keeps them fast closed! I knew he was not one to approve of what is false, in order to gain his ends.'

'Well, well, I will go and see Mr Stanhope myself, and explain matters,' said Mrs Blackburn in a conciliating tone.

'Nay, grandmother, but I must send the message,' said Ellen with quiet determination.—'Come in, Mary' (for the girl had been bidden to wait outside the door). 'You are to tell Mr Denton from your mistress, with her compliments, that no member of the family can see him to-day; but that if the nature of his business will permit him to do so, he can communicate it to Mr Stanhope, who is in the dining-room.'

The servant departed, repeating to herself Miss Ellen's words, for fear she should forget them; and in a minute or two Stanhope's step was heard leaving the apartment below for the drawing-room, into which the visitor had been shewn.

John Denton and the young Squire of Curlew Hall had never met since they had stood together on Slogan, eighteen months ago; and during that interval, short as it was, there had been considerable change in both of them. John, always self-reliant and self-composed, had become even more conscious of his own powers, of which his improved position in the world had also afforded ample proof, had he needed such. Instead of the somewhat coarse attire which he had worn as overlooker, he was now dressed, although very plainly, in all respects as a gentleman; and he looked every inch a gentleman, and something more. If there was an absence of that careless ease which sits (not ungracefully) upon those for whom all things have been made smooth from the cradle to manhood, the steady purpose of his face was far from hard or egotistic; while, as he now regarded his rival (as he well knew him in intention to be), a certain chivalrous courtesy lit up his fine features, and gave his tone a gentleness with which genuine feeling could always inspire it, but which, in conventional intercourse, it lacked.

Perhaps the knowledge that Ellen's heart was his, not to be won from him by this man, nor any other, permitted him to be thus generous; or perhaps the straitened, if not desperate circumstances of his rival, of which he had heard reports (unfounded, indeed, though, as it happened, true enough) in Mosedale, affected him with pity, and gave softness to his air and manner.

Herbert Stanhope was even more altered in appearance, though not, as in the other's case, for the better. He had grown paler and thinner of late months; and anxiety and wounded pride had set their marks upon a face that had once evoked Denton's antagonism by its calm insouciance.

The two young men shook hands, if not with cordiality, yet with perfect frankness.

'I am sorry to have been thus obliged to trouble you, Mr Stanhope,' said Denton, 'but, since Mr William Blackburn is not at home, I have no choice; the matter on which I have come here

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being, unhappily, of the last importance, and not admitting of delay.'

'No apology is at all necessary, Mr Denton; the occupation you have interrupted was only that of making artificial flies; and I assure you that the arrival of any visitor in this place, whatever his business, is quite a godsend to us. I think I should remark, however, that if the matter in question, which you say is so important, has any private and particular reference to Mr Blackburn, I have no authority, and indeed must altogether decline to be its recipient.'

'The matter I have in hand,' said Denton gravely, 'touches Mr William Blackburn only as it affects every one else in this house, yourself included. It is not, I confess, upon his account I have come. I mentioned his name merely as being the most proper person to receive my communication; and yet, if there had been none dearer to me under this roof than he, I should still have thought it my duty to have made it. I must beg of you, first of all, Mr Stanhope, to take upon trust, with only my word to guarantee it—that I am well acquainted with certain matters connected with my profession, which is that of civil engineer, that I am not one to be mistaken, for instance, about the strength of an embankment. And it is with the acutest sense of the peril in which you and all persons now resident on the Curlew stand from the state of the reservoir on Redmoor, that I have ridden here this day, and with no other object whatsoever.'

'Do you mean to tell me that there is any danger of the great embankment on the moor giving way, Mr Denton?' asked Stanhope, starting to his feet.

'There is, in my opinion, very great danger of it; I should say, indeed, if the wind were east instead of south, as at present, the most imminent danger. In that case, the wind would bring the waves right down upon the embankment; and it is not in a condition to resist it, sir, it is not indeed. I entreat you, I adjure you, Mr Stanhope, to give heed to what I say.'

'There is no fear of my neglecting such a warning, Mr Denton. Independently of the risk to our friends in this house, and to human life generally, supposing I were so brutal as to disregard it, I have property on the Curlew which, even if this catastrophe should be delayed, must sooner or later be destroyed by it. I will not only do my best to persuade Mr Blackburn and his family to quit this spot, but I shall not lose a moment in representing to the authorities at Mosedale, with whom I have some influence'——

'That would be time wasted,' interrupted Denton solemnly, 'and there is, in my judgment, not one hour to waste. I have spoken—I have warned in vain. The directors of the company, in the person of their chairman, have refused to accede to my request that the reservoir should be examined.'

'But I thought that matter was looked to last year, and, if I remember rightly, you yourself, Mr Denton, were the engineer appointed for that very purpose.'

'I was, sir; and I made my Report, wherein, as you may read for yourself, I even then contended that not enough had been done for safety. From personal observation of the embankment the last two days, I am confident that mischief of a magnitude such as those people yonder'—and he pointed westward with his hand—'have no conception of, is—— Good Heaven! what is that?'

'It is my miller's fowling-piece, if I am not much mistaken,' said Stanhope smiling, 'though the echoes of the Curlew make its sound somewhat portentous. Did you think it was the bursting of the dam?'

'Do not jest, Mr Stanhope—do not treat my apprehensions as if they were idle fears. I am a young man, but not ignorant of the things of which I speak. I am as sure of what I now tell you as I am of my own existence.'

'But it seems so strange, Mr Denton, that these directors should not in so important a matter have taken action upon the Report of their own officer.'

'I was not their ordinary engineer, sir, but only the substitute for him. My friend Mr Flywheel delegated me to act for him in the affair, which he did not understand to be of the magnitude and importance which it really was. If he were on the spot now, I would stake my existence that his view would be the same as mine—that he would have the dam blown up this very hour, so as to decrease the water-pressure. There was a crack in the embankment last year that was sufficient to admit a penknife; there is one to-day in which I can almost place my hand.'

'But why is not Mr Flywheel at his post?'

'He is abroad, sir, employed on an Italian railway. I would to Heaven he were here.'

'But you in his absence are his representative, are you not?'

'I was, sir,' answered Denton, with flashing eyes, 'until yesterday. But when I found I was not listened to by the Reservoir Board, I at once threw up my appointment. To hold it for another day, would be, in my judgment, to be accessary before the fact to—— But Heaven only knows to what; there is no limit to the ruin which may happen.'

'Then you are not come here in any official capacity, Mr Denton?'

'In none whatever, sir; though, of course, if my profession were not what it is I should feel no cause for these apprehensions. I have lately been appointed resident engineer on the Mosedale Railway, or I should not have been in the town at all. If, if'—and the young man hesitated, and crimsoned to the forehead—'if circumstances had not brought one that is dearer to me than life itself into this perilous place, I should not perhaps have visited Redmoor at all. God grant that I have not done so, even now, in vain. You will not neglect this warning, Mr Stanhope—promise me that; or beware lest the guilt of blood—the destruction of man and woman, as well as the ruin of hearth and homestead—should lie at your door.'

It was curious to see how, as the one seemed to grow more earnest and impassioned with every word, the other became more calm, and even incredulous.

'I will certainly put our friends here on their guard, Mr Denton. I am sure it is most kind of you.'

'It is nothing of that sort, Mr Stanhope,' broke in the other. 'You do not say it is kindness to warn a bather who cannot swim of a current which you know will sweep him to his death. It is my duty, and nothing more. *You*, sir, can have no miserable reasons, founded on a few pounds of cost, to refuse to listen to me, such as have made those in Mosedale deaf and blind; nor, as I trust, have

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you any personal prejudice so strong against me as to make you discredit my words because they are mine.'

'Indeed, Mr Denton,' returned Stanhope, flushing in his turn, 'you do me no more than justice. It is impossible to misunderstand your motive, or to fail to be moved by such generous earnestness: you may depend upon it, so far as my influence extends in this household, your warning shall have all the attention which it deserves.'

'Thank you, Mr Stanhope, thank you,' said Denton fervently, as he held out his hand. 'You have taken a weight from off my mind such as I can scarcely bear to think of, even now that it is gone.—Good-bye, sir; and God bless you.'

Stanhope accompanied him to the door, and saw him mount and turn his horse's head towards Redmoor. 'Are you going to take another look, then, at the embankment yonder?'

'Yes, Mr Stanhope, though it is useless. I am also going to Curlew Mill to give my warning there. I am not permitted to avert this peril, it seems; but, so far as in me lies, I must strive to abate its consequences;' and with one look up at the sky, where the light clouds were floating leisurely to eastward, he shook the reins and cantered up the gorge.

NONSENSE-VERSES.

WHOEVER, in these days of struggle and hard work, adds to 'the public stock of harmless pleasure,' is peculiarly deserving of a word of praise. Even the wit that is most common at present consists chiefly in verbal ingenuity, and is at best but an intellectual puzzle, which rather strains than relaxes the brains that have so much need of repose. It is something that nobody can urge against *The Bab Ballads*,* the charge that they weary the mental faculties, and it is more to promise that they must needs elicit a hearty laugh from all who are capable of understanding fun at all. The author himself has affixed to them this modest motto: 'Much Sound and little Sense.' But the sound that belongs to them is one of the healthiest—a hearty roar; and their sense is at least sufficient to tickle the heart-strings. Their excessive simplicity—their utter absurdity—take the reader by storm, and forbid him, unless he is one of those unfortunates who are nothing if they are not critical, to speculate upon the why and wherefore of his mirth. In illustration of the letterpress there are numbers of funny little pictures, it is unhappily out of our power here to reproduce, but which doubtless heighten the whimsicality. In this respect, as in others, the author-artist reminds us of Tom Hood, a few strokes of whose pencil could give a marvellous effect to his humour; but in the present case, the sketches are well drawn as well as intensely funny. Pride and Humility, Dissipation and Puritanism, Ferocity, Despair, and even Beauty, all receive in turn their grotesque impersonations in this little volume. The ballads themselves, as will be seen, are also like the verse of him who was wont to supply us with metrical mirth in those absurd annuals characteristically entitled *Laughter from Year to Year*. But Mr Gilbert (bless him!) is more absurd even than Hood.

* *The Bab Ballads*. By N. S. Gilbert. Hotten: London.

Take, for instance, his ballad of *Captain Reece*, the model captain of that model ship, the *Mantelpiece*, with his advanced ideas of promoting the happiness of his men, and doing his duty by them.

If ever they were dull or sad,
Their captain danced to them like mad,
Or told, to make the time pass by,
Droll legends of his infancy.

A feather-bed had every man,
Warm slippers, and hot-water can,
Brown Windsor from the captain's store,
A valet, too, to every four.

Did they with thirst in summer burn?
Lo, seltzogenes at every turn;
And on all very sultry days,
Cream-ices handed round on trays.

Then currant wine and ginger pops
Stood handily on all the 'tops;'
And, also, with amusement rife,
A 'Zoetrope, or Wheel of Life.'

New volumes came across the sea
From Mister Mudie's libraree;
The *Times* and *Saturday Review*
Beguiled the leisure of the crew.

Kind-hearted Captain Reece, R.N.,
Was quite devoted to his men;
In point of fact, good Captain Reece
Beatified the *Mantelpiece*.

Yet, even as it was, he doubted whether enough had been done for their comfort, and inquired of them how he could pleasure them further. William Lee, the kindly captain's cockswain,

A nervous, shy, low-spoken man,
Then cleared his throat, and thus began:

'You have a daughter, Captain Reece,
Ten female cousins, and a niece,
A ma, if what I'm told is true,
Six sisters, and an aunt or two.

'Now, somehow, sir, it seems to me,
More friendly-like we all should be,
If you united of 'em to
Unmarried members of the crew.

'If you 'd ameliorate our life,
Let each select from them a wife;
And as for nervous me, old pal,
Give me your own enchanting gal!'

Good Captain Reece, that worthy man,
Debated on his cockswain's plan:
'I quite agree,' he said, 'O Bill;
It is my duty, and I will.

'My daughter, that enchanting gurl,
Has just been promised to an earl,
And all my other familee
To peers of various degree.

'But what are dukes and viscounts to
The happiness of all my crew?
The word I gave you I'll fulfil;
It is my duty, and I will.'

One would have thought that this complaisance would have been enough, and perhaps the cockswain was content with it, and touched with the captain's reflection that he should now be 'the only bachelor on board;' let us hope that it was no mere wish to aggrandise his own family which induced him to reply in this manner:

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'I beg your honour's leave,' he said,
If *you* would wish to go and wed,

'I have a widowed mother, who
Would be the very thing for you—
She long has loved you from afar;
She washes for you, Captain R.'

The captain saw the dame that day—
Addressed her in his playful way:
'And did it want a wedding-ring?
It was a tempting ickle sing!

'Well, well; the chaplain I will seek;
We 'll all be married this day week—
At yonder church upon the hill;
It is my duty, and I will!'

The sisters, cousins, aunts, and niece,
And widowed ma of Captain Reece,
Attended there as they were bid;
It was their duty, and they did.

The portraits of the obliging captain, of the 'enchanting gurl,' of Mr Lee, and of the 'tempting ickle sing' (fancy Mrs Gamp being chucked under the chin!), are quite worthy of the immortal verse to which they are wedded.

The *Periwinkle Girl* contains a moral not inferior to that of *Pamela*, and, we may add, is infinitely more amusing. Our author himself had taken a prejudice against winkles in early life. He had reflected that he would not himself have exchanged places with that delicacy even if he could; for a winkle, as he put it to himself, could seldom flirt, and never dance,

Nor soothe his mind by smoking.

But then he had not become acquainted with Mary who sold them.

Both high and low, and great and small, fell
prostrate at her tootsies;
They all were noblemen, and all had balances at
Coutts's.

Dukes with the lovely maiden dealt, Duke Bailey
and Duke Humphy,
Who eat her winkles till they felt exceedingly
uncomfy.

Duke Bailey greatest wealth computes, and sticks,
they say, at no-thing;
He wears a pair of golden boots and silver under-
clothing.

Duke Humphy, as I understand, though mentally
acuter,
His boots are only silver, and his underclothing
pewter.

A third adorer had the girl, a man of lowly
station—
A miserable grov'ling earl besought her appro-
bation.

This humble cad she did refuse with much con-
tempt and loathing,
He wore a pair of leather shoes and cambric
underclothing.

'Ha! ha!' she cried; 'upon my word! Well,
really—come, I never!
Oh, go along; it 's too absurd! My goodness!
Did you ever?

'Two dukes would make their Bowles a bride,
and from her foes defend her'—
'Well, not exactly that,' they cried; 'we offer guilty
splendour.

'We do not offer marriage-rite; so please dismiss
the notion!'
'Oh, dear,' said she, 'that alters quite the state of
my emotion.'

The earl he up, and says, says he: 'Dismiss them
to their orgies,
For I am game to marry thee quite reg'lar at St
George's.'

He 'd had, it happily befell, a decent education;
His views would have befitted well a far superior
station.

His sterling worth had worked a cure; she never
heard him grumble;
She saw his soul was good and pure, although his
rank was humble.

Her views of earldoms and their lot, all underwent
expansion;
Come, Virtue in an earldom's cot! Go, Vice in
ducal mansion!

It is only rarely that our author ventures to lay down his fool's bauble, and deal in a little sentiment; but when he does so, his resemblance to his great master becomes more striking than ever. The whole poem entitled *Haunted* might be taken for Hood's own, and would do his memory no wrong if it were published as such.

Haunted? Ay, in a social way,
By a body of ghosts in dread array:
But no conventional spectres they—
Appalling, grim, and tricky:
I quail at mine as I 'd never quail
At a fine traditional spectre pale,
With a turnip head and a ghostly wail,
And a splash of blood on the dicky.

Mine are horrible, social ghosts,
Speeches and women, and guests and hosts,
Weddings and morning calls and toasts,
In every bad variety:
Ghosts that hover about the grave
Of all that 's manly, free, and brave:
You 'll find their names on the architrave
Of that charnel-house, Society.

Black Monday—black as its school-room ink—
With its dismal boys that snivel and think
Of its nauseous messes to eat and drink,
And its frozen tank to wash in.
That was the first that brought me grief
And made me weep, till I sought relief
In an emblematical handkerchief,
To choke such baby bosh in.

First and worst in the grim array—
Ghosts of ghosts that have gone their way,
Which I wouldn't revive for a single day
For all the wealth of Plutus—
Are the horrible ghosts that school-days scared:
If the classical ghost that Brutus dared
Was the ghost of his 'Cæsar' unprepared,
I 'm sure I pity Brutus.

I pass to critical seventeen;
The ghost of that terrible wedding-scene,
When an elderly colonel stole my queen,
And woke my dream of heaven.
No school-girl decked in her nurse-room curls,
Was my gushing innocent queen of pearls;
If she wasn't a girl of a thousand girls,
She was one of forty-seven!

I see the ghost of my first cigar—
Of the thence-arising family jar—
Of my maiden brief (I was at the bar),
(I called the judge 'Your wushup!'),

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Of reckless days and reckless nights,
With wrenched-off knockers, extinguished lights,
Unholy songs, and tipsy fights,
Which I strove in vain to hush up.

Ghosts of fraudulent joint-stock banks,
Ghosts of 'copy, declined with thanks,'
Of novels returned in endless ranks,
And thousands more, I suffer.
The only line to fitly grace
My humble tomb, when I've run my race,
Is: 'Reader, this is the resting-place
Of an unsuccessful duffer.'

I've fought them, all these ghosts of mine;
But the weapons I've used are sighs and brine,
And now that I'm nearly forty-nine,
Old age is my chiefest bogy;
For my hair is thinning away at the crown,
And the silver fights with the worn-out brown;
And a general verdict sets me down
As an irreclaimable fogy.

The echoes of other metrical jokers beside Hood linger about this little book; you are reminded here of Thomas Ingoldsby, and there of the joint authors of *Bon Gaultier*; but in almost all the ballads there is something quite original too: the author holds the patent for a certain monopoly in absurdity which we have never seen infringed. The difficult quest upon which Elvira despatched her Ferdinando, was surely never hit upon before as a test of true affection.

Send me to the Arctic regions, or illimitable azure,
On a scientific goose-chase, with my Connell or my Glaisher!
Tell me whither I may hie me—tell me, dear one, that I may know—
Is it up the highest Andes? down some horrible volcano?

But she said: 'It isn't polar bears, or hot volcanic grottoes;
Only find out *who it is that writes these lovely cracker mottoes!*'

Again, who but our author himself would have conceived the idea of one curate, famed for his mildness, planning the assassination of another, because he exceeded him in that virtue!

Wild Croquet Hooper banned, and all the sports of Mammon;
He warred with Cribbage, and he exorcised Backgammon.

But the Rev. Hopley Porter, at Assesmilk-cum-worter, was even milder—

He labours more than you, at worsted-work, and frames it;
In old maids' albums, too, sticks seaweed, yes, and names it.

The beadle and sexton are therefore despatched, as bravoes, and demand a change of habits in Hopley Porter, or his life, at their daggers' point. So far from becoming a martyr to his principles, he accedes to their demands with almost indecent haste.

'What?' said that reverend gent;
'Dance through my hours of leisure?
Smoke?—bathe myself with scent?—
Play croquet? Oh, with pleasure!

'Wear all my hair in curl?
Stand at the door and wink—so—
At every passing girl?
My brothers, I should think so!

'For years I've longed for some
Excuse for this revulsion:
Now that excuse has come—
I do it on compulsion!!!'

He smoked and winked away—
This Reverend Hopley Porter—
The deuce there was to pay
At Assesmilk-cum-worter.

And Hooper holds his ground,
In mildness daily growing;
They think him, all around,
The mildest curate going.

The colonial Bishop attending the Pan-Anglican Synod, who learns posturing (oh, such pictures!) of a street acrobat, in order to impress his people at Rum-ti-Foo—

His people—twenty-three in sum,
Who played the eloquent tum-tum,
And lived on scalps served up in rum,
The only sauce they knew—

is a charming creation. So is the precocious Baby, who turned up his little nose at the food provided for him—

'My friends, it's a tap, that is not worth a rap'
(Now this was remarkably excellent pap);

who chucked his old nurse under the chin, with his

Fal lal lal, you doosed fine gal;

and who finally—a warning to all precocious babes—died 'an enfeebled old dotard, at five.' Baines Carew, gentleman, and attorney-at-law, who is so overcome with sympathy for his clients that he faints on the floor at the recital of their wrongs, and they are obliged to go elsewhere for a lawyer, is also one of these touches *contrary to* nature which makes the whole world kin—or, at all events, so much of it as loves a joke. But the very best of all these Ballads, and one that seems to us quite unrivalled for its grotesque humour, is the yarn of the *Nancy Bell*, which is, it seems, set to music and published as a song; and much we should like to hear it.

'Twas on the shores that round our coast
From Deal to Ramsgate span,
That I found alone, on a piece of stone,
An elderly naval man.

His hair was weedy, his beard was long,
And weedy and long was he;
And I heard this wight on the shore recite,
In a singular minor key:

'Oh, I am a cook and a captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig.'

And he shook his fists and he tore his hair,
Till I really felt afraid,
For I couldn't help thinking the man had been drinking,
And so I simply said:

'Oh, elderly man, it's little I know
Of the duties of men of the sea,
And I'll eat my hand if I understand
How you can possibly be

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'At once a cook and a captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig!'

Then he gave a hitch to his trousers, which
Is a trick all seamen larn,
And having got rid of a thumping quid,
He spun this painful yarn:

'"Twas in the good ship *Nancy Bell*
That we sailed to the Indian sea,
And there on a reef we come to grief,
Which has often occurred to me.

'And pretty nigh all o' the crew was drowned
(There was seventy-seven o' soul);
And only ten of the *Nancy's* men
Said "Here" to the muster-roll.

'There was me, and the cook, and the captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And the bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig.

'For a month, we 'd neither wittles nor drink,
Till a-hungry we did feel;
So we drawed a lot, and, accordin' shot
The captain for our meal.

'The next lot fell to the *Nancy's* mate,
And a delicate dish he made;
Then our appetite with the midshipmite
We seven survivors stayed.

'And then we murdered the bo'sun tight,
And he much resembled pig;
Then we wittled free, did the cook and me,
On the crew of the captain's gig.

'Then only the cook and me was left,
And the delicate question: "Which
Of us two goes to the kettle?" arose,
And we argued it out as sich.

'For I loved that cook as a brother, I did,
And the cook he worshipped me;
But we 'd both be blowed if we 'd either be stowed
In the other chap's hold, you see.

"I 'll be eat if you dines off me," says Tom.
"Yes, that," says I, "you 'll be."
"I 'm boiled if I die, my friend," quoth I;
And "Exactly so," quoth he.

'Says he: "Dear James, to murder me
Were a foolish thing to do,
For don't you see that you can't cook *me*,
While I can—and will—cook *you!*"

'So, he boils the water, and takes the salt
And the pepper in portions true
(Which he never forgot), and some chopped shalot,
And some sage and parsley too.

"Come here," says he, with a proper pride,
Which his smiling features tell;
"'Twill soothing be if I let you see
How extremely nice you 'll smell."

'And he stirred it round, and round, and round,
And he sniffed at the foaming froth;
When I ups with his heels, and smothers his squeals
In the scum of the boiling broth.

'And I eat that cook in a week or less,
And—as I eating be
The last of his chops, why, I almost drops,
For a wessel in sight I see.

* * * *

'And I never larf, and I never smile,
And I never lark nor play;
But I sit and croak, and a single joke
I have—which is to say:

'Oh, I am a cook and a captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's *gig*!'

NODDY'S SITUATION.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER V.

PEOPLE did talk; and the bitterness of it to Mrs Muciller was that it was all her own doing. However, she was equal to the occasion. She had made one attempt to bring Julia out at eighteen with indifferent success. As a shopkeeper, whose goods have been exposed in his window for a few weeks, and become a trifle soiled, will remove them to the back of his shop, that they may come out fresh again by-and-by, so Mrs Muciller, whose daughter had become a trifle fly-blown by the exposure, resolved to send Julia to France to finish her education for the second time, to come out fresh at eighteen again in another twelvemonth. It took a few weeks to complete the necessary arrangements for Julia's departure, during which time Mrs Muciller's attention was distracted from Noddy's affairs. The only *sentiment* of emotion at the *contre-temps* exhibited by Julia consisted in a renewed expression, in song, of something like regret that the 'two leaves were parted in the stream;' but as to any *feeling* of emotion, she probably had about as much as the 'other leaf,' that 'floated forward all alone.'

Towards the close of September, a very few days after Miss Julia had become a *pensionnaire* of a Parisian establishment, Mrs Muciller pounced upon an advertisement in the local paper.

'At last!' she exclaimed to Noddy; 'here is the very thing for you. It seems like a providence. Here have we been trying the London papers for weeks, and the very identical thing suddenly turns up in our own little print. I 'll read it:

"Wanted—a Governess. The advertiser wishes to obtain instruction for a child turned eight years old. English only required.—Address W., Pinewood, Lyndhurst, Hants."

Just what you want—no accomplishments whatever mentioned; so write directly.'

'Yes,' said Noddy, 'I will. I like the look of that advertisement. There is not too much said, and not too much required.'

Noddy wrote three or four notes before she could manage one to suit the conciseness of the advertisement. The one she sent was this:

'*September* 26, 18—.

'To W.

I think I am competent to undertake the situation.—NORAH CRAY.'

Return of post brought the following reply:

'*September* 28, 18—.

'To MISS NORAH CRAY.

If Miss Cray is of that opinion, she is requested to be at Lyndhurst Station at 7.15 P.M., to-morrow. Carriage will be sent.—W.'

'P.M.?' Mrs Muciller remarked. 'Not a very suitable time to engage a governess. However, that is not my affair.'

Noddy was so really anxious to secure a situation for which she thought herself qualified, that she would have gone had it been M.M.—twelve o'clock at midnight.

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'You will not make any frivolous objections about accepting this situation,' Mrs Muciller said. 'The family, whoever they are, seem evidently disposed to engage you, and you will understand I have *no* further occasion for your services with me. Should you be engaged at once, I do not even see that it would be needful for you to return. You forgot yourself more than once in your demeanour to a visitor of mine; it is not my wish you should have another opportunity of making a similar mistake. If you return at all, it will be your own fault; and if you suffer for it, it will be a consequence of your own folly.'

'I will really try,' returned Noddy; 'for indeed I am in earnest for employment. But you will not be angry if I return unsuccessful? You would not turn me away?'

'If you return, I do not think I should turn you away. People might talk. I should not turn you out of doors; but if, after once shewing you a separate path from my own, and you refuse it, there should be a way I have not yet tried to make you feel my resentment, I will try to find that way. Until you had the prospect of a situation, I have restrained myself, because to exhibit my feeling would be useless and purposeless. Now, let me tell you that I know something of your deceit and treachery. Thanks to your poisoning Mr Geogagan's mind against my daughter Julia, he left in the sudden and disgraceful manner he did. You need not pretend to innocence. You were walking with him the day we went to the picnic, and your lies have brought all this disgrace about.'

'I assure you it was not so. I never said a word to'——

'You own you walked with him, then?'

'I did,' said Noddy quietly; 'but'——

'Oh, you did! Vastly fine! You did! Mrs Muciller's upper servant and parlour-maid walked out for an airing with Mrs Muciller's guest! *Indeed*. Cat!' and Mrs Muciller bent herself forward, the better to project her indignation.—'Leave the room without a word, or I may forget my own interest, and once out of the house, may be fool enough to forbid your return, even to such a reception as *I* can give you. Go!'

Noddy was too angry to cry. She went. Mrs Muciller's words were too unjust to stab. No one knew their injustice better than Noddy. The one bit of truth, that she had taken a walk with Mr Geogagan, she was not ashamed of. Mrs Muciller's deduction from it, about its being the means of breaking off Julia's expected match, needed no contradiction. Noddy knew that, and, what is more, knew that her step-mother knew it too. The mistake of women's disputes is their predilection for hanging a quarrel on any peg but the right one. Had Mrs Muciller confined herself to saying she hated Noddy, and always had done so, she would have been completely justified, and would have succeeded in making her victim cry.

The 7.15 train set Noddy down at a little country station, in the middle of the New Forest, amid a wilderness of tree-beauty, with no other habitation in sight for miles than the station-master's house, and the long red roofs of Lyndhurst Union peering out from the distant green. The air was scented with flowers, and musical with bird-voices, and the golden evening haze lay on all the sombre trees, and burned them into a red misty glory. A few minutes, and a shaggy pony became visible, drawing a small phaeton out of the forest shade! The man drove up, and asked for Miss Cray.

'No luggage, mum, I think?—No. Perhaps you won't mind sittin' by me. The road is roughish, and the front seat is more springy.'

So Noddy perched herself beside the coachman, and the shaggy pony began a shuffling sort of running trot, and the 'carriage' began to glide and bump over the grassy forest-path.

'How far is Pinewood?' Noddy inquired.

'A matter of five mile, mum—miss, I *should* say—but the road is a rum un.'

So it seemed. Over humps and bumps in the lawny way, and the forest-path twisting and winding about among the majestic trees; the wheels singing pleasantly on the grass, grating a stone here and there, or going over a bough yonder, but the pony shuffling along over everything with a happy see-saw swaying of his head.

'Are they at home?'

'Yes'm—leastways, miss.'

'Who did you say your master was?' Noddy wanted to know something of the folks she was going to.

'I didn't say he was *no* one, did I?' He thought this too sharp, however; for he added: 'He's the governor—that's what he is.'

'And the child?' asked Noddy, a little rebuffed. 'A girl, I suppose?'

The coachman looked at her severely. 'No,' he said doggedly; 'it ain't a girl.—*Come* up, Peg, can't you?'—the last remark being addressed in a surly tone to the pony.

It was getting dusk when Noddy arrived. She was shewn into a spacious room, comfortably furnished, but plenty of room to walk about. The windows looked out on the billowy forest, now fading into purple gloom, all save the nearer trees, which stood in a silhouette of black lacework against the twilight sky. Presently, an old lady in black silk entered the room. Not the lady of the house, Noddy judged—more like a motherly housekeeper, than that; but there was a comfortable smile on her face as she said: 'Miss Cray, I believe—in answer to the letter? Will you follow me, my dear?'

Noddy followed her out of the room, and along a cool white hall, to a door. The old lady knocked. 'My master is within; please to enter.'

Master! thought Noddy, and trembled at the prospect of the approaching ordeal; but the housekeeper had opened the door, and Noddy had to go in. The room was larger than the other; it was also darker, inasmuch as the blinds were half-way down, and no lights to enliven the gloom. Noddy could only distinguish dimly the figure of a man, in a great chintz-covered easy-chair, at the far end of the room. She judged him to be elderly by his reclining as if with gout, his legs making two great bolster-like parcels in front of him. The hair that strayed out beneath his velvet skull-cap appeared white, and he addressed her in a slow voice of some firmness. 'Be seated, Miss Cray, if you please.'

Norah took a seat.

'Your letter appeared to me straightforward.'

Norah bowed.

'You think yourself competent for the situation, you say. I hope you have thoughtfully considered the terms in which I advertised, before venturing to make such a statement? It is a situation which will involve some amount of responsibility, as I

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wish to depend entirely upon the person whom I may select for the education and general oversight of her charge. I will not conceal from you that that charge, in addition to being a responsible one, may prove a difficult one—the lad to whom I refer having many objectionable propensities, that will require to be watched and corrected.'

'I think you stated in the advertisement the child is eight years of age,' Norah said.

'"*Turned* eight," are the words employed. He is, in fact, "turned eight."'

'Then, I think there is every hope that those propensities may be subdued.'

'I hope so. And in proof of your ability to bring about such a result, I conclude you can give me some testimonials, received from previous situations.'

She had not thought of that. 'I have never been out before,' Noddy said.

'H'm. Then your method of procedure would be tentative? That is a grave consideration.'

'I would try to do my best,' said Noddy eagerly, 'if the child is not too old, and not beyond my capacity to teach. I'm not clever nor accomplished, but it was your plainness in advertising led me to think I might suit. You said: "English only required."'

'Exactly, but the best of English. And you will bear in mind that there are many more English persons who can talk three or four foreign languages than can speak their own with correctness.'

Noddy's heart began to sink. 'The advertisement doesn't say the best of English,' she said.

'No, it says *English*, and only the very best can be called that.'

Noddy thought of Mrs Muciller and of her own prospects at Braithfield, if she lost this place. She determined on a despairing battle for it.

'But the child is yet young, only eight; and I can teach him till he is ready for some one wiser. Indeed I will do my best.'

'*Turned* eight—if you please. He is in fact "turned" nine. He is at least ten years of age.'

'Then,' Noddy said, just ready to cry with disappointment, 'I suppose I am not competent? You may know better English than I do, but you have not made a brave use of it to torture a poor girl who wants work.'

'Miss Cray, I believe you are so far competent that I have no hesitation in offering you the situation. You speak truth, in spite of its being calculated in many a similar case to lose you an engagement. I therefore see you are likely to give instruction. Will you accept my situation of governess?'

Noddy hardly believed her ears. 'I will,' she said with heartfelt thankfulness.

'You have not mentioned terms, remember.'

'I am content to accept what you may please to offer.'

'Then I have only one other question to put. You may think it a strange one, but I shall be obliged if you will answer it. Do you know what you are?' There was a distinct alteration in the old gentleman's voice that sounded queer.

'No,' Noddy said, blankly enough.

'Then I must ask another. Do you know what day this is?'

'The 29th of September.'

'Then you are the biggest little Michaelmas goose that ever was!' and the elderly gentleman kicked off his gouty legs, and pitched his skull-cap and wig into the fender; 'and you had better own it, Noddy!'

There stood Mr Frank Geogagan.

'*Turned* eight, Noddy,' he said; 'and turned eight-and-twenty, for the matter of that. Behold your pupil! Of the establishment, you see I am the gover*nor*. You have already given me your promise to be gover*ness*. Do you wish to withdraw it?'—and he came towards her.

Noddy was utterly disconcerted for the moment, but she got out of his way. 'Mr Frank,' she said, 'I answered your question, now please answer mine. Do you know what you are?'

'No,' said Mr Frank.

'You are a most dreadful horrid story; that's what you are. You said you had lost all your money.' Noddy was nearly crying.

'No. I said, "all I had in India"—which was quite true, and six thousand pounds. I did not tell you I had brought four times that sum home with me.'

'You told me you were going to seek employment.' Mr Frank was dodging her about the room.

'I did—you told me to go and dig—I came down here and took this little farm, and I have gone and dug, or digged, whichever you prefer.'

'But you don't want a governess, after all; and that was a wicked cheat.'

'But I do, Noddy. I want to be made such a man of as you can love, and you have given your word, you will not refuse. You won't take it back again? you will forgive me the artifice? For I love you as I can love no other woman.'

Mr Frank caught her up. 'It is a very bad story,' she said. But Mr Frank gathered her to him in his arms; and Noddy did not refuse. He folded her to him against his breast, and Noddy did not refuse. He hushed her sobs as she lay nestled against him like a bird that has found shelter. 'I love you with all my heart,' she murmured, 'and I'm so happy!' (in proof of which she was wiping tears from her eyes); 'but you don't think I loved you for your money?'

'I'm sure you didn't, little goose,' said Frank, soothing her with kisses.

'I had rather you hadn't any at all, and that we had to work together.'

'Nonsense, Noddy; you have forgotten you are a little woman of property yourself. Just come out with me and take the first instalment of a quarter's interest for your twenty pounds.' He led her through the house, and out into the dairy, to have a draught of warm new milk. It was from Noddy's investment—the finest milch cow on the farm.

Somehow, the comfortable old housekeeper didn't seem altogether surprised at Mr Frank walking about the shrubbery with his new governess on his arm; I think she must have been in the secret.

Noddy did not return to her step-mother. In three days she was Mr Frank's wife, and as there were no cards, this is how Mr Geogagan informed Mrs Muciller of Noddy's marriage:

'MADAM—I beg to inform you that Miss Cray has accepted the situation. FRANK GEOGAGAN.
Pinewood, Lyndhurst.'

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ON 'CHANGE.

STANDING in the centre of a wilderness of alleys, distinguished by nothing but that dull and dingy tone of colour which may be called the hoar-frost of age, within a stone's-throw of the Bank and the Royal Exchange, is a plain white-washed court, as insignificant in appearance as the outer walls of the Alhambra, which through its price-current controls the policy of half the courts of Europe, regulates the rate of exchange at San Francisco and at Calcutta, and governs the value of money in the bazaars at Cairo and in the gold-room of New York. This is the Stock Exchange. In form it is a *cul de sac;* and except that its glass doors are guarded by a porter, and that there is a slight attempt at architecture in the form of a pillared portico, there is nothing to distinguish Capel Court from the rest of those courts and alleys that form the heart of the city of London. It is simply a bit of old London, of the London of Sir Thomas Gresham and Sir Dudley North, the London of the merchants who, in the early days of international commerce, laid the foundations of that vast and complicated system of credit which has linked all the nations of the earth together.

To men of business in all parts of the world, in the Gulf of Mexico and the treaty ports of the Chinese Seas, this court is holy ground—the Mecca of commerce—and, like holy ground, it is guarded against the intrusions of the profane by a system of police which is an odd compound of superstition and lynch-law. Despotism in miniature is the only phrase by which I can aptly characterise this system of police; and woe to the belated sightseer who presumes to pry into the theatre of its mysteries! In a freemasons' lodge, possibly he might find some sort of mercy; but he must not look for it on 'Change. The word itself is not in the vocabulary of its committee. It forms part of the *lex non scripta* of stock-jobbing that any sightseers caught within the temple of its mysteries shall be danced round the Exchange, yelled at, bonneted, punched, nudged, and generally exposed to the treatment inflicted upon pantaloon at Christmas; and if you understand the dialect of Capel Court—the most puzzling and barbarous of all the dialects spoken within the four seas—you will soon discover by the sign that flies from desk to desk, from group to group, when a bird has been caught in the meshes of the spoiler. It is not often that this law is put in force; but in the course of the past five or six years more people have gone through the process than care to recollect or talk about it. Only five or six months ago, a foreign gentleman who happened to stroll through those mystical glass doors found himself very much in the position of Marshal Haynau in Barclay and Perkin's brewery. To the shout of 'Number forty' the bears fell upon him. One knocked off his hat, and kicked it into the centre of the court; another threw his newspaper into the air; others hustled him like a band of garrotters; and when, recovering his courage, he plucked up spirit enough to turn upon his assailants, they simply called the porters to kick him out. It is necessary, of course, if business is to be carried on with anything like pleasure within the four walls of a narrow court, that sightseers should be kept out of the Stock Exchange as they are kept out of the House of Commons; but this bit of lynch-law is a relic of the rough and lawless past, when stock-brokers were not reckoned in the category of gentlemen, and when gentlemen west of Temple Bar thought it an aristocratic exploit to bonnet the watchman.

The customary hours of business on 'Change are from 11 to 2 or 3; and none but those who keep their eye on the City Article of the *Times*, and can read between its lines, can form anything like an adequate conception of the amount of business that is got through in those three or four hours of chitchat and speculation by the two hundred or three hundred gentlemen in frock-coats and buff waistcoats who represent the plutocracy of the city of London, and, as its representatives, give the cue to all the money-markets of Europe. To say nothing at all of our own funds, representing in themselves many millions of capital, the official list of the Stock Exchange comprises the funded debts of not only every power in Europe, but, with the exception

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of Persia, of China, and of Japan, the debts, I believe, of every government to be found upon the face of the globe three degrees out of the picturesque civilisation of feathers and paint; and over and above all these government stocks, the scrip of all our own railway, banking, mining, and telegraph companies, mounting up probably in value to a higher figure even than the amount of the largest debt in Europe, those of Great Britain and France. It is impossible to say with anything like precision what the total amount of these stocks is. A keen man of business, to whom I once put the question, answered as a guess: 'Probably over a thousand millions;' and assuming that only one per cent. of this paper changes hands every day, the average business of the Stock Exchange is ten millions. Frequently, of course, it is double and treble that amount; and in times of excitement, when a whisper may put the Bourses of Paris and Frankfort in a panic, when every fresh paragraph in an official or semi-official newspaper brings orders to buy or sell this or that, stocks may pass from hand to hand to the tune of a hundred millions in three or four hours.

It is at times, not like these of comparative quiet, but of excitement and panic, when every moment has its whisper, and every whisper is big with the fate of a bank like Overend and Gurney's or Masterman's, when a strip of yellow paper with a few ciphers upon it, passed secretly from hand to hand, may announce a war or proclaim a peace—that the Stock Exchange ought to be seen in its most characteristic form, although even in such moments the visitor will see little but what I may call suppressed passion. There is nothing theatrical about the Stock Exchange. It is talkative, and now and then noisy. It can occasionally work itself up into what is called a panic. But in comparison with the gold-room at New York or the Bourse at Paris, it is like the lobby of the House of Commons in contrast with the gallery of Drury Lane Theatre on a boxing-night. On the Paris Bourse, when there is anything like a storm in the air, you may meet men and women of all ranks, from countesses to ballet-girls, from senators to cab-drivers, elbowing each other, to get to their brokers, and shouting at the tops of their voices to the brokers to sell or to buy this or that stock; and though the gold-room at New York is a little more select, it is hardly less passionate and demonstrative than the Paris Bourse, especially when millionaires are manipulating the shares of the Erie Railway, or politicians in the White House at Washington are talking commercial treason about Five Twenty Bonds. Anything like tumult or passion or enthusiasm is as religiously tabooed in Capel Court as it is round the gambling-tables of a German Kursaal; and with the exception of a spurt now and then among the bulls and bears—the professional gamblers of the city—you will see nothing more in the Stock Exchange, where hundreds of thousands are changing hands every ten minutes, than you will see in the Cloth Hall of Leeds or on the Liverpool flags. Now and then you may hear a call for Egyptian Bonds or Russian Railways or Peruvian Bonds, Midlands or Metropolitans, but this is only when speculation for a rise or fall runs high, and stocks are scarce; but, as a rule, the business of the Stock Exchange is carried on as quietly as the business of a provincial corn-market.

Here, as everywhere else, there is a division of labour: this man takes one description of stock; that man takes another. At this stall you may find American Bonds or American Railways; at that you may find French Rentes or Greek Coupons. This man is a jobber, and that man is a broker. All, therefore, that the broker with a commission to lay out, say, ten thousand pounds in consols, to sell or to invest one hundred thousand pounds in Indian Railways, has to do, is to walk into the court, find out the jobber who deals in these stocks, and make a bargain. The transaction is but the work of three minutes, and an entry of a couple of lines in a note-book. The delivery of the scrip itself generally stands over till settling-day, perhaps ten days or a fortnight hence. The broker is paid for his share of the trouble by a slight percentage on the purchase or sale, a percentage varying from an eighth per cent. on consols to a fourth on, say, Turkish Consolides. The jobber looks for his profit from the turns of the market, that is, from those variations in the daily price of stocks which the press note with such particularity as to fractions.

This is the general course of *business* on 'Change. To the broker, it is little more than a matter of routine; for he is only a professional go-between—a link between borrowers and lenders. All he has to do is to give the best advice he can to his clients as to the prospects of this or that stock, and to buy or sell as he is ordered at the market price. Strictly speaking, these are his only functions. To buy or sell on his own account is against the etiquette of the Stock Exchange. The fluctuations in the value of stock from day to day are, therefore, to him merely the fluctuations in the readings of a barometer. The position of the jobber is very different. To him all these fluctuations are fluctuations in an account of profit and loss. His business is speculation—speculating for a rise or fall of values; and speculation of this kind in a market where competition is as keen as it is on the Stock Exchange, is a game partly of skill and partly of hazard, one requiring on the part of the player skill, wit, courage, and capital, a keen appreciation of the personal characters of the five or six statesmen and soldiers who just now hold the destinies of Europe in their hands, with an intelligent comprehension of their policy and its motives, and of its prospects of success. To these men every line in Reuter's telegrams is of personal interest; and it is their business to discount every phrase that may be uttered by the rulers of France, Prussia, Spain, or Italy, to calculate its consequences on the holders of stock, and to lay their account accordingly for a rise or fall of prices. Every morning, therefore, you will find these men standing about in groups discussing the politics of the day, the prospects of war or of peace, the rates of exchange, the state of the Bank balances, the prospects of the harvest, and the value of money; for the tone of business on the Stock Exchange is influenced by every variation in the barometer of politics and trade. Acting thus from calculation, and acting against people who in the mass may be said to act merely from impulse, buying or selling upon the strength of the day's rumour, or the caprice of the hour, the jobber who has his wits about him can hardly help finding himself at the end of the year with a handsome balance in his bank book. Of course

> The best-laid schemes o' mice and men
> Gang aft a-gley;

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and the jobber may now and then find himself on the wrong side of the hedge. But the chances are ten thousand to one in his favour; and it must be very strange indeed if in this game of 'pull devil, pull baker,' where the mass of investors are acting from nothing but a haphazard reckoning of profit or loss, with no basis for their calculations but their own hopes or fears, a newspaper article, a speech in the House of Commons, or a prospectus; and where the bull and the bear, working upon different lines of attack, are acting nevertheless upon profound calculation, and perhaps upon secret information, the public do not go to the wall.

We have at present no further space to explain the secret working of the professional gamblers of the Stock Exchange. The bulls and bears do a great deal of mischief, to-day perhaps inflating stock far above its value, and to-morrow depreciating it far below its natural value; but they are both necessary on the Stock Exchange; and in these days of speculative finance, of international banks, and of co-operative associations for working mines in Brazil, for planting tea plantations on the slopes of the Himalaya, for cultivating the Pampas of the river Plate, for intersecting China with railways, and for working out every chimera that the wit of man can suggest and that capital and skill can accomplish, it is impossible to deny that these men do a great deal more of good than of evil in testing the *bona fides* and the prospects of success of the schemes that are every day floated into the market through the agency of the Stock Exchange.

MY CASUAL ACQUAINTANCES.

At five o'clock one August afternoon, a few years ago, it was hot in Piccadilly.

'Must one dress?' I asked in pathetic tones.

'Of course,' replied Tibbit. 'You are in London, my dear Stumps.—You will excuse my leaving you now, but I have important letters to write before dinner. Remember, half-past seven to the fraction of a second: till then, fare-you-well.'

Important letters I knew meant adjournment to his chambers in the Albany, the removal of his coat and neckcloth, a glass of sherry and bitters, a cigarette, and a sound nap till it was time to adorn himself for the event of his day; and I thought that he might have kept company for once with a poor provincial, who had but his hotel to go to when he was weary of strolling about the streets. But still a dinner at the *Apician* is doubtless a very great treat, and I felt ashamed of my ungrateful repinings.

Ah, here was one of the bliss-houses of my youth, still open, and shewing by large announcements that it continued to cater for sightseers. My heart was forty-two, and did not beat on approaching the Egyptian Hall so violently as it had done thirty years before, but it gave a decided though slight wobble; so fresh do hearts keep in the country. Any entertainment would be more amusing than sitting alone in the hotel smoking-room reperusing the newspapers. What! the Victoria Cross Gallery? Why, that was one of the things I had wished to see directly I heard of it. An old schoolfellow had shot six Russians with his own revolver at the affair of the Ovens in the Crimea, and another had spitted several mutineers in India with a regulation sword: a wonderful feat to the mind of a fencer, who finds one of those weapons clumsy enough in his hand after the foil. I turned in, paid my shilling, and ascended the well-remembered stairs, hoping that the room would not be crowded that hot afternoon. The selfish wish was gratified: the only living being in the place was an official seated behind a green baize table at the entrance, who wanted me to buy a catalogue, and write my name in a large book spread open before him for the purpose. To the first request I gladly acceded, but not to the second. The name of Stumps is not beautiful in itself, and I could not flatter myself that it would awaken any particular enthusiasm in the mind of a subsequent visitor who might read it; unless, indeed, he was a monomaniac about cricket. So I left the half-filled page unenriched by my autograph, and gave myself up to the enjoyment of a real treat. The room was cool, there were seats at intervals, and the pictures were just what I enjoy; full of action, and representing stirring scenes. A man named Stumps cannot be expected to appreciate high art; or at anyrate *I* don't. I own with shame that I like Music with a tune, and Painting with a story; that I am a being without culture in short, fit to make all Mr M——w A——d's nerves jar horribly if I came within five yards of him. Now, with the exception of a few French works, like the 'Gorge du Malakoff' and the 'Prise du Malakoff,' all the battle-pictures I had hitherto seen were disappointing representations of smoke and impossible horses, with a broken gun-carriage and a few dead soldiers in the foreground. But there was a vivid, thrilling episode in each of the paintings which now engrossed my attention, and to study them seemed as good as reading Napier.

I was roused from rapt admiration of a couple of midshipmen in the ditch of a fortified place at midnight, one of whom was quietly lighting a portfire with his cigar, by the sound of voices and the rustling of dresses, and turning round I saw five new-comers clustered round the visitors' book. *They* had no objections to signing their names. Paterfamilias, who was round and stout and pleasant-featured as the ideal middle-aged gentlemen in *Punch*, said: 'Eh, what?' and scratched his signature with the rapidity of a man who was constantly performing that operation. His wife, a portly lady with an imposing nose and proud demeanour, took longer about it, evidently reading the names which preceded her own. Her two pretty daughters—the relationship was written on their faces—signed next; and then a young man in flower-show apparel, with silky hair parted in the middle, took the pen, whispering something to the youngest girl, who simpered. I'd have taken slight odds he uttered an allusion to a ceremony which is performed in vestries.

Of course, I was not staring, but took this little

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by-play in out of the corners of my eyes, which were still apparently riveted upon the midshipmen who were engaged in patriotic arson. Why only apparently? Because the proper study for mankind is man; because, though Art is very fine, Nature sometimes beats it; and because, even at forty-two, if one lives in the country, a pretty girl is still a pleasing object.

I soon discovered a fact, however, which modesty and experience alike prevented my calculating upon; *they* were noticing *me*. I remember a story, told, I think, in this *Journal*, of a man who flattered himself that he was stalking a lion, and hearing a rustle in the bushes behind him, found that the lion was stalking him. I sympathised with that sportsman. There could be no doubt about it. Madam was the first to gaze on me, as though she thought she knew me, whenever she fancied herself unperceived; then she nudged her husband, and whispered in his ear, whereupon he too inspected me, as if I had formed part of the exhibition; then a mysterious communication was conveyed to the girls, and they examined me in a quiet sort of way, shyly but perceptibly. The young man, too, gave a glance in my direction, but evidently did not think much of me—his attention being engrossed by the charms of the younger-looking of the two sisters, though indeed neither of them appeared more than twenty. An incident soon occurred which I am almost ashamed to mention, lest it should appear to be insinuated that it was not entirely accidental, as of course it must have been. The whole party, making their tour of inspection, passed behind me in single file, Materfamilias bringing up the rear; and just as she passed me, she dropped the pencil with which she was marking her catalogue, without perceiving the loss until she was two pictures off, when she suddenly called to her eldest daughter: 'Oh, do look here, love; here is dear Sir Henry Slasher, whom you danced with the other night, cutting a horrid native's head off! I must put a cross against that.—Dear me, what has become of my pencil?'

I picked up the little golden toy, studded with turquoises, which lay at my feet, and presented it to her. Her gratitude was amazing. She set a particular value upon the article; would not have lost it for worlds; was so *much* obliged to me. Perhaps you are aware how fascinating the manners of a proud matron with a Roman nose are when she condescends to make herself agreeable. I was quite charmed, and being very sociable in disposition, preferring, indeed, almost any one's society to my own, I was glad enough to accept the advances towards conversation which were made to me, in a cordial manner. Presently Paterfamilias chimed in; and then the eldest girl asked some question about a picture, which was referred to me, and so in a little while I found myself chatting away indifferently with the whole party. They were a very diffident family, at least so far as opinion of their own judgment about works of art went, for they listened to my crude observations with a respect which seemed almost tinged with awe. I was cautious at first, fearing lest the young man with silky hair might be either a painter or a soldier; but when I found that he was perfectly ignorant about the things represented, and the merit of the representations, I launched out. It is not often that a commonplace dweller in the provinces finds an appreciative audience, and it is therefore just as well for him to make the most of the opportunity when he does.

The time slipped pleasantly away, till it was necessary for me to go and adorn myself for Tibbit's banquet; and then I took a cordial leave of my new acquaintances, and left the place, feeling rather as though I deserved a Victoria Cross myself, for had I not stormed the reserve of a respectable British family? I rather wished that they had gone away first, and so afforded me an opportunity of looking at the visitors' book, and finding out what their names were; especially the Christian name of the elder of the two young ladies, who had a peculiar droop of the eyelids and a certain dimple on the left cheek when she smiled, which made me feel that perhaps I had been wrong to put off from year to year the crowning of the edifice by the election of a Mrs Stumps. Pooh—pooh! absurd; I was as old as her mother! 'But oh, my heart is an evergreen,' and would not be pooh-poohed.

But however fresh the heart may be, it is apt, after beating for forty years, to find a powerful rival in the stomach, and I certainly forgot all about smiles and dimples when the table-napkin was across my knees. Tibbit has not many merits, but he does understand how to order a dinner, and the artist of the *Apician* can execute that order in a manner to satisfy the most exacting gourmet. In the smoking-room afterwards, however, those drooping eyelids came back upon me, and I spoke of the acquaintances I had picked up to Tibbit.

'Very curious, their shewing such readiness to be friendly with a complete stranger, was it not?' I observed.

'Very,' replied Tibbit. 'The younger man said nothing about the game of skittles, I suppose?'

'Absurd!'

'Neither did the cheerful father propose subscribing seventy-five pounds to a hospital, if you would put down another twenty-five to make up the hundred—eh?'

Tibbit has a most absurd conceit of the superior wisdom of dwellers in cities, and supposes that a man who, like myself, is for the greater portion of the year 'buried,' as he calls it, in the deepest wilds of the agricultural counties, must be ready to fall an easy prey to the first sharper who chooses to bait a hook for him. But, except in gastronomy, Tibbit is shallow.

My reason for making my home so far from London is, that I cannot afford to gratify my passion for field-sports on any other terms. The hire of a moor is also quite beyond my means, so, when trout-fishing ends, it is a dead season for me till September; and at the time I am speaking of, I was therefore 'on the rampage.' This unsettled period comprised a month at Scarborough (spent), three weeks in London, two of which had also expired, and the rest of the time in Paris, or at one of the gay German baths. So seven days after Tibbit's dinner, I went to London Bridge Station to catch the tidal train, and in consequence of three separate and distinct blocks on the road, nearly missed it.

'Look sharp, sir, and I'll manage it for you. First class? All right, sir. Take the portmanteau in the carriage with you? Two places; here you are.'

Moralists may write what letters to the *Times* they like, but that porter deserved his shilling. I

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should certainly have had to go back ingloriously to my hotel, and remain there till next day, if he had not been remarkably spry. The guard was whistling shrilly, and some official was calling out to another that all was right behind, as the tipped one shoved my portmanteau under the seat; and when I plumped down, panting, and he slammed the door to, the train was actually in motion.

When I ceased to be a flurried package, and grew capable of observing, I discovered that the four occupied seats besides my own were filled by my acquaintances of the Victoria Cross Gallery, *minus* the young man with silky hair. I greeted them, and they returned my salutations most cordially. The drooping-eyed one was sitting next to me, and was faced by her mother, to whom, of course, I directed my conversation, not, however, with the same complete success which had attended my efforts to interest her on the former occasion, as her mind seemed to be much occupied with a peculiar class of phenomena.

'I beg your pardon,' she observed, soon after we were clear of the station, 'you are next the window, can you tell me if the smoke from the chimneys is going straight up?'

'Not quite,' I replied; 'it is waving about, as smoke usually does.'

Soon we were in the open country, and then she put another question. 'Are the trees still, or swaying to and fro?'

'They seem pretty quiet, I think,' said I wondering.

And then Paterfamilias leaned forward, and spoke of some matter about which he had been reading—a *Times* article.

His wife soon interrupted us. 'There is a windmill somewhere about here,' she said, 'on the left.'

'O yes; I can see it,' I replied, looking out of window.

'Tell me, oh, do tell me, is it going round?'

'No,' said I, beginning to think her rather cracked. 'It is quite quiet; no grinding going on to-day.'

I suppose that the young lady sitting next me saw a bewildered and curious expression on my face, for she offered an interpretation. 'Mamma dreads sea-sickness during the crossing so very much,' she said, 'and takes great interest in the wind.'

'Oh!' cried I, much relieved in mind, 'then I am glad to say that it seems to be very calm.'

'Thank goodness!' exclaimed the mother.

What brutes husbands almost invariably are. A man standing in any other relation to this poor lady would have let her take what encouragement she could from the motionless windmill; but her rougher half must needs blurt out: 'You cannot tell inland what the weather is on the sea; I daresay it is blowing half a gale of wind at Dover.'

'Prophet of evil!' said his wife, 'I will not listen to you.'

'You think too much about it, and frighten yourself into being ill,' continued he.—'Are you, sir, a good sailor'——

'Stumps—Mr Stumps,' added I, observing that he paused.

There seemed to be a prospect of our travelling together, for I was quite alone and unfettered, and glad enough of their company, while they apparently liked mine. So, as it is very inconvenient for people who are thrown much together not to know one another's names, I was glad to have the opportunity of at once avowing mine.

But I could not imagine why it should give them all an electric shock, which it did: if they had been joined hand in hand, and the word Stumps had been the brass knob of a charged Leyden jar to which one of them had advanced a knuckle, they could not have started more simultaneously.

Of course the involuntary movement was very slight, and might not have been observed, but that I was somewhat thin-skinned about my name, and therefore on the watch for the smile which it sometimes evoked; but there was no smile, only a thrill of surprise, which was immediately suppressed.

'Oh, indeed,' said Paterfamilias. 'I did not mean to—to be inquisitive; but since—in short, self-introduction—my name is Draper; this is Mrs Draper (bows); this is my eldest daughter, Caroline (bows); this my youngest, Julia (bows).'

'And the young man who was with you at the Egyptian Hall the other day, was he your son?' I asked.

'O no, *Mr Stumps*,' replied Mrs Draper, with a strong accentuation of the word Stumps. 'He was only a friend, no relative.'

I looked across at Miss Julia, who tried to appear unconcerned, but coloured slightly. It was evidently as I had supposed. What taste in the lad, to think twice of the younger sister while the elder was there!

Caroline is nice; but her family called her Carry, which was intoxicating. It was impossible for me to help shewing a certain anxiety to please when speaking to her, or paying her any little ordinary attention, quite different from my manner towards her parents or sister; and I thought she noticed it, and seemed rather pleased than otherwise. There is no fool, you know, like an old fool.

There were opportunities enough of shewing civility to all of them before we got to Paris; for—though Mr Draper did his best, and was not inactive for his figure—to wrestle with so much luggage as the ladies found it necessary to travel with, was quite beyond the powers of any one man who was not a Briareus, or an Argus, or a Hercules, or some other peculiarly gifted myth. And then that overtasked gentleman's anticipations about the weather proved correct; it *was* blowing very hard in the Channel, and he did not get off much better than his wife on this occasion. Indeed, the whole Draper family were thoroughly prostrated, and as I am not subject to the malady of the sea, they looked up to me very much as people do to a doctor when there is illness in a house. The romantic boy breaks ground by presenting the girl of his heart with a nosegay; I, middle-aged and practical, insinuated myself by handing a basin.

When we were in the train on the other side, and my fellow-travellers had recovered, they seemed really hurt and ashamed at having put me to so much trouble; not that they bored me by dwelling much on the subject, but what they did say was evidently genuine.

Then they deferred to me in everything. 'Which is the best hotel to go to, Mr Stumps?' 'How long ought we to stop in Paris, Mr Stumps?'

That was a queer thing: they never spoke to me without mentioning my name with an emphasis, pausing upon it, as it were, as if to impress it upon their memories. And when Miss Carry grew

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playful, as she did under my attentions, she said 'Mr Stumps' in a sly way, as though there was some joke in the word, which I did not at all like, seeing that I soon began to contemplate the possibility of asking her to assume it.

For I went to the same hotel as they did; walked, drove, dined, and visited the theatre with them. When they were tired of Paris, we went to Cologne and up the Rhine together; and by the time we had settled down at Wiesbaden, I was quite like a member of the family; and the continued deference they, and particularly Carry, paid to everything I said, might well have tickled the vanity and softened the heart of a man even older than I was.

At last I determined to declare myself, and took the opportunity of speaking to Mr Draper after the *table-d'hôte*, when we were taking cigars and coffee at a little round table in the courtyard of the *Rose*. I told him that I knew I was rather old for his daughter, and that I was not possessed of that wealth which in these cases often makes up for lack of youth; but that I was not exactly poor either, and would do my best to make Carry happy.

'Well, my lord,' said he, 'of course I am deeply sensible of the honour a man of your rank does my girl by such an offer'——

'My lord! What on earth do you mean?' interrupted I.

'Surely it is time to throw off your incognito when such a serious matter as marriage is being discussed,' he said.

'Incognito! What are you driving at? Whom do you take me for?'

'Why, for the Marquis of Walden,' he replied.

'Marquis of Walden!' cried I. 'Come, come, if you have other views for your daughter, say so; but there is no need to banter me.'

'Do you mean to tell me you are not the marquis?'

'Of course I am not; there never was a title in my family yet.'

'Then who are you?'

'The man I profess myself, to be sure—plain Mr Stumps.'

Mr Draper remained utterly dumfounded for a while; but at last roused himself sufficiently to say: 'I beg your pardon for the mistake; but why, may I ask, did you sign yourself the Marquis of Walden in the visitors' book at the Victoria Cross Gallery?'

'I never committed such an absurdity.'

'It was the last name in the book when we entered, and you were the only person in the room.'

'I can't help that,' cried I, losing patience; 'I never signed my name at all.'

Mr Draper sat still a little while with his lips tightly compressed, and his fat sides and shoulders heaving convulsively at intervals. At last he could bear it no longer, and exploding with irrepressible laughter, he rose and rushed into the hotel; while I strode off in a state of boiling indignation to the Rooms, and lost a couple of pounds worth of florins, to relieve my feelings.

The cold manner of Mrs, and alas! also of Miss Draper towards me on the following morning was so extremely disgusting, after their late cordiality, that I packed up my portmanteau and left the place at once. I must say that Draper himself looked hurt and ashamed, and, I doubt not, would have apologised for his own mirth the evening before, and his wife and daughter's behaviour afterwards, if he could have got hold of me alone. Poor hen-pecked wretch! Well, if I had been a marquis or a millionaire, I might have been hen-pecked too at this present writing; but that I may now safely say I never will be. I have learned my last lesson.

KING ARTHUR AND HIS TIMES.

PERHAPS no story has been so overlaid with fable or so tinted by romance as that of Arthur, the greatest of British kings. Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Welsh bards, his chief chroniclers, relate such marvellous stories of his life and exploits, that one can scarcely blame authentic history for discarding him altogether, and handing him over to tradition. His very existence was doubted at an early period, but poetic embellishments have since given to that shadowy phantom the brightest colour and reality. It is difficult to sift the few grains of truth from the mass of fanciful stories, but not on that account should everything be rejected, and Arthur declared a purely mythical personage. There is no reason for disbelieving that he fought twelve pitched battles against the Saxon invaders; but to say that he killed nine hundred men with his own hand is manifestly absurd. Of course the objection will be made that, if a writer is not worthy of belief on one point, he is not on another—a most true argument in many cases, but one that will not always weigh with those who consider the dark ignorance and credulity of those times, and how unquestioned truth is mingled with the sheerest fable in the writings of the monks and bards, almost the only historians. To account for this mighty imperial presence standing out from among the dim records of the long dead past, some have even gone to the domains of mythology, and discovered that Arthur and his twelve knights of the Round Table were meant as an emblem of the sun and the signs of the zodiac: a brilliant discovery truly, which may be easy of belief to the student dreaming of the myths of old Greece and the Homeric age, but not so credible to the reverent descendants of the Briton and Saxon, who gallantly warred together for the possession of English soil. It is not as if the disputed story was of the times of Druidical supremacy. These had passed away; the native Britons had for the most part become Christians; and as to the Saxons, they would certainly have resented such an intrusion into the kingdom of Odin, All-Father. Arthur must have lived and done some at least of the many famous deeds ascribed to him. The hero we may acknowledge, though not the divine vanquisher of giants, before whom, single-handed, whole armies melted away.

Men and manners were changed since Cæsar's cohorts landed in Britain and found it peopled by a half-savage race, and those they saw were chiefly emigrants from more civilised Gaul. The tribes of the interior were not half but wholly savage,

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wandering through thick matted forests and desolate marshes in search of the animals whose flesh supported them, and whose skins clothed them in winter. They stained their naked bodies with woad and other herbs; and their Roman enemies speak of watching with curiosity the fading colours upon the poor Briton in his death-agony. Polyandry, the most primitive form of marriage, as it has been thought, was universal among them. Some of the most civilised sea-coast tribes had horses and rude chariots, with iron scythes fixed in the wheels, and they also used iron for their lances and hatchets, instead of the flint and bone-tipped implements of the earlier inhabitants; but the majority led as miserable lives as any Central African negroes, without the luxurious climate and sunny nature of the negro to brighten their dark existence. Unmoved by the accustomed sights and sounds around them, the low growl of a bear close at hand, the eyes of a hundred wolves gleaming through the darkness, or the vulture poised overhead waiting for prey, they fled terrified from floods or lightnings which the wicked elves had surely roused to torment them. No wonder they turned for help against invisible powers to the Druids, that strange priesthood with its white robes and golden amulets, and knowledge so infinitely above the common people, and then huge stone altars ran red with human sacrifices, and long-forgotten Celtic cries echoed through the oak groves. Such were the Britons as the Romans found them; but the civilisation of the conquerors took root. For five centuries it progressed, and a purer faith stepped in, lifting them higher and higher in the scale of nations; till in the reign of Uther Pendragon they were skilled in the arts of peace and war, possessing towns and cattle, rich clothing, jewels, armour, and fighting weapons equal indeed to those of their Saxon invaders.

Uther Pendragon died about the end of the fifth or beginning of the sixth century, leaving his son Arthur, a boy of fifteen, to succeed him in a fair kingdom. The old chronicler, Geoffrey of Monmouth, calls him 'a youth of such unparalleled courage and generosity, joined with that sweetness of temper and innate goodness, as gained him universal love,' which character he appears to have generally maintained throughout his stormy life. With this, however, he nursed a fierce hatred of the Saxon, a feeling shared by every Briton, who looked with dread at the ever-advancing footsteps of that gigantic, blue-eyed race. Hengist and Horsa were long dead, but the battle-axes of their followers fell no less heavily. Against them were Arthur's unwearying efforts directed. His first enterprise was the siege of a Saxon army at York, a sufficiently ambitious one; so it may be supposed he staid quietly at home for a few years after his early accession. Upon the Saxons receiving reinforcements, he retreated to London, and after joining fifteen thousand men under Hoel, king of Armorica, his sister's son, the two kings together defeated the Saxons at Lincoln. They had another encounter with the Saxons in Somerset, where Arthur first appears as the chivalrous hero-king. He had a very tall, imposing figure, but beyond that, even those who knew him say nothing of his personal appearance. On this occasion he wore splendid armour, a golden helmet, which bore in front his well-known device, a dragon; and fondly did his people believe he was the dragon that should chase their cursed enemies back to the sea whence they came. His shield, named Priwen, was emblazoned with the figure of the Virgin Mary; his famous sword, Caliburn or Excalibur, was made at Avallon, and then, as afterwards, it scarcely needed to flash from the scabbard before the Goths fell back at the sight of that terrible weapon and the terrible arm that wielded it. He conquered in this battle—indeed the chronicles hardly tell of one which he did not win. This is cited as a strong proof of their inventive and lying propensities, and, as I think, unreasonably; for though it is certainly unlikely that any man, however superhuman his genius, should be invariably successful, yet, if we consider more modern historians, how many shall we find who faithfully record the defeats as well as the victories of their respective heroes?

Having settled the affairs of southern England, Arthur marched northward, and even penetrated to Scotland, to attack the Scots and Picts, who had long harassed the Border. Softened by their submission, he generously granted them a free pardon. That Christmas he kept at York, resting his wearied army, and ordering the restoration of churches demolished there by the idolatrous Saxons. About this time he married the beautiful woman whose name is variously spelt Guanhumara, Guenhyfar, and Guenever, modified by late writers into Guinevere. From this point the narrative is certainly largely mixed with fable. We are told, without much detail, that he next conquered Ireland, Iceland, 'Gothland,' and the Orkneys, and then reigned peaceably in Britain for twelve years, his fame spreading widely through the surrounding countries, and numbers coming from far to add to the increasing splendour and refinement of his court. Out of the many brave knights surrounding him, the king chose twelve to be his constant companions in battle and in council, and instituted for them the brotherhood of the Round Table. In it there was no distinction of rank; all took an oath to be courageous, honourable, and loyal, ready to assist ladies or any other persons in distress, to fight for God and King Arthur, and even if need be, lay down life itself in defence of a good cause: and the king was foremost in all he prescribed to his chosen knights. Daring in battle, wise in council, he was beloved for his gracious sweetness, and above all for the tenderness with which he cared for the soldiers who were expending their blood for the country. In battle he used to set up a golden dragon as a standard and a place of refuge for wounded or exhausted soldiers.

The nine following years, Arthur employed in subduing Norway, Dacia, Aquitaine, and Gaul, concluding with a grand assembly of people from

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all parts that he called at *Paris*. It is difficult to imagine how the most ignorant monk of the twelfth century could have made this absurd assertion, yet Geoffrey of Monmouth delivers it with the utmost gravity and confidence. At that time, Arthur may have been engaged in some wars, mainly successful, that his eager biographers magnified into immense proportions, thinking perhaps, good souls, that it was not easier to deceive their few contemporary readers than the microscopic eyes of their cavilling descendants. After this truly marvellous campaign, he returned home, and 'celebrated Pentecost' at Caerleon, or the city of legions. Here his coronation took place. In the midst of a multitude of people, and all the nobles and clergy of the kingdom, the Archbishop of Caerleon, uncle of the king, crowned him and Guinevere with great pomp and rejoicings that lasted many days. Arthur had never paid any tribute to the Roman emperors, for the excellent reason that they existed no longer; and the Byzantine monarchs did not trouble themselves with the affairs of Britain. Rome had fallen into barbarian hands at least sixty years before we are told that an embassy arrived at Caerleon from the Roman general Lucius, rebuking Arthur for want of respect to his sovereign power, and desiring him to go immediately to Rome to answer for his conduct. A council of knights agreed with the king in returning a defiant message, and the whole country was roused to prepare for war. On his way to Cornwall to meet the Roman army, two incidents occurred: Arthur had an ominous dream, in which were foreshadowed the evils coming fast upon him; and on St Michael's Mount he killed a giant, who had carried away the niece of Hoel, king of Armorica. This latter story is related with the amusing solemnity of a fairy tale. Having defeated the Romans several times, he was going on to Rome, when the news came that his nephew Modred, to whom he had committed the care of the kingdom and the queen, had betrayed his trust, placed himself upon the throne, and won the love of Guinevere. Undaunted by the king's hasty return, Modred boldly met him on landing, but was finally beaten and obliged to flee to Winchester, while Guinevere entered a cloister at Amesbury. Too glad of the opportunity, the Saxons joined Modred, and they fought a desperate battle with Arthur at Camelan, in the year 542, in which the traitor was killed. Mortally wounded, Arthur was borne from the blood-dripped field, 'to be cured of his wounds in the island of Avallon,' that mysterious place undiscovered to this day, though some think it may be Glastonbury. And so he vanishes for ever into the misty night, while our eyes strain to follow, if only to know what manner of death the hero died; but the darkness reveals nothing. He flames like a meteor over the shores of ancient England, then drops down into the red western sky, and is lost in the gloom of centuries.

Thus far we have traced the old chronicles, such as profess to be history, though I would not dismiss the *Morte d'Arthur* as belonging purely to romance. The question is, where lies the boundary between truth and invention in this strange story? Does it not seem as if these biographers had commenced building upon the truth—for the first part is certainly the most probable—and that, warming with the subject, they magnified small incidents into amazing exploits, and coloured them with what appears to us an air of fiction? Most of these wild stories must have a basis of truth. At St Michael's Mount, King Arthur may have fought with some arrogant knight, who wished to match his unusual strength and courage against the king, famous for both; and may not wars with some distant unknown tribes, of whom there were many in those half-barbarous times, have been soon transformed into conquests worthy of Alexander? The *Morte d'Arthur* is simply a tissue of romantic tales, woven over the few known facts of Arthur's history. It is filled with the adventures of his knights, the most renowned of whom were bold Sir Gawaine, Sir Tristram, Sir Galahad 'the pure knight,' Lancelot's son, and bravest of all, Sir Lancelot himself. A myth, though a noble one, is the quest of the Sangreal, that holy vessel which appeared to many, filling the place with a heavenly light and sweetness and fragrance. None saw the hands that bore it but such as were stainless, and none found it but Sir Galahad at his death. Our laureate has drawn deep inspiration from this romance; and indeed some stories, as those of Elaine, and of Sir Bedivere throwing the sword Excalibur into the lake, are scarcely bettered, the originals are so beautiful and pathetic. The love of Lancelot and Guinevere is related chiefly here and in those antique poems bearing the same name. They say that Modred, hating Lancelot, revealed to the unconscious king what had long been whispered, that the best and dearest of all the Round Table and his golden-haired queen were false to him, and that he was away fighting with Lancelot when Modred seized the kingdom and the remorseful Guinevere. Mr Tennyson alters the story still further, representing Modred as having nothing to do with Guinevere, but all turning upon her passionate devotion to Lancelot, to the neglect of Arthur, 'blameless king.' The old chronicles hint that she was not insensible to Modred's insinuating grace, but they scarcely mention Lancelot. The Welsh bards, those truthful echoes of a bygone age, do not attribute to Arthur that superhuman character with which he is invested by later writers, but while shewing his superiority, they are more moderate in their praise, and can even find room for others beside him. Llywarch Hen, who fought under him in one of his earlier battles, calls him 'emperor and conductor of the toil;' but the Prince Geraint—'the unflinching,' 'enemy of tyranny'—is almost entirely the subject of the poem.

In the *Black Book of Caermarthen*, it is said of Sir Bedivere, that before him his foes fell by the hundred—a poetical exaggeration, it is needless to say, but meaning he was an accomplished soldier. Sir Kay is represented in the *Morte d'Arthur* as a sleepy, thick-headed knight, a butt for the merry ladies of the lake, a fate from which his beauty ought to have saved him. The same ancient *Book of Caermarthen* speaks in great praise of 'the handsome Cai.'

> Brave was his disposition,
> With sword and shield,
> Vanity were the foremost men
> Compared with Cai in battle.

So that romance does not always exalt its subject. His proficiency is also celebrated in an acquirement much admired in those rough old times, and indeed in much later ones, the power of hard drinking: 'he could drink with four.' Of all the bards,

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Taliesin shews the greatest admiration for Arthur. One of his poems begins:

> I will praise the sovereign, supreme king of the land,
> Who hath extended his dominion over the shore of the world—

that is to say, the world that lay within Taliesin's limited vision. In his opinion, fighting under 'Arthur the blessed' was 'a splendid labour,' and he speaks of 'his wisdom and his swift irruptions,' and of the 'restless activity on his face in battle.' No one, he says, who was not at Caer Wydre (a battle fought near the Picts' wall), could conceive the prowess of Arthur.

The name of Merlin the seer is bound up with Arthur's memory. First attached to the service of Uther Pendragon, he afterwards filled the same post, under the son, of confidential adviser and communicator with the spirit-world, of which it was imagined he knew so much. Very likely, he was cleverer than most people of his time—had studied the nature and properties of herbs, and learned a few of the closely veiled secrets with whose vast powers modern science is but slightly acquainted. These may have given him a reputation for magic; but beyond this, he aspired to foretell future events. His prophecies and maledictions are very curious, and there are those who profess to trace their fulfilment in the course of the following centuries; but they really appear a collection of horrors intended to disturb the popular mind, and gain a certain influence over it. He and his arts were brought to an end—so runs the tale—by his being, in a moment of weakness, outwitted by Vivien, the cunning lady for whom he conceived a foolish attachment in his old age.

In most histories of England, one may read that in 1189, King Henry II., being at Glastonbury Abbey, where Arthur was reputed to be buried, caused his so-called tomb to be opened, and they found therein the remains of a man of extraordinary size, corresponding with the description given of him; but, strangely, it also contained a woman with long hair, that crumbled as a monk touched it. If this was Arthur, the other could scarcely have been Guinevere. Perhaps it was his sister, Morgan le Fay, who, with Enid and Vivien of the lake, conveyed him to Avallon—at least so says the *Morte d'Arthur*. But the whole story of this discovery is apocryphal, to say the least.

Romance, in magnifying its hero, has rather injured than added to his fame. Not content with his being the son of Uther Pendragon and his wife Igerna, it has invented stories of his miraculous birth—of his being found by Merlin, who prophesied strange things of him. But Arthur the Dragon's Head he was in right of his father. For a long time, the British people refused to believe in his death—they thought he was only lying hid in mysterious Avallon, and would come forth again to lead them to victory; but year after year waned away, while they looked for him as eagerly as the Jews for their Messiah. There came no sign, and the wild Saxons were pressing on, shouting their grim sagas, and rushing into the midst of battle, in the hope of meeting that bloody death that should open for them the doors of Walhalla. So this mighty race of gods, sons of Odin and Thor, from the North Land, drove the despairing Britons back and back to the hills of Wales, to fair Devon and rugged Cornwall, till they saw, standing high and solemn above them, enduring as the name enshrined in their hearts, Tintagel Castle, the birthplace of Arthur; and there they rested.

A COUNTY FAMILY.

CHAPTER XXXV.—KNOWING THE WORST.

'I AM sorry you and Mr Denton did not agree this morning,' said Lucy to her father as they sat in their home at Mosedale on the evening of the day on which we last saw her: 'he seems a very straightforward and unselfish young man.'

'Does he?' returned Mr Waller vacantly, and passing his hand wearily across his forehead. 'I really paid but little attention to him in other respects, except that he seemed to be very fidgety and importunate.'

'That's because he feels everything that he says, papa; his every word seems to come from his heart.'

'It would be better if it came from his head when he talks about business matters,' observed Mr Waller drily.—'Did he say anything more about that confounded reservoir, Lucy, this afternoon?'

'No, papa; but I met him on horseback, and I fancy he was riding out to Redmoor, to take another look at the embankment. I hope and trust you are right in the matter, papa, dear: it would be so terrible if what Mr Denton is so apprehensive of should come to pass.'

'Yes, yes; I am right enough, Lucy; I must be right, for did not Flywheel tell me so himself. This Mr Denton's Report, he said, made far too much of the matter last year; and I have no doubt he is again alarming himself unnecessarily. A young man always likes to make out a serious case out of anything in which he first gets employment; it is only natural; and I bear no grudge against him whatever on account of the fuss he made. His throwing his appointment in my face, indeed, was petulant enough; it looked very fine, but it was not much of a sacrifice. He has a good salary from the railway company, I am told; and is likely to get on in the world. I daresay, so far as means go, he will soon be quite as good a match for your friend Ellen as Mr Stanhope. I don't wonder that a sensible girl like her should prefer a man with a steadily increasing income to one who has scarcely anything but his good blood to recommend him. It is not every young lady who has the chance of securing a man who is rich and also well born.'

This was a subject not pleasing to Lucy, and she made an effort to avert its continuance.

'But if all Mr Denton wants is to have the embankment thoroughly inspected, why should it not be done, papa? Cross-examination, as I have heard you say, is the key that lets out the truth; and is it not something the same with inanimate objects as with human beings?'

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'It can't be done, my dear,' sighed Mr Waller, 'for, to be candid with you, I can't afford it.'

'Is it so very expensive, then? Mr Denton said it would cost only a few pounds.'

'Nor would it, Lucy, so far as the mere work was concerned; and my share of the expense would indeed be insignificant enough. But once let the folks here know that the reservoir needs repair, and down go the shares, as they did last year. Since you have pressed me on this matter, my darling, I will take the opportunity to tell you exactly how my affairs stand—if those can be said to stand at all, which the breath of rumour might topple over in utter ruin.'

'I am quite aware, dear papa, you are in sad straits,' said Lucy faintly; 'I have always entreated you to let us live more in accordance with our actual means. The luxuries with which we are surrounded have given me no pleasure since I came to know the shifts to which you have been put to maintain us in them. I would rather give up everything to-morrow, and live ever so plainly, than remain in our present false position.'

'You don't know what "giving up everything" means, Lucy,' said Mr Waller gloomily, 'nor can any one guess, who has not put it into practice: no rich man, and certainly no rich woman, has any real conception of actual poverty. You have the same idea of it as your would-be Sister of Mercy has of tending the sick in hospital; she fancies only wasted features with grateful looks on them; she has no idea of what would really meet her eye—and her nose.'

'I don't know about abject poverty, papa,' said Lucy simply; 'that is, I don't know so much as I ought to know, though it always seemed to me, even in that case, that a little care and taste'——

Mr Waller cut her short with a bitter smile. 'Taste!' cried he; 'yes, that would mend matters indeed; you would have cut flowers and a musical-box in every two-roomed house, I daresay.

> Thy gallery, Florence, gilds my humble walls,
> And my low roof the Vatican recalls.

You and the man who wrote those lines had much the same conception of cottage-life.'

'Well, papa, I know at least how our lodge-keeper and his daughter live; and Heaven knows that I would gladly exchange places with them.'

'Yes, Lucy; but even if I were adapted for a lodge-keeper (which I confess I do not think I am), that is unfortunately not the question. There is no middle course for us left; there is no alternative for us but this—either the life we are now living, or positive beggary—destitution. There is not one brick of this house, nor one article which it contains, that we can with strictness call our own. I thought that I had hinted as much to you already.'

'No, papa, I did not know that.'

Lucy was very white, but her voice was firm. It was ill news indeed, but she was preparing herself for worse tidings which she saw by her father's face were on the way.

'Yes, dear Lucy, the time has come when I must use plain words. Those reservoir shares are all—absolutely all—that I now possess in the world; and I must sell them to-morrow to meet a bill which will then fall due, unless it is met by some one else.'

'By some one else? I do not understand.'

'William Blackburn's name is on the back of it.'

'O papa, did you persuade him to do that on my—through any hope'—— She leaned back breathless in her chair, and gazed upon him with terrified eyes.

'I made no promise, darling, certainly not. But I did say, as indeed I thought, that time might have its influence upon you in his favour. He was very reasonable—he said that he was content to wait. He did not wish to press matters at all, and I am sure he will not do so; and in time, who knows but that fortune may befriend us. I have many an iron in the fire, and though I have been unfortunate of late, that cannot last for ever. On the other hand, what is it makes this match so repugnant to you, which many a young girl in the county'——

'Do you ask me that, papa, who know this man?'

Mr Waller cast down his eyes, and fumbled with trembling fingers at his watch-chain. 'You cannot have a husband made to order, Lucy: there is something to be said against every man, if you come to that.'

'And do you really ask me, father, to take William Blackburn for my husband, for my companion—for my master all my life?'

'No, only for all *his* life,' returned Mr Waller boldly. 'I would fain have kept silence upon this matter, but, after all, it is a mere conventional reticence. We take into account the chance of death in every marriage settlement, and why not in our considerations of a match, as now? William Blackburn's life is not worth five years' purchase: Mr Allcase told me so himself. He has undermined—I mean, when he was abroad, and isolated, as it were, poor fellow! from his family and friends, he was driven to take more to drink than was good for him; and though he sees the evil of it now—you must yourself have noticed a marked change in him of late for the better in all respects; he is certainly grown more social and pleasant in his manners—well, as I was saying, though he is so improved in his habits, the mischief has been done: he is bound to be a short-lived man.'

'And how many years, father,' asked Lucy in hollow tones, 'would it take a man like that to break a heart like mine, think you?'

'He shall never do it, my girl; he shall never have the chance of doing it,' replied Mr Waller vehemently. 'If you are not happy with him, you shall come back to me. Do you think that I could not manage that and him? I tell you I could wind that fellow round my finger, compel him into doing what I pleased, and become his master wholly, if only I once got free from the meshes of this net. I feel like some strong swimmer whose limbs are caught by the lithe weed beneath, and rendered useless: if it be but severed, he rises to the surface buoyant as ever; but else he is dragged down and drowned. Nay, worse than he, for the drowned man is buried, and there's an end; but of dishonoured bankrupt *me*, they will make a shameful spectacle, and at their shouts

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and jeers my daughter may well shudder, since one word of hers might have saved me, and yet she would not speak it.'

'Then I will speak it, father,' cried Lucy suddenly. 'You shall never say that I hesitated to make the choice between my happiness and yours—I will tell this man that since you have sold me to him, I will ratify my part of the bargain.'

'My dear Lucy,' said Mr Waller, taking his daughter's icy hand within his own and smoothing it fondly, 'this is really a most unpleasant view to take of the matter. You must forgive me—but it is not good taste—and it is also most painful to myself. I have only done what any man in the county would have been glad to have done in securing you this good position, although I confess I was impelled to it by cruel necessity. If I were a rich man, I would afford you the indulgence of wedding whom you pleased, and welcome; but as it is, the luxury is not within my means. I sincerely wish, for both our sakes, that it were, my dear. Then it is not as if I were tearing you from the arms of one on whom you have set your heart; you know that I was far from offering the least obstacle when'——

She held her hand up for a moment pleadingly. 'Pray, spare me that, papa, since I have promised to do your bidding. Why torture me further?'

'Torture you, my child? Heaven forbid!' said Mr Waller earnestly. Deeply moved by his daughter's wretchedness, he was now characteristically bent upon shewing her that, after all, matters might not turn out as she feared. 'I was obliged to put the whole matter before you—to let you see the extent of the sacrifice (as you persist in viewing it) which might possibly be demanded, but to tell the worst is always to exclude much that is hopeful, something that is even probable. As I said before, William Blackburn is in no hurry to wed; nor, indeed, would it be fitting that he should be. Six months at the very least must elapse out of respect for his late wife. I should insist, even if it were not his own desire, upon so much of delay myself. And in six months, why, you don't know what a man like me can compass, if he has but room to turn about in: you don't know what Time can do, my child.'

'I know what Time has done for me, papa,' said Lucy bitterly, 'but fifteen months of time! Heaven help me!' and then at last the silent tears began to fall.

Mr Waller rose, stooped over her white face, and kissing her forehead, left the room without a word. He understood what his daughter felt, and perhaps even sympathised with her more than many a less selfish man would have done. The faculty of insight, untrammelled by the weakness of sentiment, had made Mr Waller a strong man, and armed him for the battle of life. If in every case he did not know exactly what should be said, he always knew when he had said enough.

Lucy sat where she was for hours, gazing vacantly before her, through eyes now tear-dimmed with the memories of the past, now coldly fixed in contemplation of the future; busy with the dream of what might have been, and with the harsh realities of what might be.

One circumstance only, to which indeed her father had alluded, though really with no other intention than to diminish her sorrow, by placing it at a distance from her view, gave her some spark of comfort. There was still time before her. William Blackburn had never actually proposed to her; and she knew him far too well to suppose that any delicate feeling with regard to his late wife had caused this reticence. There was doubtless some material reason which turned the scale with him in favour of delay: perhaps he was waiting to see in what position he would be left by his father's will, and desired to hold himself in a condition to cry 'off,' should circumstances induce him to look for a bride elsewhere. Never was reflection, so wounding to a young lady's self-esteem, so gladly entertained and cherished.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—MR WILLIAM'S AUTOGRAPH.

Scarcely had the young engineer passed out of sight upon his way to Curlew Mill, when the carriage bringing Mr Waller and his daughter to spend the promised 'long day' at the cottage made its appearance on the bridge. Stanhope saw it with satisfaction, as he stood at the dining-room window pondering in his mind the communication he had just received, and in some doubt as to the course he should pursue in consequence. While his late visitor had been with him, Denton's earnest manner and pleading words had had more or less of weight with him, but his *laissez aller* nature was antagonistic to all press and promptitude, and now that he was alone, he already began to think that the other might have overstated his case through professional enthusiasm, if not through pique at his advice having been disregarded by his superiors. It was a serious thing to terrify the little household, with its prostrate head, by fears that after all might be without foundation, and he gladly welcomed the arrival of astute and practical Mr Waller, as one who could give him good advice in such an emergency.

'I did not expect Miss Lucy would have inveigled you here so early,' said he, when that young lady had gone up-stairs with Ellen to take off her out-door gear; 'but, as it happens, you are come in the very nick of time, for I want you to help me out of a difficulty.'

Everything of difficulty took with Mr Waller a pecuniary shape: was it possible that this young man was so hard pushed for money that he was going to ask a loan even of *him*, of whose embarrassments he was doubtless not altogether ignorant? Of course he could have lent him nothing; but it was disagreeable to him to have to refuse anything point blank. He therefore at once began *more suo* to anticipate the catastrophe. 'Yes, I am earlier than I thought to be; but the fact is there was a confounded fellow worrying me about a claim, which, just at present, it would be very inconvenient to me to satisfy; and I was really glad to get bodily away from him. There are some creditors who seem to be quite cannibalish, and ready to eat one up alive.'

The real explanation of his early visit was that he did not wish Lucy to come without him; notwithstanding her promise of the previous night, he mistrusted her fortitude, and thought it best that she should have his personal support in the society of Mr William, whom she was now to meet for the first time as her acknowledged suitor. The business he had to arrange with that gentleman in the course of the day was exceedingly likely to bring

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matters to a head, and would indeed have necessitated his yesterday's plain speaking to Lucy, had not the discussion about Denton led to the question by another channel.

'Don't talk to me of creditors, my good friend,' said Stanhope laughing; 'it's like speaking of ropes in the house of a gentleman who is to be hanged. But that reminds me we are not to be hanged in this house, but drowned, it seems. The embankment on Redmoor is far from safe, I hear; and the reservoir—— But, there; what a fool I am about all these business matters; why, now I remember, you are connected with that thing yourself.'

'Connected with it, sir?' said Mr Waller with a smile upon his shrewd face, that masked considerable trepidation; for if this news had really got about, it might have the same ill effect as the official inspection he had refused to permit. 'I am very glad to say I *am* connected with it, since the shares are at a high premium, and I hold a good sheaf of them. The reservoir, sir? Why, *Le réservoir c'est moi.* I am myself the chairman of the Board.'

'Of course you are; I remember hearing you say so last year.'

An indifferent joke about the information having only gone in at one year to go out at another, was Mr Waller's reply.

'Ah, but I can tell you it is no laughing matter, Waller. I do really believe there's something wrong. I never saw a man more earnest and confident in his manner in my life than Mr Denton was this morning.'

'Oh, Mr Denton was your informant, was he?' returned the other with irritation, yet secretly well pleased to find that the news had come from a source he was already prepared for. 'You are not aware, I suppose, that that very young gentleman, who at best was only the *locum tenens* of a much abler and wiser man, now holds no official appointment with us whatever?'

'He told me so much as that,' said Stanhope; 'but I understood him to say he had resigned the post.'

'Well, I suppose he has a right to call it a resignation, if he so pleases,' said Mr Waller coldly. 'But we should certainly not have retained him, even had he wished it. I don't say that he is not an able young fellow enough, but he is too full of fancies for a profession so practical as he has chosen. Flywheel, who has a European reputation, quite laughed at his Report last year; and I don't imagine that the six months' interval has rendered him more logical and judicious. So he has been down here already, has he, with that cock-and-bull story which he told me yesterday? Well, considering he is no longer in our employment, I think it would have been better taste in him to hold his tongue. What the deuce business is it of his, I should like to know?'

'Nay, but surely it *is* his business, considering we live here in this swan's nest upon the river itself, to let us know if he thinks the reservoir may come down upon us any morning, or even at night, which would be less agreeable still.'

'My dear Stanhope,' said Mr Waller, throwing his palms outwards—an action which he had always found of service in convincing the mercantile community—'do, pray, let us take a reasonable view of this matter. Am I—a practical man, and yet, I hope, not without some human feeling—the sort of person likely to let life and property be endangered to the frightful extent to which it would be exposed if there was really any fear of such a catastrophe as you hint at? Why, my own place at Mosedale—let alone this cottage, with its little host of friends—would be among the first to suffer, for it lies low, and close to the river; and you will at least grant that I have a sharp eye to my own interests.'

'Perhaps it is insured,' answered Stanhope laughing. 'I wish my mill was.'

'There, now, you are treating the matter as it deserves to be treated,' said Mr Waller approvingly. 'The danger, I do solemnly assure you' (and it must be added that the speaker believed what he said, because he wished to believe it), 'has no existence whatever, except in the brain of this sucking engineer.'

'Still, it must have taken very firm root *there*,' observed Stanhope, not quite convinced, 'for him to have ridden down here this morning, with no other purpose than to put us on our guard.'

'Are you quite sure he had no other purpose, as he certainly had some other *attraction* to this spot?' said Mr Waller shrewdly. 'For my part—though,' added he hurriedly, 'of course there are exceptions—I don't believe in the disinterestedness of young men.'

Stanhope's colour heightened. 'Disinterestedness you think, then, is only a product of mature years, Mr Waller? Well, that is as it may be; but certainly men of your age have a better reputation for sagacity than your juniors. I suppose we must place ourselves in your hands, and disregard this young fellow's warning altogether; else I had certainly meant to speak to Mrs Blackburn on the subject.'

'My good sir, you would surely not have been so injudicious; it would have put her beside herself with foolish terrors; she would have been for getting her husband and the whole household out of the cottage at once, and placing them on the most elevated spot in the country. She is far from well, my daughter tells me, as it is; and, indeed, we are planning to take her away with us to Mosedale for a day or two, if she could only be persuaded to leave Miss Ellen in sole charge of our sick friend.'

'But one must give some reason for Mr Denton's having called this morning.'

'Yes, yes; but you may leave that to me, Stanhope. It will be much better so; because, you see, any reference to his visit places you—considering this gentleman's pretensions in a certain quarter—in a somewhat delicate position. I will tell my daughter, who is already acquainted with Denton's ideas upon the reservoir matter, to inform Miss Ellen of the whole affair.'

'Then I wash my hands of the matter altogether,' said the other, glad to close the question. Never before had Mr Waller made direct reference to his young friend's matrimonial scheme—he was too well bred, or rather too much man of the world to do so, unless his own interest seemed, as now, to urgently demand it; and the allusion made Stanhope wince. Mr Waller was made of sterner stuff.

'Where is our young friend, Mr William, to-day?' inquired he gaily.

'He is gone fishing down Mosedale way; I wonder you did not see him as you came along.

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He talked of being out all day, but I fancy he 'll be back at luncheon-time.'

'I hope so, indeed,' said Mr Waller involuntarily, and taking out his watch. 'I rather wanted to have a word with him before the post goes out.'

'Upon business?' inquired Stanhope drily.

'Yes, upon his own business. Moffat, who can't get on with him, asks me occasionally to put this and that before him.' This was true; and Mr Waller knew that Stanhope was aware of it. 'For my part,' continued the former, 'I find little difficulty with our friend. And certainly of late he seems to me to be getting more practicable and like other people—don't you think so?'

'Within the last day or two there has, without doubt, been a noticeable change in him,' answered Stanhope coldly, 'otherwise I should not call his manners conciliatory.'

Mr Waller smiled: he knew that his companion was making reprisals for his late allusion.

'Manners,' rejoined he, 'are, after all, but the result of early training, which is in no case within one's own power. They may make the man; but it is birth and acres—provided only that they are unencumbered—which make the county gentleman.'

'Talk of the devil,' said Stanhope with irritation; 'here *is* Mr William coming through the bridge.'

'How are you, Blackburn? Good-morning to you,' cried Mr Waller cheerily. 'What sport have you had? What have you got?'

'Nothing,' grunted Mr William, awaking desponding echoes.

'Not even an appetite for luncheon?' laughed Mr Waller. 'Come, let us hope you've got that. Stanhope here was just remarking you would be pretty sure to be back at feeding-time. It is then that one has best chance of fish.'

'Oh, fishing is all rubbish. This old fool here took me to a place which he said would be like a stewpond, and where he had dropped four quarts of worms, for which he charged two shillings; and there wasn't a blessed fin.'

'It's all them poachers, Mr William,' pleaded the professional angler; 'they comes up from Mosedale every other night in the week.'

'It's your business to catch 'em, sir,' returned his master, 'or, at all events, to see that I catch fish.'

'But then you broke the rod, Mr William,' remonstrated the other—'Mr Richard's rod, as has whipped Curlew for five years, and killed a'most a ton of trout!'

'Never mind, Blackburn; spare the rod and spoil the stream, says Solomon,' observed Mr Waller encouragingly.

'Oh, I don't mind,' said William sulkily, 'whether Solomon said so or not.—Come, put me ashore here, old Groundbait;' which was done accordingly. Mr William's time was of course much too valuable to be consumed in the foolish custom of hand-shaking, but he nodded graciously to both his friends.

'The idea,' said he, appealing to their sympathies, 'of that fellow's charging sixpence a quart for worms!'

'Frogs are much dearer, my good sir, in France,' said Mr Waller, who, notwithstanding his boast of 'getting on so well' with this county gentleman, was always shooting over his head, and irritating him by opposition, when intending to conciliate him by badinage.

'Then all I can say is fools must be plentiful in France; and I never want to go there,' growled Mr William.

'Oh, then, he never has been in France, after all,' thought Mr Waller. 'Come, I've picked up *something*. A day will come, my young friend, yet, when I shall have you entirely under my thumb;' and he smiled upon him in the most genial and unaffected manner.

'You have not come without Miss Lucy, have you?' inquired Mr William suddenly, and in a manner which, if complimentary to the person sought for, was certainly not courteous to the person found.

'No, no,' said Mr Waller, smiling; 'I know too well what sort of a welcome an old fellow like me would receive at the hands of you young gentlemen, unless he brought some one else to recommend him.'

'Just so,' said Mr William bluntly. 'Where is she, then?'

'The young ladies are up-stairs with your mother,' observed Stanhope, speaking for the first time.—'Perhaps, before they come down, you had better get that business over, Waller, with Blackburn—at least, I mean, don't mind me: I can stay here among the roses.'

'A proper place for such a pretty fellow!' said Mr Waller. 'I am much obliged to you for reminding me of the matter, which else I do believe I should have clean forgotten.—Yes, I want to have a few words with you, Blackburn. Just come into the dining-room for five minutes, will you?'

'Well, be alive,' said William, when they had stepped within, and the other had carefully closed the glass door, 'for the fact is I want a cigar; and if I have one in any room of this wretched hovel, they make such a fuss about the smoke getting up-stairs. I hope you are going to tell me that that fellow Moffat is inclined to be less pig-headed?'

'Well, yes, I think I shall be able to bring him round; though, without doubt, your father's condition makes matters uncommonly embarrassing.'

'You have not got the money, then?' said the other in a tone of disappointment.

'No, I have not got the money at present,' said Mr Waller quietly. 'It is not about that that I wished to speak to you. It is about that bill.'

'What! *your* bill? Oh, that explains matters. I thought you shewed yourself deucedly interested in my affairs. Well, it falls due to-morrow. You do not expect *me* to meet it, I hope?'

'Well, I am afraid I must, Blackburn.'

'And how the devil am I to do it? I tell you, if I gave you every farthing I could scrape together, including the purse I've saved for a little fling in London, which I am sure I deserve, after having been moped up in a sick-house for half a year—I say, even in that case (which I promise you is not very likely to happen), I could not muster such a sum.'

'My dear Blackburn,' said Mr Waller, smiling, 'you could muster ten such sums with as many strokes of your pen.'

'What! by signing my name? Oh, I daresay. You have had one of my autographs already, and that is enough. I tell you once for all that I will not lend myself to help you to another shilling unless I see my way to the *quid pro quo*.'

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There was a long pause, during which the last speaker looked at the other significantly.

'The security you ask for is up-stairs,' said Mr Waller at last.

'I know *that* well enough,' answered William; 'but I must have it here—if not in my hand, at all events assured to me.'

'I have spoken to Lucy for you, William—I pleaded your cause with her only last night; upon my word and honour, I did.'

'I don't doubt it,' said the other coolly. 'I know you are upon my side in the matter, because it is the side on which your bread is buttered; but it is not to gain you for a father-in-law that I am so particularly anxious, but to gain your daughter for a wife. When she herself has said to me: "Ask papa," then I shall be satisfied.'

'And that she shall do some day,' said Mr Waller cheerfully. 'Indeed, between ourselves, she has promised as much already.'

'Some day means nothing,' said William resolutely. 'Lucy herself must tell me to-day that she is ready to become Mrs William Blackburn.'

'To-day! That is impossible, sir,' cried Mr Waller.

'Then I shall find it equally impossible to-day to put my name to paper,' said the other with determination; 'and it seems to me that you can't wait.'

Mr Waller's usually tranquil face was greatly agitated; anxiety and rage alike made prey of him. It was true that he could not wait; but he had had no idea that William also would be so urgent. Whenever the subject of his marriage had been hinted at before, he had shewn no sign of impatience.

'It is a harsh thing, Blackburn, to demand to have my daughter's answer from her own lips, under circumstances like yours, so soon. But my necessity, as you observe, is great and pressing. If you are really fixed in your resolve'——

'You need not say "if." *I am.*'

'Then I will ask Lucy, as a favour to myself, to waive those feelings of delicacy, which, though you do not seem to possess them, should actuate you far more than her.'

William stared at him with dogged wonder; he had no idea to what he was alluding: the recollection of how short a time had elapsed since his supposed bereavement, did not even occur to him.

'I say I will ask my daughter to forget what you have not chosen to remember; and to give you her promise, that when the fit time comes, she will become your wife.'

'The fit time!' returned the other fiercely; 'what the deuce do you mean by that? I think I have been put off and put off sufficiently long as it is; but it's no use mincing matters with you, I find. When she says "yes," she must also name the day, sir: any day she pleases, of course; but it must be a pretty early one, I can tell her—within six weeks at farthest.'

'Six weeks?' exclaimed Mr Waller angrily, for every moment of this man's companionship made the idea of his daughter's marriage with him more hateful, and the sense of his own helplessness more galling. 'You must have lost your wits, Blackburn, as you have surely lost your memory. Do you know how many days it is since you were *free* to wed?'

William had risen from his chair, in token that he had given his *ultimatum*, but he now sat hurriedly down again; his face had turned deadly pale, and his brow was overspread with dew; his tongue clave to the roof of his mouth, and when he got it free, it was only to moisten his suddenly parched lips. As he sat there, damp and venomous-looking, with protruding eyes, it came involuntarily into the mind of his father-in-law elect how like he was to that order of reptiles which is called Batrachian.

'I am glad to see at least that the recollection of your late bereavement moves you,' said Mr Waller gravely. 'Doubtless your affection for Lucy may be some excuse for your oblivion of the past; but still, sir, these common decencies of life, or at least of good society, should never be forgotten. Your proposal shocked me, as you saw; nor could it, believe me, fail to shock others also. To marry so soon after your wife's death, would not only provoke antagonism to yourself, but to Lucy, and would prevent her from being of that social service to you with your neighbours, of which you stand so much in need. Nay, sir, I do not hesitate to say, that any such hasty marriage would provoke the most injurious reflections and inquiries respecting your late wife. How, it will be asked, did he treat *her*, and when and where—— But there, I see I have said enough, William. I am sorry to have pained you so, but your most injudicious proposition left me no alternative.—See, there are the young ladies in the garden. Now, if you still wish to see Lucy'——

Mr William shook his head. 'No, no; not now—another time. I don't feel well; the sun upon the river has made me faint and shaky.'

'It always has the same effect upon me,' said Mr Waller cheerfully. 'If you don't feel quite equal to run your eye over this little document, I'll read it over to you. There; if you will be so good as to put your name where my finger is, in your usual handwriting as much as you can, please. Dear me, you *are* shaky!—Thank you. And now, let's go out and join the ladies; I shall be glad to discuss that other little matter with you whenever you please.'

But Mr William was in no mood to join the ladies, but withdrew himself to his own room, perhaps for horizontal, more probably for spirituous, refreshment; and Mr Waller himself remained where he was, busy with his own reflections.

'It's my belief that fellow's half-cracked,' soliloquised he. 'If his heart was not softened just now, it must be his brain that's going. Allcase is right enough: he won't last long. Gad, I almost think it would have been better to let him have his way, for, after six weeks' time, there is no saying whether he may be alive. And yet I don't think I could ever let my dear girl marry such a creature even for a day. I am sure he treated that wife of his ill—*very* ill, or his conscience would never have stung him as it did just now. He's a bad fellow, and a deuced ugly one too sometimes: he looked more like a toad than a man when I began to talk to him.—Yes, my dear, I 'm coming;' and he kissed his hand to Lucy, who was looking furtively towards the dining-room window.—'Well, I've got his name here for a thousand pounds, if they will only believe it *is* his name, and that's a good morning's work, at all events. There 's something wrong about his late wife, that 's clear. I wonder whether the screw lies there, after all,

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to which Master Stanhope yonder applies his chisel with such effect?—What a lovely day you have provided for us, Miss Ellen, and how charmingly your little bower on Curlew looks!'

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE meeting of the Royal Agricultural Society at Manchester, besides shewing improvements in live stock and farm and dairy produce, made clear to all beholders that the application of machinery to agriculture has become more and more practicable. There were nearly eight thousand machines and implements exhibited, and this fact alone implies a large and lively demand. Among them were horse pitchforks, which, by a combination of poles, ropes, and pulleys, will fork hay or barley from a wagon to the top of the tallest rick with surprising rapidity. Ploughs are now made to effect eight furrows at once by the aid of a steam-engine; and steam-cultivators loosen at once breadths of from nine feet to eighteen feet, and work to a depth of six inches. No wonder that the number of those enterprising persons increases who undertake to plough farms in any part of the country by contract. Another contrivance lays down iron shoes as a sort of endless rail under the wheels of carts on soft roads; and thus another farming difficulty is overcome. And hard roads are not neglected, for a fifteen-ton roller has been constructed which bites up the surface of an old road, and presses down solidly a layer of new macadam at the rate of half an acre in ten hours, and at a cost of a farthing a square yard (superficial). We hear that the Manchester meeting was unprecedentedly successful, and it seems to have deserved success.

The Postmaster-general asks for L.6,750,000 to buy up the electric telegraphs of the kingdom, and seems likely to get the money. In return, he not only promises cheap messages, a large increase in the number of offices, and other facilities, but after paying interest on the sum expended, he will have, in the first year, a surplus of L.77,000. This surplus will of course increase with the increase in the number of messages despatched. As regards the scientific part of the question, it is thought that the demand for improvements will be so constant, that invention will be stimulated, and that we shall see a succession of methods for applying the wondrous power of electro-magnetism excelling all hitherto compassed.

The Society of Arts have now given a definite shape to their suggestions for 'cab reform,' by offering gold and silver medals as prizes for best and second best cabs of sundry kinds, one kind being the most convenient open hackney carriage for two persons; another, the most convenient closed carriage for two persons, and the most convenient for four persons either open or closed. The specimen carriages are to be ready by the 1st January 1870; they are to be strong and yet light in construction, and must, of course, be a great improvement on our present cabs. This condition will not be difficult to realise, for in some country towns the cabs are much better in all respects than those of London. Besides the foregoing, the Society offer a silver medal for the best odometer, or way-measurer, which can be fixed to a hackney carriage of any kind, and shew the distance travelled. If this can be done, it will be perhaps more acceptable to the public than even the new cabs, for it will prevent disputes, and vexations innumerable. It will be of no use for cabby to insist on charging for three miles when his way-measurer shews he has not travelled two.

The Royal Institution of Cornwall held their annual meeting at Truro, and were entertained by Mr W. J. Henwood, F.R.S., who delivered the address, with interesting information on the products and industry of the county. Among the former, fish and early vegetables hold a prominent place. In 1868, nearly 20,000 hogsheads of pilchards were exported; from St Ives and Penzance, 3675 tons of mackerel were despatched by railway; and from a comparatively small district near the Land's End, there were sent away in the same year 3571 tons of broccoli, and 2732 tons of potatoes. In speaking of mining, Mr Henwood took occasion to remark that the waste water of the copper mines was no longer treated as waste, but was made to precipitate, on its way to the sea, the copper held in suspension. That this is worth saving is shewn by the fact, that before the precipitation works were established, there had been poured into the sea from the mines in the Gwennap district, copper to the value of at least L.150,000.

Sir John Lubbock has published a pamphlet in which he recommends that the young men who seek employment in banks and mercantile houses should undergo an examination similar to that required of candidates for the civil service. Considering the magnitude of banking and mercantile operations, there is good reason why the men who have to carry them on should be thoroughly competent; and if a few of the leading City firms would organise a board of examiners, a beginning might be made. Besides testing intellectual capabilities, the examiners should take into consideration the age, the general state of health, and the moral character of the candidates. It is a deplorable fact that under present circumstances a number of young men get into banks and counting-houses who are quite unfit for the work and the responsibilities they have undertaken.

By accounts received from Sir T. Maclear, director of the Observatory at the Cape of Good Hope, we learn that the meteor shower of last November was well seen at the Cape, and we thus have evidence of the wide range over which the brilliant phenomenon was observable. It was seen in England, in the United States, and the southernmost points of Africa.

A good deal of discussion has been carried on of late among geologists on earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and their causes, which of course involve considerations as to what the inside of the earth is composed of. Mr Poulett Scrope argues that the interior of the globe is solid, because of the weight and pressure constantly surrounding it, but that the interior solid is highly expansible, and ready to fly off when the internal heat has generated steam enough to force a way to the surface. Mr David Forbes, on the contrary, holds that the interior of the globe is in a liquid red-hot molten condition, composed of silicates and the heavy metals, and that this molten mass at times boils up into and through the solid crust which forms the surface of the earth.

A lecture has been given by Mr W. H. Perkin, at the Royal Institution, on 'The Newest Colouring

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Matters.' Among the many interesting facts then put forward was the discovery of a beautiful blue colour, by a German chemist, on treating rosaniline with sulphuric acid. Unfortunately, it was not a 'fast colour.' A dyer made many trials therewith, in the hope of turning it to account, but all in vain. He happened to mention his difficulty to a photographer, who, knowing that hyposulphite of sodium would fix a photograph, recommended the dyer to try that. The trial was made; when mixed with the hyposulphite, the blue became a beautiful green, and better still, a 'fast colour.' This was the origin of that brilliant dye commonly known as 'Night green,' because of its remaining unmistakably green in appearance when seen by artificial light. Let it be remembered that nearly all the new colours are extracted in some way from coal-tar, that the first was discovered not more than thirteen years ago, and that the annual value now manufactured is L.1,250,000, and it will be seen that in the industry created by these new products there is an admirable example of the results of scientific investigation. The best of it is that the field is inexhaustible: for many years to come it will yield a rich harvest of discoveries.

Gold has been brought from San Francisco to London in twenty days, which may be taken as a proof that the great railway all across America is in working order. Of course, if metal can travel so quickly, passengers can, and we may perhaps see some curious results of a sudden influx of a new population into new localities. What will become of characteristics of race when large intermixture has taken place? Early ethnological history abounds, as is well known, with accounts of multitudinous migrations from the East, and it seems as if history were about to repeat itself, for the Chinese and Japanese are swarming into California in greater numbers than ever. From 2300 in 1866 the tale rose to 10,000 in 1868, and that it will be largely increased in the present year may be regarded as certain, seeing that these oriental labourers are in demand, not only in the Pacific States, but are to be introduced into the Atlantic States between the Potomac and Mississippi. It is found that as labourers on railways and on farms, the Chinese are more trustworthy than American (which includes Irish) labourers. Hitherto, the arrivals of Chinese women have been but scanty; but on one day in June last, 1250 were landed at San Francisco. Are the yellow race going to supersede the Blacks and the Irish in the struggle for existence; and will they in time exert a modifying influence on the Anglo-Saxon race among whom they dwell? We may anticipate that these and other questions will one day occupy the attention of the American Ethnological Society.

WAITING.

'Mors janua vitæ.'

I have waited till Spring's first breath came over the rippling streams,
And kissed the opening flowers as it lightly skimmed along;
Till the woodland lilies waved all white in the morning beams,
And the deep dells echoed again to the sound of the wild-bird's song.

I have waited till Summer came forth all wreathed in a thousand flowers,
Shedding a luscious balm o'er the meadows, and glades, and hills,
Twining the daffodil sweet with the rose in her fragrant bowers,
And fringing, with verdant moss, the sides of the bubbling rills.

I have waited till Autumn has gone from the woods' waning sigh,
Leaving the half-dead trees of their emerald tresses all shorn;
When the branches revealed in the night the stars in the far-off sky,
Or shook in a tremulous chill at the sob of the early morn.

I have waited through dreary December's hours of darkness and gloom,
Till the Old Year, weary and worn, had passed away to his rest;
Till his midnight knell had rung in the dark with a tongue of doom,
And floated above the snow that lay like a shroud on his breast.

I have waited a dreary time on the verge of the Border Land,
Consumed by languishing pain, and shadowed by grief profound;
Living again in the thrill of the grasp of a long-loved hand,
Lingering over the tones of a voice of the tenderest sound.

I wait in the balmy hours of the twilight soft and still,
Watching the crimson flecks in an azured western sky;
Lulled by the vesper chimes from the church on the far-off hill,
Borne on the softest wings of the night-wind's tenderest sigh.

I linger here on the verge of this shadowy Border Land,
How long, Lord, yet to stay, from the Land I have seen afar?
Thine own time, Lord, then lead me up with a gentle hand!
And open Thou wide the gates that have stood so long ajar!

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LIFE AND DEATH AT ST BREACA'S.

IN EIGHT CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

THE Gray House stands fifty feet above the sea, on Penmaur Cliff, and looks as if it had been flung there. It is built of granite, and consists of two wings, three stories high, united by a centre one-third of their depth, and one story lower. In it is the principal entrance, and on either side of that are four small-paned sash windows. Facing the bay, the space between the wings is filled by a plain strong stone colonnade, raised two steps above the semi-natural terrace on which the house is situated. From thence, black rocks descend to a noble sea. They stretch a quarter of a mile away to the south, and a mile to the west, where they give way to the small fishing-town of St Breaca's in Cornwall.

In the year 1795, a picturesque old native, by name Dan Quick, returned from forty years' wandering, no one knew where, and with money which every one believed to have been amassed irregularly, built the Gray House. It was large enough to accommodate ten persons. He took two to live with him: an ancient sister, his only surviving kin; and Sam Williams, an active orphan lad, who hit his fancy. After his own fashion, he settled himself comfortably: filled a large kitchen with domestic conveniences, and made a parlour quaint with curiosities, savage and civilised; provided his sister Peggy with a tent bedstead with printed linen hangings; and slung hammocks for the boy and himself. He was an object of curiosity, and fear even, to the townspeople; and of suspicion to the coastguard; but for twenty years he baffled the former, and did not infringe the laws which the latter were appointed to enforce. The keeping the house as neat and clean as a man-of-war, shooting sea-fowl, managing a couple of boats, and fishing, filled his time. Peggy died in the eighteenth year of their residence: he buried her in the garden, in a coffin made by himself and Sam; paid her trim grave a visit before breakfast every morning, and smoked his last pipe there the night before he died, two years after her. Sam missed his early footfall, and found that he had passed quietly, while sleeping, into the unseen world. The curate of the parish had called on him once, and been, as he conceived, discouraged. The Wesleyans, more zealous, or more persevering, had paid him many visits, and addressed to him many stirring exhortations, which had elicited only sarcasms. The sole clue found by his fellow-men to the state of his conscience was in his will. He provided for being laid decently by Peggy; left one hundred pounds, his boats, furniture, curiosities, and clothes to Sam; and bequeathed his remaining property—the Gray House and three thousand pounds in the funds—to the king, with the remark that he had the best right to it.

The Gray House was shut up, the site of the garden graves lost, the wind and sea-fowl broke most of the windows; and as no railways gave facilities to tourists, and Cornwall was then very much off the world's highway, Dan Quick's residence remained for many years as solitary as his inner life had been.

St Breaca's had known better days. Architects point to striking beauties in the church, built in the thirteenth century; but as a piece of preferment, the incumbency cannot be called valuable, though its income has been augmented by a grant from Queen Anne's Bounty. This ecclesiastical promotion was obtained about the year 1826 by the Rev. Marcus Secker. Three years previously, he had been appointed curate of St Breaca's, St Mary's in the Mines, and St Ann's on the Moor. The three parishes lay wide of one another, so wide as to involve a hebdomadal walk of ten miles, in order to give, according to agreement, and for a stipend of seventy-five pounds, one full service in two each Sunday, and prayers in a third. Mr Secker decided that this had been endured too long; and, being talented always, and occasionally judicious and conciliating, he worked upon the bishop and archdeacon to effect a change. St Breaca's became a perpetual curacy, with one hundred and twenty pounds per annum; St Mary's and St Ann's fell to another labourer.

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Mr Secker was one among several officers in the army who, at the close of the Peninsular War, felt themselves called to spiritual leadership. Not that he was 'serious,' but that he was versatile. First a spoiled boy, and then a spoiled man, he had bought a commission in the line, after a fond widowed mother had prepared him liberally for the medical profession. Four years' experience of the delights of dépôts and garrison towns satisfied him that he was tired of the army, and fit for something better. He had made himself a favourite of Dr Sophton, the Bishop of Merton, who believed that his penetration detected a theological bias in the handsome young soldier. He offered to ordain him without university education, on condition of his residing three years under his eye.

Mr Secker was pleased with the proposition. It was complimentary; it commended itself to his taste and imagination. A bishop who was a gentleman combined in himself all social perfections: blended refinement, dignity, and learning, with delicate zest for the indispensable duties of hospitality. Mr Secker saw himself a bishop in no very remote future, accepted the offer, and developed gracefully into the clerical aspirant. He passed through his probation delightfully, and charmed a brilliant circle, assembled on the occasion at the palace, by the success of his début. His first sermon, adapted safely from an old Catholic divine, was delivered faultlessly; his melodious voice and fine ear made his reading perfect; and his splendid dark eyes were capable of every variety of expression. Nevertheless, equally to his annoyance and astonishment, he was appointed to the obscure curacy of Willowlea, in Lincolnshire. There was no consolation but in believing that jealousy of his superior powers had banished him thither, and in perceiving that many regrets would follow him. The Misses Sophton indeed excused themselves, on various pretexts, from wishing him good-bye publicly; and avoided being seen by each other for some hours after his departure. When they met, they were all silent in his regard, for each pitied her sisters for their infatuation, believing that she was herself the object of his warm attachment, and that diffidence about his prospects alone prevented his declaring his passion.

He did not stay longer at Willowlea than to get his title. There was no society, and he could not exist without it. He must have died, he said he thought, but for the excitement of fighting the Wesleyans, who were numerous and respectable in his parish. He wrote pungent pamphlets at them; reviled them in his pulpit; called the local preacher 'a prig-eared, hypocritical, sneaking snip;' and behaved otherwise so intemperately, that by the time he left Willowlea, the place had become 'too hot to hold him.' He thought himself fortunate in being chosen to be curate of Somerton, a parish adorned by the residence of a peer of the realm, and families likely to appreciate what he called his 'knowledge of the pulses and passions of high life.'

It was curious that Mr Secker had all this time remained a bachelor. He might, over and over again, have made his fortune in the matrimonial market. Perhaps it was because of the easiness of the step that he was careless about it. At last, he pronounced himself actually in love with one of the half-dozen daughters of an old naval officer. They sat in the pew under the reading-desk, looking like a bunch of wild roses, and the youngest and shyest caught his eye and what heart he had, as she drank in with wonder and admiration a sermon (a piracy) which he was delivering admirably. He, one of the most artificial of men, decided on the spot that he would, with as little delay as possible, marry Nannie Gray, a simple, modest country-girl, who thought it a tremendous thing to go out to tea in Somerton; who had no fortune, and was twenty years younger than himself. His income at the time was one hundred and twenty pounds; his respectable patrimony had melted away, he knew not how, for he was utterly ignorant of, and indifferent to, the value of money; and he owed about two hundred pounds, which he had not the remotest prospect of paying. It was, however, alas! easy to blind honest Captain Gray, who had never deceived anybody. He and his wife thought Nannie fortunate. They had not a penny to give her; and, by their humble standard, one hundred and twenty pounds, and the vicarage to live in, seemed ample provision. *They* had no debts; they practised self-denial and were industrious; and it did not occur to them that a clergyman, a gentleman, and one who evidently stood well in society far above their own, could stoop to deceive them. It is but justice to Mr Secker to say that he did not think he was deceiving them; he meant to cherish their daughter, to improve her immensely, and to fit her to share with him that preferment for which he felt himself as surely destined as—in his own estimation—he was undeniably qualified.

Nannie was not in love, and probably she never would have been; she was one of the women whose deepest affections are all reserved for their children; but she thought Mr Secker the most gifted and perfect of men, and accepted his offer as great promotion, and the earnest of sure protection for life. She only sighed to think how unworthy she must always be of such a husband, and marvelled honestly what he could see in her. Poor little thing! When she had been married a month, she knew that he was in difficulties, that he despised and was ashamed of her family, that her ignorance of conventional usages irritated him, and that his violent suspicious temper made him sometimes positively cruel. And she was hardly seventeen when this 'iron entered into her soul.'

It was not long before Mr Secker became so obnoxious to his vicar, that he was dismissed from Somerton, and the fact involved exposure of the real state of his affairs. A few old friends, and some persons who admired and pitied his pretty, gentle, young wife, paid his debts, and obtained another curacy for him. It was, however, less valuable, for the vicar resided; and the curate, with the same stipend as at Somerton, had to provide himself with a dwelling. He, however, scouted economy. When poor Nannie, trembling, remonstrated, he desired her, savagely, to be silent. 'What could she, the daughter of a beggarly half-pay officer, know of the wants—the absolute necessaries required by a gentleman? She would be glad—he saw through it all—to pull him down to the true quarter-deck level; but it would not do. He would have wine, and clean linen every day—twice a week, indeed!—and he should continue to order the *Quarterly* and *Edinburgh*, and to

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have a weekly paper. It was all very fine for her—she had not a soul above saucepans—to hint at doing without this, and that, and the other. He desired to have it distinctly understood that he would brook no interference.'

But it is hard for an empty bag to stand upright; and as year succeeded year, and preferment did not come, and creditors clamoured, and Mr Secker felt privations in spite of himself, he sank socially, and made his wife, while her soul sickened, give evasive answers to tradespeople; and sometimes, worse even, compelled her to write pitiful letters, asking help from people whom they knew but by name. Perhaps the answers were harsh, or reproachful; they implied that a wife who knew her duty, was self-denying, and a good manager, would make Mr Secker's income sufficient; and that she ought not to make appeals derogatory to her husband's position. And she had half-starved herself, and been often, often cold from insufficient clothing! She said nothing; but prayed a great deal, read comforting passages in the Psalms and Gospels, and hid weeping eyes in her lovely little children's plump shoulders, and wondered what was to become of them all. Mr Secker was essentially touchy and quarrelsome. No consideration of expediency or gratitude could prevent his expressing, as offensively as possible, his conviction that he had been ill used or insulted. No one had experienced this more frequently than his diocesan, who had been specially kind to him. Mr Secker's conduct to him became at length so insolent, that self-respect, and respect for his own position, made it imperative on the bishop to punish him. On his throwing up his curacy in a fit of pique, Dr Verity refused to license him to another, or to countersign his testimonials; but he stated that he would not put any obstacle in the way of his giving temporary assistance to clergymen willing to employ him. His sentiments on the occasion were conveyed in the following note:

My Lord—In submitting to the sentence your lordship has been pleased to pronounce on me, I have the lofty satisfaction of knowing that it is not in any man's power to deprive me of my claim to be considered a gentleman; and I do not disguise from myself the fact that I should have been more acceptable to your lordship if destitute of pretensions to social standing and good descent. There are men so essentially low that they cannot forgive another for possessing superior advantages. I shall not avail myself of the permission to exercise my sacred calling in the way your lordship indicates. The consequences to my unoffending wife and children, I lay at the door of your lordship's conscience; and I am, my lord, your lordship's most obedient servant,

Marcus Secker.

Mr Secker read this astounding document to his bewildered wife, who dared not express her opinion of it; and, looking like one who had relieved his mind of a heavy burden, or settled a vexed question, went blithely to post it. It was by no means the most intolerable letter he had inflicted on the bishop, a learned, kind-hearted man, and perfectly innocent of any assumption that could palliate an attack on his origin. He read it quietly, and handed it to his secretary, remarking: 'Now, that man is not mad enough to be placed in confinement, and yet it would be, in the fullest sense, uncharitable to treat him as of sound mind; in fact, he is certainly not. For the sake of gratifying his malignity—which really I cannot charge myself with having provoked—he throws up all his prospects for life, and makes his family paupers.' The good old gentleman had it intimated to Mrs Secker that if she could work on her husband to apologise, or to let her apologise for him, he would recommend him into another diocese—where, possibly, he might do better—and contribute towards the payment of debts and the expenses of removal. When Mr Secker had relieved himself of an atrocious letter, as well as when his ebullitions of temper had wrung his wife's heart, and terrified his little children into shrieks, he overflowed with amiable emotions. He accepted Dr Verity's benevolence, and wrote:

My Lord—You have 'heaped coals of fire on my head.' I cannot lie as low in your lordship's eyes as I am in my own; but you can exercise a vast benignity, and, preferring mercy to justice, forgive, my lord, your lordship's most grateful and devoted humble servant, Marcus Secker.

So, in the year of our Lord 1823, Mr Secker arrived at St Breaca's, and took the small shabby house at the corner of High Street and Water Lane, at a rent of twelve pounds, rates and taxes not included, and was in a few weeks settled in it, with his wife, seven children, and a scrub of a local servant-girl at a shilling a week; and he remarked complacently and truly that, the poverty notwithstanding, there was a certain something about the establishment which made it evident that the dwellers there were a gentleman's family. It did not occur to him that this was mostly due to the industry and exquisite domestic skill of the patient, loving wife and mother, who sat up late and rose early, and did 'him good and not evil all the days of her life.'

CHAPTER II.

'I'm the most unfortunate man in the world,' said Sir Geoffrey Monsey to his wife. 'No one hates trouble more than I do; no one interferes less with others. I hate politics, I hate business, I hate family troubles, and they are all thrust upon me.' Sir Geoffrey was a handsome man of sixty, with a fine unencumbered property; and, save annual liability to hay-fever, excellent health; but he uttered this lamentation at breakfast in his grand old country-house, on a lovely June morning.

'Never mind the politics,' returned Lady Monsey: 'you have decided not to stand again for Northshand.'

'Yes; thank Heaven! But I shudder at the bare recollection of the canvassing and noise, and dining and bills. I never would have borne it, but for you; and how I did bear it, and why you made me submit to it, I have never understood.'

'What makes you think of so many grievances this morning?'

'My letters;' and he sighed so sadly, that the wife, who had all the energy and purpose that he had not, and who had understood and loved him for five-and-twenty years, felt that he had a real vexation, and looked at him kindly and questioningly. 'Yes; here they are. By-the-bye—it is not to the purpose, but Honoria is to be married next

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week, and they want me at the wedding. I asked Thompson if I had any clothes fit to go in, and he said: "No, Sir Geoffrey; you have hardly any clothes fit for a gentleman."'

'You have spoiled him.—What did you say?'

'Say! I said: "Then why don't you order me some? You don't expect me to take the trouble to order my own clothes, do you?"'

It was told in such simplicity that Lady Monsey could not help smiling; but he did not perceive it, and went on.

'I have a letter from my unfortunate brother Arthur.'

'Where is he?'

'At Baden, but coming to England directly. He says he cannot live abroad any longer—that he is tired of it—that his children want education—that he cannot afford to give it them—that his income must be increased—and that he looks to me, as the boy is my heir. Of course, he cares nothing about the children; he is dunned, and he wants to make sure of cigars and brandy, and a cook. He talks of bringing his family to Dover, and leaving them there, while he comes here to see what I mean to do for him.'

'That must be prevented.'

'Certainly. He might have delirium tremens in the house; and, besides, his conduct to me has been invariably so atrocious that I will hold no personal communication with him.'

'How soon can the yacht be ready?'

'I believe she is ready now. Dare wanted to start next week: he thinks the weather is settled; but as I had had no hay-fever, I thought of waiting.'

'Do you not think we had better go at once? Your brother could not follow you. Tell him that your letters will be forwarded.'

'Yes; but I must have some plan.'

'True; I have been expecting this; and I think you had better promise to double his income, and send the boy to Eton; provided that he, Arthur, will live where you choose—in England, if he will.'

'I can do that,' said Sir Geoffrey; 'but I am certain he will try to force himself here. He has lost all self-respect, all gentlemanlike feeling.'

'He may not. His wife has, at anyrate, behaved well since her marriage; and whatever her faults have been, she no doubt loves her children, and she may try to make him do what is best for them. She must have some sort of influence over him.'

Lady Monsey sighed. It seemed to her so hard that the reckless, worthless, younger brother had children, and she had none; hard that those children had a bad father, when Sir Geoffrey would have been such a good one; hard that they had a mother whose name had been breathed on, while she was unimpeachable.

The schooner-yacht *Zephyr* was ready. Sir Geoffrey had said that he knew every nook of the Mediterranean, and would cruise off the Cornish and Devonshire coast, which he had never seen, and Captain Dare knew well. Off Land's End, the vessel suffered material injury in a squall, and there was no resource but to put into St Breaca's for repairs. Sir Geoffrey availed himself of the occasion to grumble. He did not dispute the beauty of the little harbour, but he was certain that St Breaca's smelled of fish; that there could be no decent inn; that there was nothing for it but to post home as fast as possible, and rush, perhaps, into his brother Arthur's arms. Lady Monsey represented that the accommodation could not possibly be worse than they had often put up with on the continent; that if they could only get rooms, they had on board wherewith to make them habitable; that he would infallibly have hay-fever if he left the coast; that they could amuse themselves very well there for a fortnight; and that it had been often the unexpressed desire of her heart to become acquainted with Cornwall and the Cornish. So, as usual, he groaned, and yielded, and regretted the concession ultimately so little, that he staid a month, and commenced negotiating for the purchase of the old Gray House. He thought it capable of being made a very pleasant temporary seaside residence, and that if he were disappointed in it, he could let his brother Arthur have it.

St Breaca's had never been so stirred. The yacht was a gem, and the clever shipwrights were enthusiastic about her. Mrs Rowe of *The George* had 'real people of quality in the house, and so affable, to be sure.' All the women admired Sir Geoffrey; and the men said they felt they could do anything for Lady Monsey. Mr Secker cannot be classed. His imagination had been fluttered. Next day would be Sunday. He selected two of his best sermons. They would be at church once at least, probably in the morning, and come to the vestry after service, and ask him to dinner: he should go, of course. Poor Nannie would fidget about his cotton pocket-handkerchiefs, clumsy shoes, and so on. It was impossible to make any one, born and brought up as she—dear creature!—had been, understand that a perfect gentleman could afford to be shabby. If her poor father had been going to dine with a baronet, he would have dressed himself so as to look quite new, and have felt that he had no social standing but what he owed to his clothes. The little-great people of the town would see how the Sir Geoffreys regarded Mr Secker, the poor parson, though he had not their mine-and-fish-bought finery. How he should enjoy being once more in good society! How had he dragged on for weary years, away from the polished men, the fascinating, perfectly feminine women, with whom he had been born to be familiar! Sir Geoffrey and Lady Monsey would understand it all, and feel for him. Perhaps they had church preferment in their gift. Here nature welled up, and his eyes grew moist, and he said aloud: 'My blessed, blessed, patient wife, you should not then be such a slave, and my precious darlings should have all the advantages they ought to have; and they would know how the fond, foolish, passionate father loved them.' And he went into the parlour, and played with the baby—no one could do that better than he—and talked innocent nonsense to all, building vicarages in the air, till Mrs Secker said: 'I have often and often wondered if I should ever go up that hill again' [St Breaca's is in a deep valley]: 'it seems impossible, we are so completely out of the world; but as long as we have the dear children, it does not signify where we live.'

Sir Geoffrey and Lady Monsey did ask Mr Secker to dine on that Sunday, and often afterwards. All his dormant social talents woke under congenial influences. Sir Geoffrey said: 'It is really a pity that man is buried here. He is a

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gentleman; he reads well, preaches well, and, a few crotchets apart, talks well. He should have had St Cuthbert's, if I had not given it away: I am sorry for it. He must be half-starved here. The loaves and fishes of the establishment are very unequally distributed.'

TERRESTRIAL MAGNETISM.

One of those periods is now approaching when the earth is thrilled through her whole frame by magnetic throes of unusual intensity. Physicists will be able to trace in the silent indications of the suspended magnet the action of the most remarkable of all the forces to which the earth is subjected. In telegraphic offices, the occurrence of these disturbances will be made apparent by the interruption of communication for longer or shorter intervals of time. And the self-recording instruments at Kew and other such observatories will indicate by unusual movements the progress of those mysterious electric convulsions known as magnetic storms. But except for such indications as these, and one or two others which have only of late years been referred to the agency of terrestrial magnetism, the inhabitants of this earth will not be made sensibly aware that anything unusual is in progress. For ages these magnetic disturbances have thrilled through the earth's framework without being recognised; and even now it seems almost as by an accident that our physicists have been led to understand the significance of one of the most remarkable of all terrestrial phenomena.

The facts which have been ascertained respecting terrestrial magnetism are so interesting and so little known, that we may confidently claim the attention of the reader while we state some of the most striking and noteworthy of them.

The most generally recognised property of the magnet, its power of indicating the north point, was discovered by the Chinese many ages before it became known to European observers. We learn that the Chinese, when journeying over the great plains of Central Asia, used a magnetic car, in front of which a floating needle bore a figure, whose outstretched arm pointed continually southwards. The Greeks and Romans were aware that iron could be magnetised; but it never happened that a suitably balanced fragment of magnetised iron exhibited to them the earth's directive force. Humboldt remarks that 'on this accidental circumstance alone the great discovery depended.' It must be remarked, however, that such accidents have been common in the history of discovery and invention.

Had the western nations discovered the magnet's principal property so early as the Chinese, we should probably have gained valuable information respecting the next property which has to be considered—the fact, namely, that the magnet does not commonly point due north. It is not likely that the Chinese discovered this property, because over the whole of Eastern Asia the magnetic compass points very nearly towards the north. But even if they had, it is not so much the divergence of the compass from the north point which would have rendered the discovery interesting to us, as the knowledge which ancient observations might have given us respecting the laws on which the *changes* of that divergence depend. In Europe, as we shall presently see, these changes are very conspicuous.

It was in the thirteenth century that European observers first detected the fact that the magnetic needle does not point due north.* For a long time it was supposed that the direction of the needle was the same for all places; but during the first voyage of Christopher Columbus across the Atlantic it was found that this is not the case. He had travelled six hundred miles from the most westerly of the Canary Islands, when he noticed that the compass, which had been pointing towards the east of north when he was in Europe, was now pointing due north. The actual day on which the discovery was made was September 13, 1492. As he sailed farther west he found that the westerly declination gradually increased.

But here we have at once to call attention to another peculiarity of the magnetic compass, otherwise the reader would form a mistaken notion of the present nature of the needle's declination. We have spoken of the needle as pointing to the east of north in 1492. This is no longer a true description of the declination in Europe. The needle now points far to the west of north. It is a peculiarity of the science of terrestrial magnetism that variations are thus mixed up with variations, until it has become a matter of exceeding difficulty to present all the facts of the science in such a sequence that the student shall not be in any risk of being led astray. Properly speaking, the change of the needle's declination from time to time should be kept wholly separate from the changes which are noticed as the needle is changed from place to place. Yet, if this were done in describing the original discovery of the latter change, erroneous impressions would be given respecting the present state of the needle's declination in various countries.

At present, the terrestrial globe may be looked upon as divided into two vast but unequal portions, which may be called the region of westerly magnets and the region of easterly magnets. In the former must be included all Europe, except the extreme north-easterly parts of Russia, the whole of Africa, Turkey, Arabia, the greater part of the Indian Ocean, and the western parts of Australia. Returning westwards, we must add to the region of westerly magnets the greater part of the Atlantic Ocean, the north-eastern parts of Brazil, the eastern parts of Canada, and the whole of Greenland. All the rest of the world belongs to the region of easterly magnets except an oval space, which is situated in the very middle of the region, yet has a contrary character. This space includes the eastern parts of China, Manchooria, and the islands of Japan.

Such is the present arrangement of the two divisions; but fifty years ago, the description would have been incorrect, and fifty years hence it will again be so; for over the whole world the declination is steadily changing—here in one direction, there in the contrary; quickly at some places, almost imperceptibly at others. And we may mention in passing, that, as a general rule, where the declination is least either westwards or eastwards, there it is changing most rapidly; and

* It may be well to notice a certain peculiarity about the nomenclature of this deviation. Seamen always call it the needle's *variation*; but among scientific men it is called the *declination*.

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where it is greatest, it is hardly changing at all. But there appear to be some places where the range of change is so small, that, though the declination is never large, it does not change rapidly—as in other places of small declination. As yet, however, much remains to be learned respecting the progress of these strange changes in countries where magnetic observations have been only commenced in recent times.

Some idea of the complexity of the question will be suggested by comparing the changes which have occurred in two places so near to each other as London and Paris. We shall see that not only are the declinations different in these cities, but their range of variation is different, both as to extent and as to the period in which a complete oscillation of the needle is effected.

The easterly declination of the needle in London was observed to disappear in about the year 1657. From that epoch, the needle continually travelled westwards, until it began to be thought that it would move ever in that direction, and so come at length to point southwards. In Paris, the easterly declination had not disappeared before the year 1663, and there also the needle travelled continually westwards, though not quite so rapidly as in London. In 1814, the needle pointed about 22½ degrees towards the west in Paris, and some two degrees farther west in London. In that year, however, Arago startled the scientific world by announcing that in his opinion the needle's westerly motion was flagging, and he asserted his belief that that motion would presently give place to an easterly movement. Only three years passed before the prediction was fulfilled; and on the 10th of April 1817, Arago was able to announce that the needle had begun to return towards the north. But observers in London pronounced against this view. The London needles were still travelling westwards, though with a slowly diminishing motion. It was not until the spring of 1819 that the London observers admitted that the needles had really reached the limit of their westerly oscillation. And whereas in Paris the needles had not travelled more than 22½ degrees towards the west, in London they had passed no less than 25 degrees from the north point. Corresponding to this circumstance, we see also that the duration of the half-oscillation (for the needles had not been watched from their greatest easterly declinations) was a hundred and sixty-two years in London, and a hundred and fifty-four years in Paris.

It gives a grand idea of the nature of those ever-acting forces to which terrestrial magnetism is due, to consider that the sway of the magnetic needle from limit to limit of its range should occupy so long an interval as three centuries in both these instances. Conceive the scale on which a pendulum should be constructed in order that its oscillations might have a period of as many seconds!

It was while they were engaged in tracking the progress of this long oscillation, that physicists detected minute oscillations superposed, so to speak, upon the main one, and even more singular in their character. The case is somewhat as though to the bob of a long pendulum there were attached a short one, and that it was to the motions of this short pendulum (beating with its own rapid swing, while carried slowly backwards and forwards by the main movement) that attention was primarily directed.

Each day the magnetic needle sways backwards and forwards *twice* across its mean position. Shortly before midnight, it begins to travel from west to east, reaching the limit of that motion soon after eight in the morning. Then it sweeps westward to its greatest westerly limit, which it reaches soon after one. Then back again towards the east, until half-past eight, and so to its original position at about eleven o'clock.

It must be understood that these motions are so minute in comparison with the great secular oscillation, that they never affect the general direction of the magnet to any noteworthy extent. For instance, we have just spoken of the two easterly limits of the daily swing, but throughout the day the magnet always points far to the west of north. The mean declination, in fact, is (roughly) about 20 degrees, whereas the daily swing never ranges over more than the fifth part of a degree.

It will be noticed that the oscillations above described correspond closely with the diurnal motions of the sun. They are such, in fact, as the needle would exhibit on the supposition that it tries to follow the sun during his complete apparent revolution round the celestial sphere. It is believed that the daily motions of flowers, and in particular that class of motion which has given to the sun-flower its distinctive appellation, are due to the same magnetic properties which cause the diurnal swing of the suspended needle.

But besides the daily sway of the magnetic needle, there is an annual oscillation of a somewhat different character. In fact, properly speaking, the annual change is not oscillatory, though it has a regularly recurrent character. The daily swing is variable. Now, this variability would be somewhat confusing, on account of its general irregularity; therefore, physicists consider the mean of several days, and thus get rid of what for the present we may term accidental variations. When this has been done, it is found that the average daily swing of the needle is subject to a slow progressive increase, followed by an equally slow diminution; and the period of these slow changes is a year.

The peculiarity of this annual change is that its progress is the same for both hemispheres. It might have been expected that it would attain its maximum in summer, when the solar influence is strongest; but this is not the case. It attains its maximum in January, which is indeed near midsummer for the southern hemisphere, but nearly the least sunny of our northern months. The secret of this peculiarity lies in the fact that the sun is nearest to the earth in January. The peculiarity is a very meaning one, as shewing that the magnetic influence is not a local matter, however variable the magnetic declination may be as we shift from place to place. The real fact pointed to by this, as by many other phenomena, is, that the earth must be looked upon as a single gigantic magnet, gaining or losing power throughout its whole frame simultaneously.

The consideration of the *power* of the great earth-magnet must be for a moment laid on one side, while we deal with a form of deviation as remarkable as the declination. We refer to the *dip* of the needle. The ordinary compass is, we know, suspended horizontally, and, for anything which appears to the contrary when we examine such an instrument, that might be the needle's position

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of rest. But when a needle is so suspended by a silken thread as to be free to assume an inclined position, it is found that the northern end dips perceptibly. We are assuming, of course, that in its non-magnetised state the needle would rest horizontally. In our latitudes, the dip or inclination is so great that the needle is inclined only about 22 degrees to the vertical. When we travel northwards, the dip increases; when southwards, it diminishes, until we reach a place near the equator (travelling always, it is assumed, in the longitude of London) where the needle becomes horizontal. After passing that point, the southern end dips, and the inclination continues to increase as we travel southwards.

The same is true for other longitudes, only the place of 'no dip' is differently situated. The line along which there is no inclination lies near the equator, crossing that circle at two opposite points, one in west longitude 3 degrees, the other in east longitude 177 degrees. The magnetic equator is not a strictly circular curve, however; it is noteworthy that it departs most from the figure of a true circle where it traverses the Atlantic Ocean.

We have seen the variations which are exhibited in the declination of the magnet, not only at different places, but at different times in the same place. Changes of precisely the same character are exhibited in the dip of the magnet: in London, for example, the dip has diminished four degrees in less than a century; in Paris, during the last two centuries, the dip has diminished about seven degrees.

Seeing this, we must accept with some little question the locales usually assigned to the magnetic poles; because we have every reason for supposing that these poles must be continually shifting their position. In fact, the motion of the magnetic equator, which is continually sweeping from east to west along the true equator, suffices of itself to demonstrate that the magnetic poles are continually travelling around the true poles. What the laws of this motion may be, it would not be easy to determine in the present state of our knowledge; but it is worthy of notice that the same motion would serve to account at once for the change of dip and for the change of declination. For example, in 1663 the magnetic pole may be reasonably supposed to have been due north of Paris. In the latter year, the inclination was 75 degrees in Paris, so that we can judge that the magnetic pole was on the nearer side of the true pole. As the magnetic pole passed away from this position, travelling westwards, there would naturally result both a westerly declination and a gradual diminution of dip. And the fact that when Sir J. C. Ross determined the position of the northern pole in 1837, it was found to be somewhat more than 90 degrees west of the longitude of Paris—in other words, the fact that it had traversed somewhat more than a quarter of a complete revolution soon after the westerly declination at Paris had attained its maximum value—seems strikingly confirmatory of this view. If this theory is correct, the inclination will continue to diminish until the magnetic pole has completed half a revolution, so as to be again due north of Paris, but on the further side of the true pole. Then the declination will be nothing, and it will afterwards become easterly.

It must be admitted, however, that there is much more complexity in the laws according to which the declination varies, than the above view, taken alone, would imply. Doubtless, the peculiarities of the earth's structure, the arrangement of land and water, mountain-ranges, table-lands, and valleys, have much to do with the matter.

The variations of the intensity of magnetic action, either from time to time, or as we proceed from place to place, are among the most interesting of all the phenomena of terrestrial magnetism. The latter class of change is associated so obviously with the changes of declination and dip, that we need not enter on its consideration. The former, however, points to problems of extreme interest in connection with the probable character and source of the whole range of forces included under the subject we are dealing with.

We have seen already that from hour to hour, and from day to day, there are changes in the extent of the minute oscillations of the suspended magnet, and that these changes indicate variations in the intensity of the magnetic force under diurnal and annual solar influences. When we add to these variations a change which has a period corresponding to the motions of the moon, it becomes evident that it is to an influence as subtle and as pervading in its character as gravitation itself, that the terrestrial magnet owes its powers.

But there are other variations still more significant.

A long series of researches had convinced Colonel Sabine, one of our leading authorities on the subject of terrestrial magnetism, that the intensity of the magnetic action is subject to a process of change having a period of somewhat more than ten years. Scarcely had this law been established, when the results of a long and elaborate series of solar observations exhibited to the world the strange fact, that the spots which stain the sun's face vary in frequency according to a precisely similar relation. It was found that the changes of solar spottiness, and of magnetic intensity of action, are not merely characterised by an equality of period, but that the maximum effect under one period is absolutely coincident with the maximum effect under the other.

We might have looked upon this as merely a very singular coincidence, had we not independent evidence of an association between the sun's action and the intensity of terrestrial magnetism. Part of this evidence has been already referred to. But the evidence founded on the exact coincidence of magnetic storms, thrilling in a moment through the whole frame of the earth, with solar disturbances actually witnessed by astronomical observers, is even more striking. Thus, no room is left to question the dependence of terrestrial magnetism on solar action, and the relation between the sun's spots and the vibrations of the needle—a relation which, when first propounded, was received even by eminent physicists with ridicule—has been accepted as one of the most well established of all the circumstances known respecting terrestrial magnetism. Of the meaning of this singular relation, we have not at present space to speak; indeed, we should be led into a variety of considerations, which would be out of place in such a paper as the present. The appearance presented by the solar spots, the processes by which they are formed, the laws on which their changes depend—all these, and many other questions of the sort,

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would have to be dealt with, to say nothing of the planetary movements on which, according to modern researches, the habitudes of the solar atmosphere are dependent. We may note, in conclusion, that the solar face has recently presented all the signs which we have learned to associate with the intenser phases of terrestrial magnetic action. Enormous spots and clusters of spots have broken out during the past few months; and probably the spots which will shortly make their appearance will be yet larger, since the epoch of maximum disturbance has not yet been fully reached.

A COUNTY FAMILY.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—THE TEMPTATION.

If the sentimental emotions evoked in Mr William Blackburn with reference to his late wife were more powerful than we might have been led to expect, they were not, on the other hand, lasting, for, after a very brief retirement, he came forth and joined the rest of the party in the garden without the least sign of his recent depression; nay, he was even in high spirits—clumsily brisk,—grotesquely genial, like some wild animal whose vagaries would not be unamusing, if one could only be certain how they would end. 'Is this, now,' thought Mr Waller, smiling encouragingly at his young friend, 'merely the effect of his favourite stimulant, or does he wish to shew me that what I have just seen in him was only a momentary weakness?'

Lucy also secretly regarded him with a shuddering interest she had never experienced before. She had long been in possession of her father's scheme, of course, but he had not directly confided it to her. She had not pictured to herself the actual possibility of this man's being her lord and master. Doubtless, the reader has seen a parallel case, for there are many such in good society (indeed they are most numerous in the best); but if not, let him imagine how much more noteworthy the gambols of the Greater Ape would appear to him in its cage in the Regent's Park, if it were enacted that, after a certain time, the creature should exercise a personal authority over *him*. She wondered what arrangement had just been made by her father with this man in yonder room, and augured ill for herself from Mr William's boisterous mirth. Ellen on her part was scarcely in lighter mood than her friend; she had told Lucy of Denton's visit that morning—but that young lady was at present unable to enlighten her as to its cause, and this filled her with vague alarms. Stanhope was, for some reason best known to himself, by no means at his ease—nor had he been so of late when Ellen and Lucy were present, so that on Mr Waller and William devolved the task that day of making conversation, and what is vulgarly called 'doing the agreeable.' It was as though for some evening party too fashionable to amuse themselves, the most accomplished singer or elegant pianist had been engaged, and also a gentleman whose only art was to stick pins into the fleshy part of his legs, or draw yards of tape out of his mouth—although it must be granted that Mr William was certainly no conjurer. It would have been much more difficult, however, even under less adverse circumstances, to make time pass at the Fishery than at the Manor. There was not room and verge enough in their present picturesque but contracted position to do as they pleased; all were thrown together in that narrow space, and except for the malady of the sea, might almost as well have been fellow-passengers shipbored, compared with whom all companies ashore, even in their quarter of an hour before dinner, or when enjoying a 'little music' afterwards, are hilarity itself.

When the postman came that afternoon, who took away with him a letter (with an enclosure) in Mr Waller's fine flowing and yet business hand, he brought one of a different appearance for Stanhope. To judge by its superscription, which was 'Mr Stanhope, Esq., care of Mr Blackburn, Esq.,' it had been written with a skewer, and excited, in that dearth of subjects of interest, quite a topic of conversation as to whom such an eccentric correspondent might be.

Mr Waller opined that it was a love-letter from some young lady of rank whose education had been neglected.

'More likely,' observed dull William cunningly, 'it 's from one of his turf friends.'

'Who uses, characteristically, a horse's shoe-nail, instead of a steel pen,' added Stanhope good humouredly.

He read it and crumpled it up in his pocket, carelessly saying that Blackburn was so far right—that it was a begging-letter from poor old Jerry the card-seller, who had come to grief.

'Why, you don't mean to say that any one begs of *you*?' was Mr William's coarse rejoinder; and so the matter ended.

But when the long afternoon came to its close at last, and the visitors had departed, taking Mrs Blackburn with them—whom they had persuaded with difficulty to be their guest for the next day at least—Stanhope took no further pains to hide that something had annoyed him deeply; and the more he shewed it, the higher Mr William's spirits rose. As he watched him involuntarily take out again and again the missive he had received, only to thrust it back into his pocket with a muttered curse, he chuckled to himself and whistled merrily. 'Uncle Dean has done the trick,' thought he. 'O yes, it 's a begging-letter, right enough; but it has none of old Jerry's whine in it. It 's a stand-and-deliver affair, from one of his Goodwood friends, I 'll take my davy.'

And for once in his life at least Mr William might have made a statement upon oath and yet not committed perjury. It was a letter of the 'You-call-yourself-a-gentleman' sort, which those who owe debts of honour to persons of no honour, and which they are unable to pay, ought to make up their minds not to wince at; but it galled its present recipient to the quick. 'As for your being abroad, I know it 's all Dawlish's gammon,' ran one of its sentences, 'and I for one am not going to be fobbed off with promises. It 's true that I can't get my rights by law; but if Stokes and I—for he 's my pardner—don't get our cool four thousand within the week, mind this, *I 'll post you*.'

Presently, as they sat in the twilight over their brandy-and-water and cigars, at the open window, a boat glided slowly by up the stream.

'Now, I 'll stake my life,' cried William, who was always offering this tremendous wager (as in his own idea at least it was) upon the most trifling

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events, 'those two young rogues there are after night-poaching.'

'Very likely,' answered Stanhope curtly. 'I don't care a farthing whether they are or not.'

'But it's my river, sir, every yard of it, from here to Mosedale.'

'Then I wish 'em luck,' said Stanhope, draining his glass, and mixing himself another.

'I say, what the deuce is the matter with you, old fellow?' inquired William, always conciliatory, when another shewed signs of fight. 'You seem uncommon down upon your luck to-night.'

'Well, my luck is rather down upon *me*,' returned the other bitterly—'my usual luck, that is.'

'Bosh! what have you got to complain of?—a handsome, gentlemanly young fellow, whom all the girls are wild for, with a fine house and an old name, and whose estate, if it *is* a little dipped'——

Mr William stopped; he could not quite conceal the delight he took in thus torturing his friend, and the other's eyes flashed fire.

'I have no estate, sir, as perhaps you know,' said he desperately. 'Read *that*,' and he tossed him over Mr Stokes's partner's letter.

'What an impudent scoundrel!' ejaculated the other, when he had mastered the contents. 'Of course'—and here he lit a fresh cigar, as an excuse for not meeting his companion's gaze—'of course you'll pay the beggar off at once, and have done with him? And yet four thousand pounds is a large sum to have to pay all of a sudden.'

'To me at least it is,' said Stanhope sternly. 'Indeed, I have not got the money.'

'Not got the money?' exclaimed the other, raising his bushy eyebrows. 'Dear *me!* What will you do, then? Bolt?'

'No; it has not come to that yet, I hope. I must raise this sum how I can. Redmoor Firgrove is still mine to sell, and that will fetch it; and in the meantime I must trouble you to advance it to me.'

'The trouble would be a pleasure,' said William coolly, 'but, upon my life, I have not fifty pounds I can call my own. If you had asked me at breakfast-time, I might have lent you a little more, but my father-in-law that is to be was so very pressing this morning, that I had to lend it to *him*.'

'Is this really true, Blackburn? Can you not help me in this strait at all? If you will only make the advance, I will pay you ten—twenty per cent. You know that I am one to keep my word.'

'This gentleman here does not seem to know it,' said William carelessly, pointing to the letter; 'although I daresay what he writes is all lies.'

'No; it's true,' said Stanhope hoarsely, taking no notice, in his fierce excitement, of the other's irritating manner. 'I believe I have been the greatest fool alive;' and he ground his teeth so that the cigar fell from his lips bitten clean through.

'I know one way, and only one, by which you may still be a rich man,' said William slowly.

'To-morrow?' cried the other bitterly.

'Yes, to-morrow; that is, as soon as you like.'

Stanhope shook his head.

'It is not,' continued the other, 'the way which you have in your mind, but another way.'

'What do you mean?' There was something in Blackburn's voice which, wretched as Stanhope felt, gave him a thrill of horror.

'Well, I'll tell you, upon two conditions. First, that you don't fly into one of your foolish passions—enough to make a fellow's blood run cold to look at you; and secondly, that, whether you agree to my proposal or not, you'll keep it a secret—never breathe it to any human being—never speak about it again, even to myself, unless I ask you.'

'You are mystery itself, sir,' said Stanhope, forcing a laugh; 'but I have no objection to agree to both your terms. It is impossible to make me more savage than I am'——

'I am not so sure of that,' interrupted William. 'When you happen to take a different view of a thing from what another man takes, who is perhaps as good as yourself, only without the same finical notions, I have seen you burst out at him like a—like an unchained bull-dog.'

'Oh, you are afraid of wounding my honour, Mr Blackburn, I perceive. Well, I think, after that infernal letter, I can bear most things. Pray, don't consider my feelings.'

'Very good. And you'll keep it quiet?'

'Certainly. Why not? Secret as the dead who lie in their graves'——

'Never you mind *them*,' interrupted the other hastily.—'You'll never speak about the matter, even to me, whether it is agreed to or not, and you won't fly at my throat like a bull-dog?—Good. I know a way, then,' and here he sank his voice, 'by which you may get four thousand pounds within the week, and five times as much, and even more, when the old governor yonder,' and he jerked his thumb towards the ceiling, '"hops the twig." What do you think of *that* for a prospect? And yet it all lies within reach of your hand. Can't you guess the riddle now?'

What with his caution and his excitement, Mr William had brought himself so close to his companion that his cunning face was almost touching his, his brandied breath pervading him, his whole being anxious, as it seemed, to become one with his in rascaldom and fraud.

'I feel as if I were being tempted by the devil in person,' observed Stanhope frankly; 'and yet I've no conception of what you're driving at, or how what you suggest is to be effected. As for what may occur after your father's death, it would be idle, in talk with such a man as you, to conceal from motives of delicacy'—and yet, notwithstanding his words, the speaker hesitated.

Mr William nodded and rubbed his hand, as though he was being overwhelmed with compliments.

'I say, of course I am well aware that in the event of a certain contingency, which, however, may, after all, never take place'——

'And which you have no desire *should* take place,' struck in the other vehemently; 'which you had rather did not happen, if only the desired consequence could be insured without it. Oh, I know all that; I have watched you, I have marked you, my friend. I am not such a fool as I look, not such a fool as you and some others have been in the habit of taking me for.' And as Mr William spoke those words, he really did not look like a fool, but resembled a sharp and exceptionally malignant Satyr. 'When a chap's sweet upon a gal himself,' continued he, with his finger at his nose, to impart additional significance to his philosophy, 'then his eyes are sharpest to see through other chaps as have *their* fancies.'

'Really, Mr Blackburn, these sagacious reflections

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are entirely thrown away upon me,' said Stanhope carelessly, but with his face scarlet to the brow, nevertheless. 'What I was about to observe is this; that, supposing the contingency—to which no more direct allusion need be made, sir, since it is not only an impertinence to me, but an insult to one whose feelings are much more worthy of consideration—supposing the contingency to take place, then I understand as well as you do that I shall have considerable command of money. But as for these four thousand pounds within the week, I should like to know where, in the Fiend's name, are they to be found?'

'I will find them,' said Mr William triumphantly. 'When I told you I had not got them, I told you truth; but Mr Waller let fall a word to-day which assures me that I could raise them—for an intimate friend in his last extremity, that is.'

The speaker wore a look so very much out of keeping with the benevolence of his words, that Stanhope involuntarily ejaculated: 'Yes, he *is* the devil, and I shall presently have to sign his bond with my heart's blood.'

'You will have to sign nothing at all, my good sir,' returned the other persuasively. 'I am only about to ask you to give up something to which you have really no just claim.'

'If you refer to any hope I may entertain of securing your niece's hand, Blackburn, I promise—on the terms you mention—to forego at once all pretensions.'

'Bah! you may marry Ellen to-morrow for all I care, supposing, that is, we agree beforehand upon this little matter. I simply require of you to place in my hands—which are certainly the properest to hold it—that bit of paper which you took away with you to Curlew Hall the other day.'

'What! your father's will?'

'Yes, my father's will.'

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—AFTER NIGHT-POACHERS.

As William Blackburn uttered those last words, it seemed that Stanhope had clean forgotten his promise to keep his temper. He leaped from his chair with a great oath, and dashed his open palm against the table. But the next moment he moved slowly to the unshuttered window, and leaning his hot brow against the pane, looked out into the moonlit night in silence.

'Surely,' thought he in the bitterness of his soul, 'my degradation is now complete. For six months have I been fortune-hunting, despised by all lookers-on, and discouraged by the girl that I have made pretence to love; for six months have I been in hiding from men, such as he who has written to me to-day, and who believes me to be a liar and a thief; and now this villain here has asked my price for betraying a sick man's trust. Six months ago, I would have struck him to the earth for daring to hint as much, but now I have no such dainty sense of my own honour, and yet I am only twenty-five: I wonder what I shall be when I reach this man's age.'

'Well, Stanhope, what say you?' inquired Mr William, whose greedy eyes had followed his every movement, and were fixed upon him still, though he had to twist his own neck half round for that purpose. 'Come and sit down again, and let us talk over it quietly.'

'I can't sit down,' said Stanhope, opening the glass door as he spoke—letting in the cool night-air, and the sweep and swirl of the stream: he felt as if he needed air, space, movement, to save him from suffocation.

'I don't like that,' said William peevishly; 'you must shut the door—one does not know who may be at some open window listening.'

'But the secret's out, isn't it?' asked Stanhope with a harsh laugh. 'You have no other piece of roguery to propose, have you?'

'Roguery!—who said it was roguery? It's only natural, I suppose, that a man's only son should wish to be the custodian of the thing I spoke of, instead of a stranger.'

'Oh, it's merely a question of sentiment, is it?' rejoined the other carelessly. 'I had no idea you set so high a value upon such delicate ware.—Four thousand pounds down, did you not say, and twenty or twenty-five thousand to follow?'

'Say twenty-five,' said William, 'and one more. Upon the whole, then, you will clear thirty thousand pounds by riding home to-morrow, and bringing back with you—you know what: after that, you have only to hold your tongue.'

'It is really princely munificence,' said Stanhope in tones that mocked himself at least as much as his companion.

'It is worth my while, or else I shouldn't give it,' said the other coolly. 'You're not such a fool as to suppose I have not read the thing, and made my calculations accordingly; and indeed, I have no doubt you have done the same.'

'No, sir; curiously enough, I have omitted that precaution; and I should like to know, before giving you a final answer, how you propose to recoup yourself?'

'You had much better ask no questions,' said William significantly. 'If you are disturbed at my giving too large a sum for so slight a service, take less; or comfort yourself with the assurance that it is not I who shall have to pay it.'

'He is telling me now,' thought Stanhope, 'that he means to destroy the will, thereby making himself sole heir, and to pay me out of what is in fact his niece's money. He has made up his mind to beggar her, to begin with; and Herbert Stanhope, whom she has refused to listen to as a lover, is, he thinks, the very man to acquiesce in the arrangement. Thirty thousand pounds!—in another minute he will be proposing to make it guineas, if I will only smother the old man up-stairs. And yet, scoundrel as he is, he must have at least as bad an opinion of me as I of him. He and that imperative gentleman whose letter I have here in my pocket, have done me a good turn so far: they have made me for the first time see myself as others see me. From this night, I am no longer Squire Stanhope of Curlew Hall—shall no longer wear borrowed plumes. As this is the villain of this melodrama, let me be that less interesting character who is "poor but honest." I'll dispose of the Firgrove at once, no matter at what loss, and the rest of the property shall be advertised for sale. I'll take that will, and put it into Moffat's hands to-morrow morning for safe keeping. In the meantime, and since this is the last night I shall ever pass beneath his roof, why should I perplex this gentleman with a show of virtue?'

'My good sir,' broke forth William impatiently, 'you have not given me your answer? There is no fear but that you will keep a whole skin

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in the matter; it is only my mother who knows that you have the thing in your possession, and I can answer for *her* silence. Your hesitation is altogether without reason.'

'I daresay it does seem so,' said Stanhope gravely. 'However, the will shall pass from my keeping to-morrow, that I promise you.'

'That's good!' cried William excitedly, holding out his hand, which the other took.—'To-morrow, you shall have my bond for the four thousand, and for the rest; I thought we should come to a mutual understanding, when once I could make up my mind to speak; but the fact is, you were so devilish high and mighty about that unlucky affair at Chester, that (although of course I knew it was all put on) I was almost afraid to trust you with my little plan. However, I knew you were a man of honour—not to blab if you passed your word to keep anything dark; and so I risked it.'

'I am sure I am much obliged to you for your good opinion,' said Stanhope curtly; 'but truth is only to be expected in a man in liquor, and I'm sorry to see you don't drink.'

'I never drink when I have business in hand,' answered the other with a cunning wink—albeit he had already taken half a bottle of brandy—'but when it's satisfactorily concluded, I will soak with the best man alive. Come, fill your glass, and let's make a night of it—we two. I hate the night, and like to kill it.'

'The sentiment does you the greatest credit, Mr Blackburn, as indeed all your sentiments do. If you don't like darkness, let us set fire to the house, and have a good blaze. What is a little arson more or less, when one is determined to have things as we wish them?' and Stanhope burst into a fierce shout of laughter.

'I say, what the deuce is the matter with you?' inquired Mr William apprehensively. 'They will be sure up-stairs to think it's me, and that I'm drunk.'

'Impossible!' exclaimed Stanhope mockingly; 'that is only your modest notion of what other people think of you.' And again he laughed, so that the low rafters shook again. He was really getting excited, not with drink, but with the very tumult of his thoughts, which found a natural vent in this bitter raillery. It was impossible to converse soberly with such a man as his companion had shewed himself to be, and his scorn and loathing of him seemed to long for utterance in some shape.

'I do wish you would make less noise,' said William petulantly; 'you will really cause people to suspect something by such unusual behaviour. Even as it is, your obstinacy in keeping the door open may have done mischief. I heard something stirring in the garden just now, I thought, but of course that must be fancy.'

'Why, I heard something too. Look there!'

Mr William dragged his chair from where it was, and placed it behind Stanhope's. 'What!—where?' cried he, looking with terror over the other's shoulder. 'I wish you'd lock that window, and close the shutters, else what's the use of the candles?'

'Why, my good friend, why? I am sure, with your admirable sentiments, you cannot but be an admirer of the picturesque. I was only calling your attention to that sudden splendour of the moonbeams; a moment ago it was all gloom, and now it is as light as day, look you. So beautiful, and yet so cold and ghastly, like the face of some dead woman.'

'Be quiet, can't you; I hate such talk,' cried Mr William nervously.

'But it's only moonshine, my good sir,' said the other, grimly pleased to find an unexpected weapon of annoyance so ready to his hand. 'You don't mean to tell me that an intellect like yours is capable of superstition? That this gutter in the candle, for instance, which some would call a winding-sheet'——

'It's that infernal window being open that does that,' said William hastily.

'Of course it is; there speaks the practical philosopher. But I know men—that is, who call themselves such—who would consider it an omen—a sign that something ugly was about to happen—that Death itself was hovering about us even now. Do you know, Blackburn, I'm almost ashamed to say it, but I feel a little "all-overish" myself to-night. I think I shall go out into the air, and have a row in the skiff, to shake it off.'

'What! and leave *me?* You wouldn't be such a beast as that, surely, when you have promised to sit up with me all night?'

'Very well, why not sit in the boat? I shall most certainly have a row;' and Stanhope rose from his chair.

'No, no,' implored the other; 'I can't be left alone to-night; and the skiff won't hold us—that is, it is never safe when anybody rocks it, and I know you'll rock it, because you're drunk. If we must go, let's take the punt.'

'Very well, then, the punt let it be; and look you, although I am sober as a judge, I am ripe for anything to-night, except going to sleep; so let's go after those poachers. They must be somewhere between here and the mill for certain.'

Stanhope, although, as he protested, quite sober, was in that state of mental excitement to which inaction is hateful, and the ordinary surroundings of life seem burdensome and oppressive. 'The blind wild beast of Force that lies within the sinews of a man,' was roused in him, and he would have welcomed fight and peril. Mr William's case—afraid to start on such a dangerous errand, and still more averse to be left alone, a prey to nameless terrors—was pitiable indeed; but eventually he got cap and coat, and seated himself with as much of courage as his brandy-flask would hold, in the stern of the punt, while the other used the pole.

It was, as Stanhope had said, as light as day; every jut and coign of the cottage, every stone of the bridge, stood out in strong relief as they slid up stream. The wind had chopped to the east, and was blowing sharply, so that the trees that fringed the steep right bank of the river shivered and swayed; but down in the sheltered channel it was scarcely felt, though the stream bore here and there a silver curl that marked a wavelet, and against the broad flat prow of the punt the water chafed and whitened angrily. It was hard work pushing against wind and stream, and Stanhope enjoyed it; and when he ceased from his exertion, it was never to rest, but to gaze eagerly about in search of those who had preceded them.

'I see nothing of those rascals,' exclaimed he presently; 'I am afraid they have done their work, and put their boat up at the mill; in that

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case, they will escape us, confound them, for I suppose one must catch them in the very act, eh? —that's the law, isn't it?'

'Of course it is,' replied the would-be county magistrate; 'though I must say I should have rather enjoyed a tussle myself.'

'Hush! be quiet!—we shall have them yet; I hear something.' And Stanhope noiselessly pushed the boat beneath a bluff of the right bank, where it could lie in shadow; above them the steep rose sheer, with one strong sapling growing from it almost at right angles, so that the branches dipped to within a few feet of them.

'What a strange noise that is, Blackburn. If it was warmer weather, I should have said that it was distant thunder.'

His companion, who did not care what it was, so long as it was not poachers engaged in breaking the law, and thereby inviting deeds of violence, expressed his opinion that whether warm enough or not, it *was* thunder, and 'deuced near thunder too. A storm is brewing,' said he, 'and it's my idea we had better get home at once, with dry skins.'

'A storm, with a sky like that! Pooh!—nonsense! Hark! there's a horse coming down the gorge, and at full gallop too; it must have got loose, and been frightened at that noise; and I don't wonder. How it swells and roars! God of heaven! can the reservoir have burst?'

'The what?' cried William, starting from his seat with such a piercing yell, that, even in that moment of anxiety, Stanhope stared at him speechless with sheer amazement. His face, though in shadow, shewed as white as though the moonlight were full on it, and his eyes seemed to be starting from their sockets. But at that same instant another spectacle presented itself—a horse and rider at full speed came round an angle of the opposite bank, and thundered down the road. It was John Denton, riding as if for life.

'What has happened?' cried Stanhope; 'for God's sake, tell us.'

'The embankment's gone, and the water is coming down,' roared the other. 'Up the bank, or you are dead men!' And he did not even turn his head, but was out of sight before the echo of his words had died away.

Then, for the first time, the thunder of the torrent broke unmistakably on their ears. Stanhope sprung at the drooping sapling, seized a branch, and swung himself a few feet up the bank, not nearly far enough, as he well knew, for safety; but then he stopped, for William did not stir. 'Up, up, Blackburn; there is not an instant to lose. Don't you hear the flood coming down?'

Yes, he both heard and saw; for, following the direction of his eyes, the other beheld, just in the act of rounding the next reach of the little river, a huge wall of water, forty feet high as it looked, and crowned with foam, which came on *en masse* with an incredible swiftness, and the roar of a hundred seas. Stanhope turned, and digging feet and fingers into the hard cliff, struggled desperately upwards to the summit. Though even then scarce feeling secure, he could not resist the terrible attraction of the spectacle, but lying at full length upon the cliff-top, peered down upon the ruin beneath. His late companion was standing in the same spot, not, as he had expected to see him, paralysed with terror, but gesticulating vehemently, and apparently (though nothing could now be heard but the fury of the flood) ejaculating something at the top of his voice. He was pointing to the creaming top of the hurrying wall, where he seemed to see some object visible only to himself. Then, as the mighty mass swept by him, and him along with it, he suddenly threw up his hands, and once more, ere he was whelmed in the wave, that piercing shriek rang out above its thunderous roar. The next instant, a river was rushing by, nearly on a level with the spot where Stanhope lay, and at the rate of some twenty miles an hour, in place of the babbling little Curlew.

'Thank God, she is safe at Mosedale!' ejaculated Stanhope; 'but alas! for poor Ellen.'

GREENWICH HOSPITAL.

GREENWICH HOSPITAL, the grand old place which we all so much admire during our trips up and down the Thames, and which really is one of our finest buildings, is undergoing a transformation—not architecturally, but socially. We shall see there fewer and fewer of the blue-coated veterans who remind us of the days when steam was in its infancy. There have been three periods in the history of the building—its gradual construction by kings and queens; its long-continued employment as a habitation for old worn-out seamen; and its gradual desertion, owing to the substitution of the out-pension system for that of the in-pension.

Built by kings and queens, we say. This was really the case to a considerable extent. A portion of the site was once occupied by that suburban palace which, after being in favour with most of the Tudor sovereigns (some of whom were born there), constituted Queen Elizabeth's *Pleasaunce*. We hear very little about it during the reigns of James I. or Charles I., or during the Commonwealth. In the time of the Merry Monarch, however, the old Pleasaunce was pulled down, and commencement made with the present structure. Although Inigo Jones was not the actual architect, his ideas were present to the mind of his pupil Webb, by whom the plans were prepared. Three reigns at least elapsed before the edifice was substantially completed; but happily the same architectural character was preserved throughout. It is a grand series of courts and broad avenues, separating four fine clusters of buildings, known as King Charles's, King William's, Queen Mary's, and Queen Anne's quarters. The two quarters or clusters bordering on the river have been, until recently, almost wholly given up to the officials who were supposed to manage the Hospital, but who really had very insufficient work imposed on them. The other two quarters, nearest the Observatory hill, contain the Painted Hall, the Chapel, the wards for the pensioners, the dining hall, and the kitchens.

This was the building which, after some of the Stuarts had resided occasionally in the north-west quarter of it, became an asylum for seamen of the royal navy. Mary, the queen of William III., is credited with the suggestion of this plan. Never was an institution supported by a more heterogeneous variety of revenues than this has been. First, donations were given by royal and princely personages; then others by nobles and wealthy subjects; then a tax of sixpence a month was levied on all the seamen in actual service; then the forfeited

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estates of traitors and rebels were appropriated; then parliamentary grants were made; and then fines and penalties of numerous kinds were handed over to the Commissioners—including unclaimed prize-money, deserters' and forfeited prize-money, smugglers' fines, a percentage on the freight of gold and silver carried by royal ships, and at one time a portion of the coal-duty. For a century and a half, even the sailors of the mercantile marine, although receiving no benefit from Greenwich Hospital, were compelled to subscribe their sixpence a month towards its support; but this was commuted, a few years ago, by an annual parliamentary grant of twenty thousand pounds. So large have been the receipts during a period of a hundred and seventy years or thereabouts, that the invested capital of the Hospital now amounts to a sum of great magnitude. We have the accounts for 1868 before us; and from them we learn that there is (in round numbers) L.1,000,000 stock in the 3 per cent. consols, L.1,500,000 in the 3 per cent. reduced, and other stock, shares, and money out on loan to the amount of L.400,000—making altogether a very near approach to three millions sterling, all yielding annual interest or dividend. This interest and dividend are augmented by the rental of estates, and by the government grant, to a total sum not very far short of *two hundred thousand a year!*

During one generation after another, the wards at the Hospital were occupied by seamen of the royal navy, incapacitated either by wounds and accidents, by illness or old age. When one of those had gone through the formalities necessary to obtain admission (and they were rather troublesome to unlettered men), he was put in receipt of the requisites for existence—food, clothing, and lodging—together with a trifle in the shape of pocket-money. The old knee-breeches and cocked-hats of Queen Anne's time remained in use at Greenwich long after their abandonment by the other classes of society; but whether knee-breeches or trousers, whether cocked-hats or wide-awake hats, the old fellows have always been pretty warmly and comfortably clothed. As to their lodging, each man was assigned to a particular ward. The ward was a long gallery divided into compartments of different sizes, containing one, two, three, or four beds each. Each bedroom was called, in sailor phrase, a cabin; but it was little more than a sleeping-place, seeing that the men were not allowed to eat any of their meals there, nor to lie in their beds in the daytime. Some of the old fellows were fond of decking out their cabins with curious odds and ends, mementoes of foreign adventures. As to food, the men were summoned thrice a day to the dining-hall. The breakfast was (in later days, not originally) cocoa and bread; the dinner consisted of alternations of roast meat, boiled meat, soup, boiled puddings, baked puddings, broth, and vegetables, varied according to the days of the week and the season of the year; the supper (which served also as tea), bread, butter, and tea. Two pints of beer a day were allowed, and a shilling a week for tobacco and little trifles of miscellaneous kinds.

If the old Greenwich pensioner had been *contented* and *unmarried*, such a provision of board and lodging and clothing was by no means bad. But the men were not exactly happy. Most of them yearned for a little more freedom, a little more mixing with the busy world, a little less of the solemn dulness which always hung about the grand old building. So few of them had any fondness for books, even if they could read, that the library was very little used by them; and the authorities provided hardly anything in the form of amusements. Jack, in fact, was made a sort of monk in his old age, shut up in a monastery; and he didn't like it. Those of them who were married were rather miserably placed in regard to wife and children. Even so recently as ten years ago, there was no provision made by the state for the family of the married pensioners—except a portion of the broken victual from the dining-hall. The pensioner's wife was obliged to support herself and children, for he had nothing to give them. The only way he could manage was this: he had a choice of receiving tenpence a day instead of the regular three meals in the dining-hall; he was allowed to be absent from the hospital at meal-times; and his tenpence a day, *plus* a shilling a week pocket-money (making about seven shillings a week altogether), was all that he had to feed himself and to support his family. Many of the women worked as charwomen or washerwomen in and near Greenwich, but many of them became chargeable on the parish; and as the children were still more ignored by the state than the wives, some of them fell into evil courses, and grieved the hearts of the poor old fellows, who were powerless to help them.

In 1860, a series of reforms began. What was wanted was—to lessen the enormous cost of management; to add a little to the very scanty money pittance of the inmates; to improve the out-pension system, for those who might wish to quit the Hospital; and to do something for the wives, widows, and children of the old men. There used to be so many admirals, commodores, captains, lieutenants, and other naval officers quartered upon Greenwich Hospital, and provided with comfortable apartments within its walls—nominally to attend to the old pensioners, but really with scarcely any duties—that they absorbed one-half of the entire building, and made a deep inroad on the funds. Many useful changes have, however, gradually been made in this system. Then, as to the pocket-money, it was raised from one shilling a week to two, three, or four, according to the rank which the man had held in the royal navy. The married pensioner had an extra two shillings a week given to him, to aid in supporting his family; and still another two shillings if his children were motherless. The wives had medicines and medical assistance placed within their reach, and schools for the children were aided if not actually provided. The men had another privilege awarded to them, which they greatly relished; they were allowed to visit their homes for six weeks at a time, at stated intervals, taking with them all their pocket-money and ration-money—quite a fortune for the old bucks. But the great change of all has been in the substitution of out-pensions for in-pensions. It became gradually but certainly known that the men—except those who were really decrepit, or had no relatives or friends to go to—preferred the former to the latter; and that the change would be advantageous rather than otherwise to the nation generally. The Duke of Somerset drew up a memorandum of suggestions in 1864; and a committee of skilled officials

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developed a complete scheme in 1865, for working out these results. One-half or two-thirds of the pensioners were, by degrees, to quit Greenwich Hospital, and support themselves in any way they might select, by means of an increased out-pension; none were permanently to remain, unless they were very infirm, or had no friends to go to. The out-pensioners are ten or twelve thousand in number, and receive a few shillings a week each, varying in amount according to the rank the man had attained, whether common seaman, able seaman, petty officer, or the like. An arrangement was made that all the men above fifty-five years of age should have an addition of about ninepence per day to their pensions; and that any of the in-pensioners who left the Hospital should at once become entitled to these advantages.

What has been the result of these changes, to the pensioners themselves and to Greenwich Hospital? Readers of the *Illustrated London News* —that storehouse of pictorial gossip—will perhaps remember a woodcut in 1865, representing the departure of a body of pensioners from Greenwich, in omnibuses provided by the government. It was merely one scene in a very extensive exodus. No sooner did the pensioners hear of the new Admiralty plan, than most of them hailed it with delight; and something like one thousand (out of fourteen hundred) have taken their departure from the establishment.

Very recently, the Admiralty have brought forward a plan for carrying out still more completely the intentions above noticed. They say: 'The key-note of the policy of 1865 is so to administer the revenues of the Hospital as to make the money, set apart for the advantage of seamen incapable of service, go as far as possible in the direction most agreeable to the navy itself; that is to say, that the greatest number of seamen and marines should be benefited in the way which they themselves would individually prefer, and which would most adequately carry out the original intentions of the royal founders of the institution.' In the year just named the in-pensioners were reduced from 1382 to 395, and very few of them have since applied for re-admission. The plan is to be carried out to a still greater extent, so as to leave in the building only so many pensioners as can be accommodated in certain outbuildings known as the Infirmary and the Somerset Ward—virtually clearing out all the four grand clusters of the original building. Some of the regular old inmates, incurable or broken down, will remain; some, received temporarily for medical treatment, will be well cared for at the expense of the institution until cured; and all the rest will be offered grants which, combined with their naval pensions and Greenwich pensions, will make up an annuity of thirty-six pounds ten shillings a year for life. Few of them are absolutely friendless out of doors, and there will be many a home glad to welcome Father Jack or Grandfather Benbow, especially when he brings fourteen shillings a week with him. Even the Infirmary itself, it is believed, will be emptied in a few years; for every invalided and decrepit pensioner will be offered the option of a money equivalent, if he would prefer to live among his friends. Even at the best of times, numbers of seamen who have been wounded, and perhaps injured for life, in the public service, have been left unprovided for, owing to formal rules and technicalities connected with the navy; but the Admiralty now entertain a hope that, owing to the vastly improved appropriation of the funds, 'parliament will have the assurance that no man who has long served his country at sea, or who has been invalided from the service, need become an inmate of a workhouse.' It is a shame to us that such words should be at all necessary; but we are fortunately not too old to learn. In 1859, the cost of one thousand six hundred in-pensioners ran away with one hundred thousand pounds, so extravagant was the expense of management, leaving nothing at all for out-pensions; in 1868, about four hundred in-pensioners and forty thousand pounds establishment charges left sixty thousand pounds for out-pensions; in future there may probably be two hundred inmates, all told, and there will be ninety thousand pounds a year for out-pensions.

As to the fine old building itself, the Admiralty purposely abstain from any present appropriation of it. It is to be kept in repair and insured, and applied to any such 'public purposes as Her Majesty's government may determine;' but (mark the proviso) 'the Admiralty shall have power to reclaim it for hospital purposes in the contingency of a naval war breaking out.' Many well-wishers of our seafaring classes have urged the government to hand over Greenwich Hospital to the mercantile marine generally, for sick and invalided seamen of trading ships; but the proviso above quoted interferes with this. There are, however, other arrangements planned, one whereby the admirable *Dreadnought* institution will probably be benefited out of the Greenwich funds; and another for giving small pensions to such merchant seamen as paid the Greenwich sixpence for ten or more years.

A MORASS ADVENTURE.

In the latter part of last summer, a scanty purse led me, in company with some relatives, to spend my holidays at a little village on the Welsh coast, out of the ordinary beat of tourists, but otherwise remarkable for nothing but its general air of bleakness and sterility. The place was very quiet, and the lodgings were cheap, and tolerably comfortable. These essentials being secured, we had to put up with the scenery, which was not very attractive. A long low line of beach, surmounted by a high pebble ridge, leading on the one hand to the foot of some bold jutting cliffs, and on the other losing itself in an estuary; behind this, a black and dreary-looking bog, stretching three or four miles inland, and intersected in every direction by wide, artificial ditches, and deep, natural fissures connecting the inky pools. A small river flowing into the estuary divides the bog, its course being marked by mounds of peat, cut from the firmer ground which forms its banks. Branching out at right angles to the river are other lines of peat-stacks, following the course of the larger drains, which herald the attempt to cultivate the dreary waste.

This was the view I beheld, as, standing one evening on the top of the stony ridge, I faced eastward. The sinking sun threw my shadow far over the bog, distinctly seen as it fell over the gilded rushes and the crimsoning pools. I had been

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strolling out with my gun, in the hope of adding some specimens to my cabinet, and was thinking of returning homewards, when a long-legged heron slowly sailed high overhead, in the direction of the river. I watched the bird till it alighted near one of the peat-stacks, and carefully noting the spot, I proceeded to a careful stalk, hoping to secure an acquisition. I contrived to get within seventy yards of the heron, and as there was no cover of any kind nearer, I lay down behind the last mound I had reached, and with finger on the trigger, watched patiently, in the hope that my quarry would feed towards me. I was not disappointed: it gradually approached some yards nearer my hiding-place, and then either caught sight or scent of me, for it suddenly rose, but in so doing came within range. Bang! went both barrels. Uttering a hoarse croak, the heron flew heavily away, keeping close to the ground, and evidently hard hit. I sprang up and followed, jumping the ditches, and avoiding the soft ground as best I could. During one particularly long jump, I lost sight of the heron for a moment; I caught sight of it again just in time to see it fall to the earth as softly as a snow-flake, and lie still with wings outspread to their full stretch. Between the bird and me, however, there was a crevasse wider than any I had yet leaped, and a dozen yards on the other side lay the object of my pursuit. The black slimy sides of the ditch overhung the water, which lay deep and still some six or seven feet below, and a few yards to the right connected with a large pool, having equally high and muddy banks. To the left was a labyrinth of similar ditches. Some distance in front, a broader and straighter crack in the flat expanse shewed where the river lay. The bank on which I stood was a foot or two higher than the opposite bank. I describe the situation thus minutely in order to make the reader understand what afterwards happened.

Not liking to lose the prize so nearly in my grasp, I resolved to risk the jump. Laying down the gun, and taking my coat off, I made the effort, and cleared the ditch, only, however, by a few inches. I secured the heron, and smoothing its beautiful plumage, but little injured by the shot, threw it across to the bank from which I had just come. Then, on looking around, I found myself in a sort of *cul de sac*. The bit of firm ground on which I stood was an island, and the only way of escape was the one by which I had arrived. Having to 'take off' from a lower level, it was much harder to get back than it had been to come; but as there was no alternative, it had to be tried. I did not leap quite far enough, and pitched with hands and knees together against the edge. There was no vegetation to catch hold of, and after hanging on the balance for a few moments, vainly clutching at the mud, I fell backwards with a heavy splash into the water.

Fortunately, I am a good swimmer, and at first, while treading water, the ludicrousness of the affair alone struck me; but when I began to see that it might be difficult to get up those slimy, overhanging banks, I must confess I felt rather frightened. It was impossible to get out at the spot where I had fallen in. I swam farther up the ditch, and trying to bottom it, felt my feet touch the soft tenacious mud, that gave no support, but was ten times more dangerous than the water. The water became shallower as I struggled on, but the muddy bottom refused to give me a standing-place, and the muddy sides afforded no hold for my hands. It at last became so shallow that I had to turn on my back to avoid kicking the mud as I swam, and when in this position, I could push my arms into it with almost as much ease as I could push them through the water; but to draw them out again was far from easy. With a horrid fear of being unable to extricate myself from the mud, and of a slow suffocation, I made a sudden dash back into the deeper water, and tried the other ditches, only to be repulsed in the same manner. I swam round and round the pool, seeking for an outlet, and beginning to feel my boots and clothes very heavy. Even now I involuntarily smiled at the comparison which suddenly occurred to me between myself in this plight and a mouse swimming round a bucket of water; but the thought that I too, like it, might be swimming for my life soon drove all ludicrous thoughts out of my head.

Matters now began to look very serious, when I saw a root or branch of some long-buried tree projecting out of the bank. I caught hold of it; but it was not strong enough to enable me to lift myself out of the water. All that I could do was to support myself with my hands just sufficiently to keep my head above the surface. I took this opportunity of kicking off my boots.

Up to this time, I could scarcely realise my position; but now the conviction began to dawn upon me that I might never again see the mother and sisters I had left in the cottage a mile and a half away. I looked up at the sky, in which the twilight was fast giving place to the moonlight, and across which the clouds were merrily driving before the evening breeze; and then I looked at the black and slimy walls which hemmed me in, and felt as though I were about to scream with terror. From my childhood, I have always had a horror of confinement of any kind. I have felt strangely uncomfortable when I have been persuaded into exploring a cave, or when I have been shewn through a prison. This feeling I felt now more strongly than the fear of drowning. To die hemmed in by those gloomy walls would be terrible.

To add to the weirdness, a hollow booming sound, almost amounting to a roar, ran through the quivering bog, intensified to me, no doubt, by my imprisonment in the heart of the moss. This, though I had never heard it before, I knew to be the note of the bittern. During the night, it was repeated several times, and anything more weird and dismal it would be hard to imagine.

I had not as yet thought of shouting, but I now did so till I was hoarse. The only answer was the eerie scream of the curlew. The improbability of any one being near enough to hear me so late, struck me, and I desisted from the useless labour. The stillness was intense, broken only at rare intervals by the bittern or curlew. How long I clung to the branch, I do not know. Fortunately, the water was not cold. The clouds had cleared away, and the moon, near the full, shone brightly. Had

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it been dark, my courage must have given way, and I should most probably have sunk. As it was, I cannot say that I quite despaired of a rescue in some way or other. If I could only hold out till morning, some one might, I conjectured, come for the purpose of carrying away the turf sods, and might see my coat and gun, which would lead to a search. I had not much hope in any search from the village; I had started in the direction of the cliffs, my favourite evening haunt, and I fancied that would be the direction the searchers would take. As the night wore on—oh, so slowly—with the moon so calmly gliding through the stars above me, I fell into a kind of stupor, and I can distinctly remember repeating scraps of verses totally unconnected with each other. From this state, I was aroused by the loud note of some night-bird, probably an owl, and found my arms very stiff from holding on to the root; while my legs felt like weights of lead suspended beneath me. While trying to change my position, I fancied I heard the gurgling sound of running water, and that not far off. I listened intently, and found it was no fancy. Water was evidently running into the pool, and I saw by the root I was clinging to that the water had risen some inches.

A cheering hope sprang up within me, as it flashed across my mind that the tide must be rising, and that the pool must have an outlet into the river.

The thought infused new life into me, and I struck out in the direction of the sound. Then, to my intense joy, I saw distinctly, in the clear moonlight, that the water was streaming in fast through several small inlets, and pouring in quietly and steadily, through one of the ditches I had previously swum up. I knew that if the tide rose another foot or eighteen inches, I could by treading water fast, spring up so high as to be able to catch hold of the top of the bank, and so swing myself up. I knew also that the water could not possibly begin to flow into the bog-pools until it was nearly high tide. Returning to my resting-place, I watched anxiously, the prospect of speedy deliverance banishing all weariness. The water continued to pour in steadily and in greater volume. The dawn was now breaking, and I had not much longer to wait. The water had ceased flowing, and the bank in one place was barely five feet above the water. Taking a long breath, I let myself sink low, and then treading water as strongly and quickly as possible, I threw half my body above the surface of the pool, and caught the top with one hand. Before the soft earth had time to crumble beneath my weight, I had obtained a firmer grasp with the other hand, and in another moment stood on the moss—saved, drinking in with eager gasps the fresh air of the morning.

The white haze was rapidly clearing away, and through it I saw five or six men hurrying towards me. I have a confused idea of being helped to my lodgings, and of afterwards telling my adventure to many eager questioners.

The soaking I had had, and the exposure to the unhealthy mists which rise from the morass in the night, caused an illness for a time, but the effects soon wore off.

The heron is stuffed, and adorns my cabinet, unconscious of the revenge which overtook its destroyer.

THE EJECTMENT.

The dusty road is fringed with green;
The hedges shelter from the heat;
Above, the woodbines blossom sweet;
Below, the toiling ant is seen.

And in the hedge, that rises high
Above the tangled grass and flowers,
A little bird beguiles the hours
With quiet homely minstrelsy.

It sings as day is drawing nigh,
Or when the idle noon is bright,
Or when the purple fringe of night
Is rising in the eastern sky:

Scarce noticed—yet perchance its song
Makes weary feet forget to ache,
Or dull despair again to take
Some hope and strength to toil along;

Or merely serves to bring a smile
On faces never touched by care—
On hearts that have not known despair,
To shed a brighter joy awhile.

But use must rule: the woodman's bill
Clears the green bank—the bird has fled,
In other boughs to hide its head,
The while its former haunt is still.

Yet hard to think another shade
Can be as loved as that one, where
It watched the primroses appear,
The springing of each tender blade.

Another hedge may bloom more sweet,
O'er richer fields be heard its strains,
But sweeter than all these remains
The memory of its first retreat;

And when alike the new and old
Fade in the autumn, and the blast
Clears the thick trees, the flowers are past,
The grass is withered with the cold;

Some pity rises in the mind,
To view the songster, silent now,
Seek shelter from the driving snow,
Or shiver in the cutting wind.

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IN THE TEMPLE.

'I'VE been laundress to gentlemen of all ages in my time, sir,' remarked Mrs Flanagan, my laundress, this morning; 'but of them all, you, sir, when you fust come to live in the Temple, was the very youngest I ever "did" for.'

What the nature of the preceding conversation between Mrs Flanagan and myself had been, and which had induced that excellent lady to make the above remark, it is not necessary for me to explain; but as she departed down-stairs, banging the outer door of my chambers after her, I found myself wondering how many years had really elapsed since I first became the occupant of the dingy set of chambers on the third floor of No. 5 Flag Court, Temple, which it has been my lot ever since to inhabit. As the result of my musings, I came to the conclusion that Mrs Flanagan was right. I *was* very young when, a few weeks after having entered myself as a student on the boards of the Honourable Society of the Upper Temple, I presented myself at the treasury-office of that learned body, and besought the clerk to inform me whether there were any chambers then vacant. That official looked at me over his spectacles—doubtless thinking, like Mrs Flanagan, that I *was* very young—before he replied that there were only two sets of chambers in the Inn then vacant. One, he remarked, was a handsome set on the first floor of Harper's Buildings (rent one hundred and fifty pounds a year), and which had just been vacated by Mr Quirk, Q.C., upon his appointment as one of Her Majesty's judges. The other set which was on the third floor of No. 5 Flag Court, Temple (rent thirty-five pounds a year), had been recently occupied by Mr Redtape, but had become vacant by the removal of that learned gentleman to another world.

Thinking that this last-named set of chambers might suit me, I requested the clerk to shew me them. It was a dreary November afternoon—how well do I remember it!—as the clerk and I left the treasury-office, and set forth upon our quest. The fog which hung over London that day was so thick that all the gas-lamps were burning on the staircase of No. 5 Flag Court, and looked to me like distant light-houses seen through a fog as the clerk and I slowly toiled up-stairs. The clerk was a portly man and plethoric withal, so he eagerly seized hold of the opportunity of resting himself afforded by each landing-place; and by way of filling up these involuntary pauses, he discoursed to me about the owners of the names which I beheld painted up over each door.

'Those rooms,' said he, 'are Mr Growler's. You know his great work, *Growler on Ejectment*. Those chambers opposite to his, are Mr Denhope's, the great parliamentary counsel. Ah,' remarked the clerk reflectively, 'I remember *him* when he entered the Upper Temple—I took his entrance fees myself not twenty years ago—and now he's making L.20,000 a year.' On the floor above Mr Denhope's rooms we found the name of Mr Waltham painted up. 'Yes,' said the clerk admiringly, '*he's* a Honourable!—the Honourable Arthur Waltham, youngest son of Lord Manleytowers.—As for that gentleman,' he continued doubtfully, pointing as he spoke to the name of a man who has since that time written one of the sweetest and tenderest poems in the English language, 'I don't know much about *him*, but I've heard that *he's* a literary character. However,' concluded the clerk hopefully, '*that* mayn't be true!' With this we reached the third floor, and knocked at the door of the late Mr Redtape's chambers. It was speedily opened, and we were forthwith confronted by Mrs Flanagan.

She was then a very portly widow of about fifty years of age. She was dressed in a seedy suit of black, and had a swollen red face, twinkling black eyes, and iron-gray hair. I trembled inwardly at the awfulness of her aspect as she shewed the chambers to me, enlarging, as she did so, upon her own merit as a laundress, and upon the devoted care which she had always taken both of Mr Redtape and of his household goda. I found that the chambers consisted of a moderate-sized sitting-room, an exceedingly small bedroom, and a third room so small and so ill contrived, that the only

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use it could be put to was that of a pantry. The furniture of the late Mr Redtape still adorned the room, 'and could be had,' I was volubly informed by Mrs Flanagan, 'at a most moderate price.' The ceiling of the sitting-room was black with smoke; the wainscoting of wood running round the walls had originally been painted green, but was now so stained by age and dirt as to be almost unrecognisable. As for the windows, they looked as though soap and water had never been applied to them within the memory of man. The view out of the bedroom window comprised a horizon of chimney-pots; whilst that from the sitting-room looked into the dingy quadrangle of Flag Court, on the opposite side of which I could dimly discern the lights of the houses looming through the fog. My heart sank within me as I gazed, and I inquired shudderingly of Mrs Flanagan whether the late Mr Redtape had died in these rooms. 'O yes, sir,' replied that excellent woman cheerfully; 'he died here on this day fortnight. He made a sweet end, sir; nobody bein' in the room with him but the priest and me. God rest his sowl!'

To bring a long story to an end, I took the chambers. The Honourable Society very liberally repainted them from top to bottom; and, declining Mrs Flanagan's repeated entreaties to take Mr Redtape's ramshackle furniture, I had the rooms refurnished after my own heart, and in them it has ever since been my lot to live—for I decline to state how many years.

My experience of the life of a man in chambers in the Temple is, that though rough and uncomfortable in many respects, it is nevertheless far from being without its compensating advantages. It is amazing, for example, to find how much interest one can find in watching one's neighbours. Next door to my chambers are those of a late Attorney-general. As I lounge out of my sitting-room windows I behold attorneys' clerks bearing thither huge briefs. Thither, too, occasionally come, under the guidance of the solicitors engaged in the case, men who, from their anxious and excited looks, are clearly the plaintiffs or defendants, on whose behalf the services of the eminent Sir Longrobe Bigwig have been retained. On one memorable morning, I saw, moreover, no less a person than the then prime-minister of England walk across Flag Court, knock at the door of his Attorney-general's chambers, and with him remain closeted for more than half an hour. Opposite to me, again, on the other side of the court, are the rooms of Mr Dennis O'Flaherty, the sub-editor of the *Daily Intelligencer;* and on Saturday evenings, many a shout of laughter do I hear borne across from his rooms—testifying either to the goodness of O'Flaherty's wine or the piquancy of his jokes. On the right-hand side of my court are the chambers occupied by Mr Page, the 'leading junior' on the —— Circuit. Thither I behold each day five or six sprucely dressed young gentlemen proceeding, each of whom has paid to Mr Page a fee of one hundred guineas for the privilege of reading his briefs, drawing his declarations, and generally doing his work for him for the space of one legal year. The other day, I beheld an amusing incident at Mr Page's rooms. The afternoon was warm, and his windows were up. One of the pupils, in playful altercation with one of his fellow-students, jokingly threw at him the great bundle of papers at which he had been working. The pupil at whose head the ponderous missile was hurled, promptly ducked that valuable part of his person, and the papers thereby missing their mark, flew out of the open window. As ill-luck would have it, a London street-boy was passing through Flag Court at that moment; to seize hold of the valuable bundle of papers which fell ponderously at his feet, and to fly with it, was with him, as novelists say, but 'the work of a moment.' Hot chase was of course instantly given by the whole posse of Mr Page's pupils, assisted by the Temple porters; but from that day to this, the papers have never been recovered. An advertisement offering a reward for them, and stating (of course) 'that they were of no value to any one but their owner,' was ineffectually inserted in the London papers for weeks. It is said that the pupil who so rashly threw those valuable papers at his fellow-labourer's cranium is now a solitary exile on board a vessel bound to New Zealand.

Occasionally, even more pleasing incidents enliven my court. But a moment ago, I raised my eyes from this paper, and I beheld, crossing Flag Court, a gentle widow lady, supported on each side by two blooming daughters; the whole party was proudly escorted by her son, a young Hopeful, who evidently had taken, only a few months ago, the first step on the road which his fond mother doubtless feels sure will lead to the judicial bench. Candour, however, compels me to state that incidents of so agreeable a character as that which I have just described are rare in Flag Court. Policemen, gatekeepers, laundresses, attorneys' clerks, printers' devils, and porters, are, it must be confessed, its normal patrollers. By craning my body very far out of my bedroom, I am sometimes glad to remember that I can just discern the window of the chambers in which gentle Oliver Goldsmith breathed his *last sigh;* whilst immediately below his rooms are those which were occupied by Sir William Blackstone, whose temper, be sure, was sadly tried whilst he was engaged in the composition of his famous *Commentaries*, by the sounds of 'revelry by night' in Mr Goldsmith's rooms overhead!

Has my reader ever been present at a dinner in the ancient hall of the Upper Temple? If not, let me describe the scene for him. Let him imagine a well-proportioned hall of the Elizabethan style of architecture, with a lofty roof of dark oak, unsupported by pillars; down the length of the hall there run long narrow oaken tables, destined for the accommodation of barristers and students; whilst across the high end of the hall, upon a raised dais, there is placed the benchers' table. Does the reader ask who a bencher is? My answer is, that he is a Q.C. who, having originally been called to the bar at the Upper Temple, is created, upon his attaining the rank of a Q.C., a bencher of his own Inn, and so becomes one of its governing body. In the hall are to be seen men of all ages, who are engaged in keeping terms for the bar, by eating that prescribed number of dinners which, from time immemorial, has formed so essential a part in the preparation for the English bar. The majority of faces in the hall are those of young men fresh from the universities; but here and there you see a swarthy countenance, shewing that its owner is a native of the far East, and designs, when he is called, to practise before the High Court of Calcutta, Madras, or Bombay. Here and

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there, however, are old men who wish, from some mysterious reason, to be elevated to the horse-hair before their approaching departure from life.

The men in the hall of the Upper Temple are very conveniently dined together in messes of four; and for each mess a complete dinner of soup, fish, joint, pastry, bread, cheese, ale, and a bottle of wine is provided. Each mess has a 'captain,' whose duty it is to see that the wine is properly decanted, &c.; and to bully the waiters, should they be remiss in their attentions. Barristers and students alike dine in gowns, but without hoods. If you want a subject for reflection during dinner, you can find it in the thought that the hall in which you are now dining is the only building still standing in London in which a play of Shakspeare's was acted during the lifetime of its author. For the knowledge of this interesting fact, we are indebted to a chance entry in the Diary of John Manningham, a member of the Temple, who records the event thus: 'Feb. 2, 1601, at our feast we had a play called *Twelve Night, or What you Will.*' It is probable that Shakspeare himself looked down upon the performance that night from yonder music-gallery—the exquisite wood-carving of which I would advise you to observe before you finally quit the hall.

Whenever any country friends of mine call upon me in town, and behold the open grassy space known as the Temple Gardens, they invariably exclaim: 'What a capital place for you to walk in! One would never have imagined that, in the heart of London, there would have been such a fine open space!' 'My dear friend,' I invariably reply, 'it *is* a fine open space; but I must tell you that no one who lives in the Temple ever walks in the gardens! This may surprise you, O Rusticus, but it is quite true.'

When, however, it is my lot to pass outside the iron railings of the Temple Gardens, I never fail to observe several nursery-maids, with troops of young children under their charge, walking in them. It has always been to me a subject of wonder to reflect upon the possible district of London from which these nursery-maids and their charges come. If I lie sleepless at night, I ruminate upon the matter. What district of London is there—I ask myself—so well to do as to employ nursery-maids to look after its children, and yet sufficiently near to the Temple Gardens as to render it reasonably probable that it would send its nursery-maids and its children to walk therein? Although I have reflected upon this question times innumerable, I have never yet been able to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. Can any of my readers help me? Yet these same Temple Gardens, though now frequented chiefly by nursery-maids and children, are not without their romantic memories. Does not Shakspeare, in the fourth scene of the second act of *Henry VI.*, make the red and white roses—the badges of the two Houses of Lancaster and York in the famous wars of that name—be plucked in these gardens? Did not Mr Spectator frequently walk here, looking at the ladies in their mighty hoops, and pondering, doubtless, whether he could not write a paper about them? Have not Johnson and Boswell, Garrick and Goldsmith, all sat and talked under yonder tree—whose aged limbs are so carefully supported by iron bars, or 'crutches,' as Longfellow, when he visited the Temple last year, so happily termed them? Does not Charles Lamb devote one whole charming *Essay by Elia* to a description of the old benchers who solemnly paced along the river-terrace in these gardens? Was not Mr Arthur Pendennis seated in yonder arbour when Miss Fanny Bolton so entirely unexpectedly met him? Above all, did not Mr George Warrington walk here with Miss Laura Bell during those happy summer evenings of Arthur Pendennis's convalescence—the history of which has been also told to us by Mr Thackeray? It is pleasant also to me to know that for two whole months in the year these Temple Gardens still ring with the happy cries of children, for, in accordance with an old custom, they are thrown open from six to eight every evening from the twelfth of June to the twelfth of August to all the 'gutter children' of London, who pour into them from the filthy alleys of Clare Market, the Strand, Fleet Street, and even Southwark and Lambeth. During last summer, the Temple Gardens were visited by two hundred thousand of these children, and—to their credit be it said—they did no damage to shrub or flower. So thickly do the children crowd into the gardens, that upon a fine summer night I have seen the grass absolutely black with them.

I had to remark just now that no one who lives in the Temple ever walks in the gardens, and I am afraid that—to a limited extent—the same thing must be said as to the attendance of resident Templars at the Temple church. When country-cousins come up to town, and call upon Mr Briefless, in all probability that learned gentleman will escort them on Sunday to the grand old Temple church, with its wonderful 'round,' its tapering columns of Purbeck marble, its roof all ablaze with devices of the arms of the two societies of the Temple, and last, not least, its splendid organ and famous choir. Possibly also, upon such occasions, Mr Briefless may intimate, in sufficiently general terms, that 'he attends the Temple church;' but I am afraid that, excepting on rare occasions, the residents in the Temple do not affect the Temple church, and that the proverb, 'The nearer the church the farther from God,' is painfully true in their case. Should my reader ever feel the sermon dull at the Temple church, I may suggest to him a subject of thought. It is said that the benchers of the Temple spent seventy thousand pounds, about twenty-five years ago, in restoring the church. Query, how on earth came they to spend so much money? and where are the results thereof?

How many men do actually reside in the Temple, I have never been able satisfactorily to ascertain. Probably their number is nearly three hundred. The majority of them are young men lately called to the bar, and who reside in a state of briefless-ness in chambers upon the third and fourth floors. Most of these men live alone; but occasionally two friends are to be found who chum together. Upon each man what is termed in the Temple a 'laundress,' but who would be called at the universities a 'bed-maker,' attends. Most of these women 'do' for two or three men, and as their wages run from five shillings to seven shillings a week, they make, considering the lightness of their duties, a very good income. The whole work of these women can usually be performed by them in a very few minutes daily, for it only consists in coming to the chambers in the morning, kindling a fire, laying breakfast, and making a bed. In the

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evening, usually, the laundress again comes in, lays tea, kindles a fire, and departs. This is their whole daily duty. I know of one laundress, who, in addition to attending to her own house and family, acts as laundress to five barristers in the Temple, and thereby earns for herself the yearly income of a curate. It has been the fashion in several popular novels to represent the Temple laundresses as being in a state of perpetual drunkenness, as continually helping themselves to their masters' viands, and, in short, victimising them in every possible way. I must say, in justice to the Temple laundresses, that, although no doubt some of them do imbibe occasionally a little too freely, whilst others of their number unquestionably entertain ideas upon the subject of *meum* and *tuum* which are hopelessly at war with those of their masters, still they are, generally speaking, an industrious and honest body of women.

On the whole, I am disposed to think that the chief drawback to life in chambers in the Temple is the great 'dinner question.' During term time, the members of the Upper Temple can get an excellent dinner in the hall of that society at a most moderate price; and why they should not be permitted to enjoy the same privilege out of term time would require no less a person than a bencher satisfactorily to explain! If the members of the Upper Temple happen to be also members of a good club, of course they can dine there comfortably enough when the hall of their own society is closed to them. The great majority of the residents in the Temple are, however, compelled nightly to sally forth to dine at the *Cock* (where, by-the-bye, I have often looked in vain for that famous waiter whom Tennyson has immortalised), or the *Mitre*, or the *Cheshire Cheese*, or the *Rainbow*, or at some other of those ancient taverns with which Fleet Street has abounded from time immemorial. Right opposite to the Temple gateway, too, is the famous *Prossers*, where at two o'clock on any day the junior bar of England may be observed engaged in the delightful occupation of lunching. Upon the whole, notwithstanding the drawbacks of the dinner question, and some other disagreeables, I am disposed to think that living in chambers in the Temple is, by a bachelor, to be in every way preferred to living in lodgings. Bad as a Temple laundress may be, she is in every respect to be preferred—so far as my own experience has gone—to a lodging-house 'slavey.' Unquestionably, as Mr Thackeray observes, 'those venerable Inns which have the Lamb and Flag and the Winged Horse for their ensigns, *have* attractions for persons who inhabit them, and a share of rough comforts and freedom which men always remember with pleasure.' As I transcribed the above passage from *Pendennis*, the casual mention therein of the Lamb and Flag and the Winged Horse, which are the arms of the two societies of the Temple, recalled to my mind the witty lines which some one, unknown to fame, composed upon those emblems:

As by the Templars' haunts you go,
The Horse and Lamb displayed
In emblematic figures shew
The merits of their trade!

That clients may infer from thence
How just is their profession—
The lamb sets forth their innocence,
The horse their expedition!

'O happy Britain, happy isle!'
Let foreign nations say,
'Where you get justice without guile,
And law without delay!'

Some one—also, I regret to say, unknown to fame—upon reading these lines, at once 'capped' them by the following *jeu d'esprit*:

Deluded men their holds forego,
Nor trust such cunning elves!
These artful emblems tend to shew
Their clients—not themselves!

'Tis all a trick—these all are shams,
By which they mean to cheat you!
But have a care, for you're the lambs,
And they—the wolves that eat you!

Nor let the thought of no delay,
To these their courts misguide you!
For you're the showy horse, and they—
The jockeys that will ride you!

No article which professes to treat upon *Life in the Temple* could possibly be deemed complete unless a few words in it were devoted to the numerous race of barristers' clerks who are to be found within the precincts of the Temple. Of no class of men, assuredly, is the saying more true that 'there are clerks and clerks.' Barristers' clerks are to be found who are grave and portly men, fathers of families, and heads of society in districts like Islington and Walworth. These are men who render valuable and well-remunerated services to eminent Q.C.s, and who, if their masters should happen to be elevated to the judicial bench, drop forthwith into the snug position of a 'judge's clerk,' with a salary of L.600 a year. There are also barristers' clerks to be found who, though termed clerks, are really errand-boys. These are lads of from twelve to fourteen years of age, who add to the impudence of boyhood the freedom of manhood, and who attach themselves ordinarily to the fortunes of some junior barrister who lives in chambers upon the third or fourth floor. These lads may be seen in the Temple at all hours of the day, lounging (in the absence of their masters) so very far out of top-story windows, as to suggest horrible thoughts of the probability of their coming to grief upon the pavement below. They pass their unoccupied time in reading blood-and-thunder novels of the worst class, and in holding mortal conflicts with other boys of their own age, who are employed in similar capacities in the same house. These are the young gentlemen who, if you tell them to remain strictly in chambers during your unavoidable absence, whilst you are calling upon a friend, straightway, the moment your back is turned, affix a notice upon your outer door: 'Mr Brown at Westminster; will return at five; clerk gone out, but will return at 1.45 precisely;' and forthwith depart upon a round of visits to *their* friends. Some excuse undoubtedly must be made for these lads. Shut up all day in a back-room, with nothing to do except to open the door to their master's callers, or to clean his boots, or to run out into Fleet Street to buy him some tobacco or an evening paper, their life is so dull and monotonous, that I have often wondered how they contrive to bear up under it. Did not most of them enjoy, to the full, that enviable power of 'turning to mirth all things of earth as only boyhood can,' I am disposed to think that Bethlehem or St Luke's would claim them as inmates.

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The manner in which the evening hours are spent by the residents in the Temple is of course very various. Some men read hard, some men write hard, some men smoke hard; others speak nearly every night at some of those numerous debating societies which abound in the neighbourhood of Fleet Street; whilst another class sit down to a quiet rubber at whist in their own rooms with two or three friends, who share their liking for that game. Some quiet men, again, spend their evenings in having an enjoyable chat over a pipe and glass of grog with another man of their own tastes. Four times a year, the serene calm which generally broods over the Temple in the evening hours, is broken by the noisy 'call parties' which, upon the occasion of his call to the bar each man gives to his friends. At these gatherings, a good deal of wine is drunk, a number of very bad speeches are made, and usually some good songs are sung. Only last evening, 'night was made hideous' to me by the boisterous shouting which came from a call-party which was being held on the other side of Flag Court.

There goes the horn which, in accordance with a custom—doubtless originating in an age when clocks and watches were not—is still blown by an official of the Temple, in each court of the Inn, half-an-hour before dinner-time, as a warning to the members of the society to prepare for that repast. I must lay down my pen, or else I shall be too late for that event, which is to me not the least important one in each day's Life in the Temple.

A COUNTY FAMILY.

CHAPTER XXXIX.—THE RIDE FOR LIFE.

It was not without reason that William had warned Stanhope that his fierce mirth would rouse the cottage, for it woke the sick man above stairs, whose eyes asked of Ellen, his night-watcher, what the noise might mean, then once more wearily closed. Ellen herself, always alert when it was her turn for duty, was rendered more wakeful by it; she knew that it was not her uncle's laugh, and yet how unlike it was to Stanhope's! She had heard the two in serious talk, and then the opening door and their embarkation. Why they should have chosen such an hour for a river-trip was a mystery which excited her. They went up stream—was it possible to examine for themselves the state of the embankment at its head, about which dear John seemed so solicitous? It was much more likely to be a mere drunken frolic of her uncle's; but Ellen preferred the less obvious solution, because it had reference to her lover. She had looked to see him recross the bridge that day, but he had not done so, having probably returned to Mosedale by way of Redmoor. How beautiful the stream and garden looked! Now grandfather had dropped asleep again, and those men were gone, and all the house was still, why should she not go out into the moonlight? She was dressed, of course, and had only to put on her bonnet and shawl—she would be back in a few minutes; her head ached, and the cool air would do her good.

She leaned over the old man, to listen to his breathing, and to smooth his pillow ere she went. The moonbeams seemed to make his white beard whiter, and his pale face still more pallid. Poor grandfather! how long was this to last? Her thoughts were entirely of him and for him. It never crossed her mind, How long is he to linger on, a barrier between John and me?

Then she stepped down-stairs, without a sound, through the little dining-room—still reeking of spirits and tobacco, notwithstanding its open window—and so out. The cottage stood between her and the quarter from whence the wind was blowing, so that she was quite in shelter; but she noticed a ghostly shiver in the willow, and that the rushes on the island below were all blowing one way. Presently, upon *her* ear too fell the weird sound which had struck on Stanhope's only a minute or so before; but it did not move her as it did him. Another and more attractive sound mixed with it, the galloping of horse's feet. It must, thought she, be John coming back at last. Of the two ways home, he would surely take the one that led by her door. And yet, if it was he, what could have kept him up yonder all the livelong day?—What a hurry he was in, now that he did come. He must be riding at full gallop—as fast, so it seemed, as the horse could lay legs to ground. How foolish of him to run the risk of a fall by using such headlong speed in that uncertain moonlight! She was not going to speak to him, of course, for that was forbidden, but she would just go to the road-side, and shew herself, so that he might not gallop past in his mad haste, and miss her altogether. He would, of course, imagine that at such an hour—for it was just midnight—she would be fast asleep, and perhaps not even cast his eyes towards the house—although, in truth, he could scarcely have avoided that.

A few steps brought her to the little gate that opened from the garden (there was no room for carriage-sweep) immediately upon the road. There she stood and listened. Besides the horse, there now seemed to be some heavy wagon rumbling along the way, and yet it was a strange time, surely, for carts to be coming from the mill. But all other thoughts or fancies vanish as a horseman comes round yonder bend, whom she knows well; the wind—and it is no wonder, considering the pace at which he cleaves the air—has taken his hat; yet he has not stopped for that, but rides on at the same mad speed bareheaded. There is peril behind him for certain; and hark! how that rumbling of the wagon increases, just as though, urged by four fleet horses, it was flying after him, and he knew there was no room on the narrow way for him and it. What with the bright sheen of the moonbeams and the silence of the midnight, unbroken save by that weird sound, the whole scene seems to Ellen unreal and eerie. The translation of some German ballad which Lucy has been reading to her, of late, respecting a spectre horseman who comes to claim his false bride, and carries her off from her kith and kin to his home the grave, flashes upon her brain as Denton gallops up. She notices how pale he looks, instead of ruddy, as might have been expected after such a ride, and how his horse is bathed in foam. He draws his rein and holds his arms out, as if to embrace her, and with a glad cry she rushes into them. 'Mount, mount!' cries he; 'up, up! for your life.' And by sheer force—for, in the extremity of her surprise, she neither aids him nor resists—he has swung her up before him, and again the horse is at full speed.

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'John, John, are you mad?' exclaims she, beginning to struggle.

'The flood, the flood!' was his reply. 'The reservoir has burst! Look yonder!'

'But grandfather, poor grandfather!' She would have struggled down, if he had not held her with a grasp of iron, even then—even then, as they flew across the bridge to gain the hill beyond, and when all the horror of the scene burst on them both for the first time. The Thing from which Denton had fled with such fiery speed—the thing with which he had raced so far—the goal herself (for whichever reached her first must needs indeed possess her), was upon them at last. The watery wall, just breast high with the bridge, dashed on to it at the same moment as they, and drenched them through and through; it was lower than it had been when it rushed past Stanhope, because the bed of the river was less narrow, otherwise both horse and riders would have been swept over the low parapet at the first shock; but as it was, they galloped through the flood. Once on the hill-side, they were safe; and Denton stopped his panting steed and gazed behind him with unspeakable awe. The spectacle was indeed sublime as well as terrible. The bridge over which they had just passed was *gone:* a seething, weltering mass of waters occupied its place, with only the angry waves—made fierce by the vain resistance of battlement, and plank, and pier—to mark the place where it had been. The cottage—because on the side of the main channel—still stood, but through every door and window on the ground floor poured the mad river; and the whole house was visibly trembling to its fall. What a scene must the mirrors in that upper chamber have presented to poor helpless Anthony, awakened by that inexplicable thunder!

'Save him, save poor grandfather!' gasped Ellen, thinking of this, and scarce knowing what she said.

'I have saved *you*, dearest, God be thanked!' said Denton gravely. 'To do more is not in human power.'

Even while he spoke, the pretty cottage, which but a few minutes ago had looked like a fairy bower, nestled in that quiet stream-washed nook, collapsed like a house of cards, 'caved in' on all sides, and sank; and there was nothing to be seen but the wild waste of waters!

There was no sign of human entreaty or despair—the whole household, as well as its helpless master, had apparently been caught in their beds, and so, only half-conscious, perhaps, of their terrible doom, were drowned.

Ellen closed her eyes, while her white lips moved in prayer; and when she looked forth again, the river was hidden from sight—Denton was pushing on for Mosedale.

'Where are you taking me? Let me stay here!' exclaimed she wildly—'let me stay by poor grandfather!'

'His body will be at Mosedale before us,' answered Denton sadly. 'Your home is no longer here, since it does not exist. I am taking you to the Cedars;' which was the name of Mr Waller's residence.

'Yes, take me to grandmother; she is there, and safe, thank Heaven! But surely this is not the way?'

'It is not the shortest way, dearest, because that is impassable: the road by the river must be ten feet under water by this.'

'Alas for the poor cottagers on the marsh,' sighed Ellen.

'They will have neither fever nor ague more,' was the solemn reply.

'And the family at Island Grove,' continued Ellen, as her mind rapidly travelled over the space through which the flood, at scarcely a less speed, was hurrying.

'Death is busy to-night both with rich and poor; and their blood is on the heads of them who would not stay him whilst they could,' returned Denton sternly.

'O John, you were right, then, after all. Lucy told me that her father'——

'Hush, dearest. Do not mention to me that man's name to-night, for I cannot bear it.'

Presently, they reached a suburb of the town, whither the flood itself had already brought its own evil tidings. Notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, there were lights in all the houses, most of the inhabitants of which, however, had gone down to the river-side, to behold the scene of devastation. Others, half dressed, were running thither from all directions; and so excited were they, that they did not even notice the double burden borne by Denton's horse. At the gate of the Cedars, over which the once pleasant garden could be seen a tangled mass of slime and ruin, Ellen dismounted; but Denton rode on, refusing to set foot within that house.

CHAPTER XL.—AFTER THE FLOOD.

There was no rest for any in Mosedale for the remainder of that night. The passion of the raging flood had indeed much abated by the time it reached the town; and the mischief it wrought was comparatively small, by reason of the greater width of the stream; yet its sudden rush through the unsuspecting streets had not been without its human victims, and had smitten the place with universal terror. Almost the whole population were out upon the river-bank within half an hour of the catastrophe; and while they regretted their own losses, there went forth an awful whisper of how ill it must have fared with them who lived 'up Curlew.' Two women and four children had been drowned in their beds, within a stone's throw of the very market-place, and it was almost unintelligible to those who looked upon the row of cottages where this had occurred, and then at the narrow thread of river which wound beside it, how such a mischance could be. The stream had shrunk to its usual limits; and a broad muddy strip on either hand was all that remained of its late outbreak, except the ruin it had caused. Houses were gutted as completely as though that other element, which we commonly term 'destroying,' had been at work. Strong walls were swept away, and scarce one stone upon another left to mark their place; gardens were become swampy wildernesses; the town bridge had stood, but shewed great gaps, where stone and iron had alike yielded to the watery shock. It would take months to repair, and years to obliterate the traces of that night's ruin. And if all this had happened at Mosedale, miles away from the spot where the waters had first burst their prison-house, what must have taken place 'at the marsh' and the mill, the great water-wheel of which, it was rumoured the next day, was found at Bromfield,

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ten miles below Mosedale—one human body, it may be here said, was stranded, thirty miles from the spot where the flood first clutched it for a prey.

It was the season, although early in it, when Mosedale folk were wont on holidays to flock 'up Curlew,' by land or water, and feast and make merry among its woody steeps and winding gorges; but never did so great a company take that road before as on the day which followed the bursting of Redmoor Reservoir, albeit bent on a very different errand. There is no need here to describe what they saw, save so far as it has connection with this story—the bodies that lay stark and stiff by scores upon the muddy shore, or shewed a limb above the still turbid stream; the shattered relics of what had been human homes; the objects of domestic care and pride, which, soiled and shattered, strewed the torn-up road and barren swamp—so lately fertile fields—that fringed it: you may buy photographs—such pictures as the bold-faced sun alone can paint—of that wreck and ruin to this day.

Stanhope and Denton were in a skiff together, having a common object of which they were in search. The former, whose feelings had been hitherto, if not hostile, at least unfavourable towards the latter, was in that respect, as in others, wholly changed; unfeigned admiration for this young man, who had risked his life, and, indeed, only preserved it by a hair-breadth, to save another's, had taken possession of him. True, he would himself, in like circumstances, have hazarded as much, but the opportunity in his case could not possibly have occurred. He had no knowledge of any sort that would have served *him* to scent out any danger which was not patent to all the world. How much more useful, much more valuable, had Denton proved himself, than he could ever have been or be! Not only Ellen, but the tenant of his own mill, together with his wife and child, had escaped death through the unselfish foresight of the young engineer. After visiting the mill on the previous morning, Denton had gone up to Redmoor, and found the crack in the embankment which had already excited his apprehensions, manifestly increasing. He had remained at the reservoir all day, examining it yet again with the utmost minuteness; and having still further convinced himself of the menaced peril, had made up his mind to lay the case before the municipal authorities of Mosedale the next day, since the Board of Directors would not listen to him. At the same time, although he still remained on the moor with only a couple of workmen for his companions, he had not conceived the danger to be so alarmingly imminent as it really was, until late at night. Then the wind still rising, and bringing the mass of water to bear directly upon the bank, certain indications shewed themselves which, to his practised eye, convinced him that the catastrophe was at hand; and he had sped down the gorge, as we have seen, but with feelings not to be described, listening, as he urged his horse to utmost speed, for the sound behind him that should give notice that the water-fiend was loose, and roaring for its prey. He lost a minute or two waking the sleepy miller, whom he had not the heart, notwithstanding his own safety and that of one far dearer than himself was imperilled by the delay, to leave to drown. Scarcely had the warning left his lips, when the thunder of the torrent gave its terrible corroboration to his words. And yet he had not now a word to say of his own efforts, except what was incidentally extracted from him by Stanhope's eager questions.

The young engineer shewed himself much more solicitous for his reputation for professional sagacity than to be considered as a hero. With reference to Mr Waller, he said: 'I could not get that man to believe me, sir, simply because his giving credit to my words would have cost him a few pounds. Did he suppose I did not know my own business? No, sir. It was mere selfishness and saving, and those are the fruits of it;' and he pointed to where some men were even then taking into a larger boat close beside them a sad freight—the bodies of a mother and the babe whom she embraced even in her last sleep.

'Forgive me,' said Stanhope humbly, 'if I venture to differ from you, Mr Denton, who have hitherto shewn yourself so wise and in the right throughout this sad affair. But I know Waller well. He may have—nay, he has doubtless been both obstinate and foolish, but I am sure that a few pounds were not the cause of his opposition, even if they had anything to do with it at all. He has lost a much larger sum than such as you hint at by the destruction of his own property, as we have just seen. You are a very young man, and he is not one to credit young men with the wisdom you have shewn; he judges them by myself and those like me—fools enough, Heaven knows. Even Mr Flywheel seems to have scouted the idea of the reservoir being in danger from the first.'

'Yes, but he had no personal knowledge of the thing, which makes all the difference. Now, *I* had, and I pleaded with Mr Waller as I never pleaded before with man or woman. He is not one to underrate genuine earnestness, though he has so little of it himself. No, no, sir; his obstinacy was wilful; reparation he cannot make, but he will have to answer for this mischief to God and man.'

'To God he must needs answer,' said Stanhope gravely. 'But I pray you, Mr Denton, to take counsel of your own heart before you publicly brand him, as I fear your purpose is, with a mark compared with which that of Cain was as nothing, before you make him an object of execration to the widow and the fatherless throughout this valley for last night's work. It is not my way to talk like this. I daresay you have always thought me an unprincipled and vicious fellow, as indeed I have been—nay, for all that I have shewn, I am. You see in me even now, doubtless, a frivolous and idle nature brought for once face to face with the realities of life and death, and for the moment impressed by them; but before this ruin was wrought—before I heard your warning cry upon the river last night, Mr Denton, which saved a worthless life, I had, believe me, formed—— But there, that is no matter; let it suffice to say, that I hope you will some day have cause to think better of me, since your good opinion is one I fain would earn. It is difficult, I know—for my own conduct has made it so—to persuade you to credit me with an honest purpose, but indeed I have no other in thus appealing to you. I saw the man whom you would punish so harshly, but two hours ago; he is borne down to the very earth with sorrow and contrition. He accuses himself, as you would accuse him (and, as it seems to me, with the like injustice), of all that

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has occurred. The tremendous nature of the evil that has been reaped does not make him more guilty of having sown it. No doubt, he ought to have listened to you—the event has proved it—but he did not foresee the event. I give you my honour (not a very material guarantee, you may say perhaps, but still the best I have to offer) that he did not credit your scientific forebodings. Why should you doubt it, who found myself unquestionably a disbeliever in them? You were earnest, passionate, eloquent enough with me also, at the cottage yesterday morning, and yet you see, like the wicked of old, I did not credit you till, with overwhelming evidence indeed, the Flood came. Forgive me, Mr Denton, but are you quite certain that there is nothing of wounded *amour propre* that mingles with and embitters your just wrath?'

'There may be something in what you say,' answered Denton frankly. 'Heaven forbid that I should feel more angry with this man because he has underrated my intelligence and despised it; personally, at all events—though, I trust, in a matter of the public service—in my duty as a citizen—such a consideration would not weigh a feather's weight—I say, personally, it would be most disagreeable for me to act as Mr Waller's accuser, since even now under his roof'——

The young man hesitated—then stopped.

'Mr Denton,' said Stanhope, resting on his oar, and speaking with deep feeling, 'this is no time for false delicacy, although I honour you for your unwillingness to speak upon a subject which might give me pain. It is a scruple which I have not deserved. I have no claim to be coupled in your thoughts with the young lady of whom you were about to speak. Her heart has always been yours; although I own with shame that, after I knew that it was so, I strove to win her hand.'

'Let us say no more about that, Mr Stanhope, since you have at last taken the just view of the matter,' said the other quietly.

'Since I have lost my own self-respect, you would say, Mr Denton, and yet that was a small part of the penalty. I lost also—for though I can not justify myself, I wish to shew you that I have suffered—the respect of one in whose estimation I now feel it is misery indeed to have thus fallen.'

'I think I can help you there,' said Denton good-humouredly. 'It is not eight-and-forty hours ago that I had proof that, notwithstanding what you say, you are not altogether out of the pale of somebody's good graces. A woman does not defend a man in his absence with such vigour as somebody then defended you without a very sufficient cause. I ought to know, because it was I who attacked you—for, indeed, I have not spared you, Mr Stanhope, whenever you have formed the subject of my discourse.'

'I am sure that I deserved all that you could say,' returned the other. 'I only wish I could see how I deserved the defence of which you speak.'

'I don't say you did deserve it,' returned Denton slyly; 'indeed, I honestly confess that I don't think you did. But that should give you the better ground for hope. For when Truth fails to offer a justification, who is it, among the virtues at least, that can suggest one, save Love itself?'

'She told me with her own lips,' said Stanhope in a low voice, and like one who communes with himself—'it was on the terrace at Redcombe, and not a week ago—that I was mean and base, a hypocrite and a coward—that, so far from having any longer a claim to be considered a gentleman, I had not even common honesty; and when I strove to palliate my offence, she hinted that I was little better than a liar.'

'Which, under the circumstances,' observed Denton, in his soberest tone, 'was equivalent to a declaration of love. She told *me*—who had not asked for the information, and, to say truth, was far from desirous to hear it—that she had known you from your boyhood, and that a nobler nature, until idleness and its consequences had warped it, did not exist in any man. It is a subject with which I am incompetent to deal, and far less with the eloquence which the young lady used—but if it is any pleasure to you to hear it, Mr Stanhope, I may tell you that I also am now of Miss Waller's opinion.' And the engineer, who was pulling stroke, stretched his hand behind him, which Stanhope took and wrung in silence. From that moment dated a friendship between these two young men, which distance has never weakened, and time has cemented.

The skiff had now reached the place where the Fishery had stood, and where the further progress of those on land had been staid by the absence of Curlew Bridge, of which only a few jutting stones on either side were left. It was impossible to recognise the scene by any other means. The boats, where formerly Squire Richard's punt and skiff had commonly formed the whole flotilla, were clustered so thickly that you could scarcely see the river; while masses of people lined the once solitary bank, who, as though they had not already supped full enough of horrors, watched the operations of the boatmen on the other side with feverish excitement. It was here that the stream began to narrow, and indeed from Curlew Mill down to this point it ran through what was but a ravine—yesterday a scene of exquisite beauty, to-day one of ravage and desolation. For upwards of twenty feet in height, where a broad black mark was to be seen, such as the tide leaves at high water, the banks were denuded of every scrap of vegetation; while the road on the left hand, along which Denton had spurred a few hours ago, no longer existed, but was a mere shelving mass of mud and rubbish. But the river-bed itself, and what had once been the rose-garden, afforded the strangest spectacle. In the former stood vast rocks, torn from the gorge just below Redmoor, and set up here, as if in perpetual token—and indeed they long remained so—of the water's wrath; while in the latter the action of the flood, which some obstruction had maddened into a whirlpool, had dug vast holes many feet in depth, and more or less circular; just as in other streams with stony beds there are found similar excavations, which, however, it takes hundreds of years to form. It was in these holes the boatmen were looking, and when they chanced to find what they sought, a hoarse murmur from the spectators evinced that interest which horror alone can evoke, and even of horrors only one—the visible presence of Death. The flood, in fact, after slaying its victims, had, as though ashamed of its murderous work, in this place, in a manner buried them. In other parts, where its course had been more free, it had hurried rocks and trees indiscriminately with its human prey, so that the latter were in many cases so crushed and mutilated that it was almost

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impossible to recognise them as men at all, far less to identify their remains; but none of the inhabitants of the cottage had been thus swept away; their bodies were all found within a few feet of the spot where death had seized them; and most of them without signs of violence. That of Anthony Blackburn, in particular, was quite uninjured both in limb and feature, and over that still and solemn face more than one genuine mourner dropped a tear that night in a chamber at the Cedars, where he lay, as it almost seemed, 'so grand he looked when he was dead,' in State—his strange eventful life, with all its wear, and fret, thus strangely ended.

PHOTOGRAPHIC WONDERS.

Surely light never will have revealed all its marvels! Every year, if not every day, it is telling us something which we had not known before, something calculated to excite our surprise and admiration.

Plates can now be engraved, and *are* engraved, for printing without any draughtsman and without any engraver. The thing has been done in more ways than one in past years, by a combination of photography with electrotyping—photography to produce the drawing, electrotype to produce the engraving; but now a method has been devised without any electric or galvanic agency whatever. Chemistry is the engraver, and chemistry in the very simple form of solution or dissolving. The process is not for producing a *sunk* engraving, such as the engraved lines of a steel plate, but a *raised* or *relief* engraving, such as a wood-cut block. Light, dissolution, and pressure: let us see how they respectively do their work.

The photographic picture is taken upon sensitised glass, just as in the ordinary *carte-de-visite*, producing a negative from which any number of positives may be taken. The picture may be a portrait, a landscape, a group of sculpture, an architectural façade, or what not—anything, provided it assumes the form of a glass negative. The positives obtained from this are not upon sensitised paper, but upon a thin film of gelatine, combined with bichromate of ammonia. When light has been allowed to pass for a sufficient length of time through the negative to the positive, it shews its action in a peculiar way on the film: wherever the light is the strongest (as in the high lights of the picture), the film is rendered insoluble; wherever it is the weakest (as in the shadows), the film remains easily soluble; wherever it is intermediate (as in the half-tints), the gelatine becomes partially soluble. It is the bichromate of ammonia that renders the gelatine susceptible to these peculiar varieties of effect. We may add that the electric light now furnishes a wonderful aid in taking the positives, rendering the photographer independent of times and seasons, day and night, bright days and dull days.

We have, then, a positive picture, taken upon a film of gelatine containing bichromate of ammonia. This film being next placed in warm water, the substance dissolves away in the unequal degree just intimated; it becomes thinner in the parts least acted on by the light; the parts most acted on are scarcely dissolved at all; while the medium degrees of action produce medium degrees of dissolving or thinning. What is the total result? The film has become a sort of *bas-relief;* there is a picture of raised parts and depressed parts, owing to variations in the thickness of the film; and these variations are so beautifully graduated as to produce all the tints and half-tints from high lights to deep shadows.

The pressure, which next ensues, is not the least curious part of the operation. It seems scarcely conceivable that a thin film of gelatine will act as a mould to impress its inequalities upon a plate of metal; yet such it certainly does. A beautifully smooth metal sheet is prepared, consisting of lead alloyed with a little antimony; the alloy is nearly (but not quite) the same as stereotype metal; it has a nicely determined degree of hardness (or softness, whichever we like to call it), settled after a number of experimental trials. The gelatine film is placed upon the lead plate, and the two between two steel plates; the group is placed in a hydraulic press, where an intense pressure is brought to bear upon it. This pressure amounts to as much as forty tons, even for a small picture, and rises to two hundred tons (nearly half a million pounds) when the dimensions are large. We might suppose that this overwhelming force would crush the delicate film into undistinguishable fragments. Nothing of the kind. The protuberances or raised parts press themselves bodily into the surface of the lead, producing a sunken or *intaglio* effect in all the places where the film presents a raised or *cameo* effect, and *vice versâ*. It is wonderful to see how perfect is this action upon the plate, the picture appearing almost as if the graver had produced it. And it is scarcely less wonderful that the thin film of gelatine will bear twenty or thirty of these pressures, transferring its picture to twenty or thirty plates, before being worn out.

Lastly, comes the printing. If the lead plate were inked in the ordinary way with inking-rollers, and passed through an ordinary printing-press, the print obtained would consist simply of masses of black and white, without any gradations or half-tints whatever: this would result naturally from the peculiar mode in which the plate is prepared. An ink or colour, however, is got ready, consisting of water and gelatine mixed with some kind of pigment or paint. This ink, instead of being lightly applied by means of a roller, is poured as a liquid all over the plate; a sheet of paper is placed upon it; a light pressure is applied, sufficient to squeeze out all the superfluous ink; and the paper is allowed thus to remain until the gelatine in the ink has 'set,' or slightly solidified. The print, when removed, is dipped in a fixing-bath, which renders the ink permanent.

Such is Mr Woodbury's photo-relief process. We have seen it all in operation, and have seen the resulting prints; and certainly the prints present a remarkable resemblance to photographs in their beautiful gradations of tone; the pictures can be produced in any shade of any colour, and all the copies of the same film correspond in tone. The commercial capabilities of the system we do not touch upon; they involve considerations to which only printers and publishers can do justice.

Another curiosity in recent photographic art is an accident, not a design: a peculiarity in the camera-lens, not a purposed mode of producing negatives and positives. A photographer, taking a photograph with a particular lens, detected in it not only the usual portrait of the sitter, but at

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some little distance a copy, phantom, ghost, or double of it—producing what was certainly a startling effect, and one not likely to be very pleasant to the sitter, especially if of a superstitious turn of mind. Fortunately, science came in, and left no room for the creations of marvel-mongers. At a meeting of the Photographical Society, it was shewn that these phantoms (if we may so call them) present two different varieties, and spring from two different causes: (1.) A photographic image is sometimes so deeply impressed in the glass of the negative by the action of light, that the subsequent cleaning of the glass plate, even with strong acids, will not completely remove the picture. When such a plate is used for receiving another picture, the original image faintly makes its reappearance. In this case the phantom is not the 'double' or 'fetch' of the sitter in the second picture; it is a very faint photograph of one person on the same plate which contains a fully developed photograph of some other person; and the juxtaposition may, perchance or designedly, produce very startling Pepper-like ghost effects. (2.) When a lens has inequalities in its substance, due to an imperfect process of annealing, or when it is subjected to unequal pressure in different parts, it acquires the property called double refraction—two images of the same object being produced by it at the same instant. This explains the production of the double or fetch phantom. An English photographer found out this matter accidentally. When he took a *carte-de-visite* portrait with a particular lens, there could be seen not only the portrait of the sitter in the usual way, but at some little distance another and a fainter image—a second portrait of the same person.

In both these cases, the Photographic Society set the matter right by shewing that, in the first instance, the negative glass retained a faint image of a former picture; and that, in the second instance, the lens glass was subject to the influence of double refraction. Thus, two ghosts have been 'laid,' and rational explanations given of seeming mysteries. It was not always so. The reader will probably recollect a little incident some half-dozen years ago, in which a photographic curiosity, instead of being honestly explained on scientific data, was made instrumental to a trading dodge. An announcement appeared in some of the American journals to the effect that a photographer took his own portrait, no one else being present in the room; that besides his own form, there appeared on the picture the image of a young girl twelve or thirteen years old; and that this image was the portrait of a cousin of his, who had been dead several years. The young lady appeared to be sitting in the same chair as the photographer himself, as a sort of 'dissolving view.' The outline of the upper part of her body was well defined, though dim and shadowy; the chair was distinctly seen through the body and arms, as also was the table, upon which one arm rested; below the waist (which was apparently attired in a dress with low neck and short sleeves), the image faded away in a dim mist, which simply clouded the lower part of the picture. Now, it has been clearly ascertained that all this would really occur under certain conditions. If the glass negative had been already used for a portrait of the young lady, and if it had been insufficiently cleaned before the second application in the camera, precisely such a double picture might result; the fully developed portrait of the photographer being superposed, as it were, on a faint portrait of the young girl. All this is curious and instructive; but it led at the time to a traffic in 'spirit photographs.' Wonderful pictures appeared in great variety in the United States, each presenting a faint portrait in addition to one more fully developed; and there was usually some one or other ready to declare that the phantom was a portrait of a deceased relative of the sitter. The various journals devoted to spiritual literature were in great excitement on the subject. Certain tricky dealers got up packets for the London market, consisting of three of these spiritual couplets; the purchaser was not allowed to see them until he had paid three-and-sixpence for the packet; and when he *did* see them, the fraud was at once detected by any experienced photographer, as an example of a negative plate used twice over. One photographer, we are told, had a negative glass which would persist in shewing a faint portrait of the Prince Consort, let him rub and wash as much as he might. Another found that the portrait of a lady contained a faint impression or ghost of the print on a piece of newspaper in which the glass negative had been wrapped. We may add that the Stereoscopic Company produce very striking examples of phantom or ghost photographs; but this is quite fair; the pictures are sold for what they really are, optical curiosities, and not as (so-called) spirit manifestations.

LIFE AND DEATH AT ST BREACA'S.

IN EIGHT CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.

The family of Mr Arthur Monsey were by no means interesting, but it is necessary to say somewhat about them. He was no uncommon specimen of his class; positively cold-hearted and self-indulgent; negatively unprincipled. Short, fat, and plain, his handsome hands and courteous bearing alone hinted at his good birth. He liked drink and play. He had been dismissed civilly by a clergyman who took private pupils, expelled from a public school, advised by his colonel to sell his commission. After these experiences, and when he was about twenty-five, he suggested to his parents that it might be a good plan to send him to travel. They acquiesced readily, and for five or six years they heard from him only when he wanted money. He was amusing himself in his own way in the pleasantest capitals of Europe. Then, at Vienna, without exactly intending it, he proposed to a young lady, half English, half Austrian, who had been sufficiently conspicuous for levity to be very unacceptable to an old-fashioned, well-regulated, well-descended British family; and he applied for an income that would enable him to marry. 'The bare fact of her being willing to marry him is quite enough to stamp her,' said his father. And his mother could only suggest that he could not expect anything better; that no prudent father would give a daughter to him; that he might do even worse; that there was just a chance of his settling if he had children. So they agreed to give him one thousand pounds a year; and Miss Lydia Courtenay became Mrs Arthur Monsey.

When Sir Geoffrey received the letter which has been mentioned, he had been, in consequence of his father's death, several years the head of the

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family; and Arthur had three children—a boy of ten, and two girls younger. The boy, as future baronet, interested him: he was proud, and perhaps even fond of him. For the girls he cared little, and was simply not unkind to them. Their mother had fallen into ill health, lost her good looks and zest for flirting. She loved her children better, and thought and did more for them than might have been expected of a woman who had grown up without any moral or religious training. For her personal comforts she depended on a certain Suzanne, who had been her nurse, and was her maid; and, provided she would not leave her, she had no objection to live in England. She only stipulated that the climate should be as mild as possible; and as far as she could, she influenced her husband to accept Sir Geoffrey's terms. And so he did, protesting the while that he was treated infamously, but sacrificed himself to his children. The boy was to go to Eton; the girls were to be dealt with as their mother chose; and they were to live rent-free in the old Gray House at St Breaca's. When Sir Geoffrey had made a good road thither, and altered it into a comfortable dwelling, he decided that it would be a pity to have it occupied only a few weeks in the year.

The Arthur Monseys being settled in it, two summers after that visit of Sir Geoffrey's which made him acquainted with Dan Quick's house, it acquired again a questionable character in public opinion. The dark foreign servants, who spoke, two of them, no English; the gentleman with occasional doubtful visitors, and actual intemperate habits, who was said to be up half the night, and in bed three parts of the day, who lounged about smoking, followed by three or four useless dogs: and the fact that none of the household went 'to church or meeting,' made the St Breacans very uncomfortable.

'Only that Sir Geoffrey told me hisself as the gent as was coming was his brother, I never would ha' believed it—never,' said Mrs Rowe of *The George*. 'Chalk and cheese b'ant more unlike one another; and I ha'n't no patience with parson for going out there as he do. He don't booze, I knows—the Lord forbid I should say so!—but them as does, a'n't fit company for a minister.'

Such talk as this reached Mrs Secker, though she was no gossip; and seizing what seemed to her a favourable time, she repeated it to her husband. At first, he said that St Breaca's detested and calumniated Mr Monsey simply because he was a gentleman. Mrs Secker thought not, for Sir Geoffrey was exceedingly popular; so was Mr Treheren, the nearest resident squire.

'Then,' replied he, 'they hate him because they see that he and Mrs Monsey are superior to their tea and twaddle; because they are parts of an elevated social system into which they never were, and never can be admitted. Mr and Mrs Jenkins, and Mr and Mrs Trezize, would tell a different story if they were asked out there to eat mackerel-pie, and drink gin and water.—Ha, ha!' he ejaculated with tone, look, and gesture which might have made the reputation of a tragedian denouncing a conspiracy, 'I see it all' (he was great in attributing small motives): 'the low, mean, dirty spite! They cannot brook that *I* should be welcome to Mr and Mrs Monsey! They have always felt that there was something in me which they could not drag down to their own level; and it was: "Oh, Mr Secker is so very eccentric." But gentlemen come among them, men of birth and social standing, and these men choose the eccentric Mr Secker for their frequent guest—shew pointedly that he is one of themselves; and then the venom of envy overflows, and Mr and Mrs Monsey are—immoral, forsooth!' He walked rapidly about the room, his face working. A clever woman, if even inexperienced in Mr Secker, would have let the subject drop; but Mrs Secker was not clever, and she never learned how to manage her husband. She was very resolute when she thought principle concerned, and, though trembling a little, she remarked: 'A clergyman is different from every one else.'

'Certainly; in St Breaca's he is a finished gentleman and man of the world.'

'I mean'—she felt frightened, but would go on—'we are told to "avoid all appearance of evil;" and if people think that you encourage what is sinful'——

He stopped, and confronted her, glaring. She thought he was going to strike her; so did the children, and they shrieked. He seized the only arm-chair, lifted it high, dashed it furiously on the uncarpeted floor, so that it was shattered; hissed at her with frightful distinctness: 'Confound your low, vulgar, cursed cant!' snatched his hat, and left the house.

'O mamma,' said a little intelligent, nervous-looking girl, twelve years old, 'why did you speak to him? It is never any use. I am always so sorry when you do.'

'Hold your tongue, Sophia,' returned the poor, pale, tearful mother, petulantly; 'I am a better judge of what I ought to do than you are.'

'But it will be dreadful when he comes in again; and perhaps he will make me go for a walk; and he will say horrid things of every one—even of you; and he will make me cry, and then scold me for crying, and tell me not to make an exhibition of myself—as if I could help it—and terrify me. I have often thought he would kill me; and suppose he should—and be hanged! I wonder we have not, all of us, fits. And perhaps, in the night, I shall hear him roaring at you, and you answering, crying; and I shall think he is murdering poor baby or you; and I shall be in the dark, and it will be horrible—*horrible*. I wish we could all run away; and I cannot help it—I am so ashamed too. I know the people next door must hear him, and opposite too; they look very oddly at him, often. And what must Patty say? When he has made me cry dreadfully out of doors, if we have met any one, he has led me up to them—he did it to a man the other day—and said: "There, pray, gratify your curiosity. This is my daughter. Would you like to ask any questions?" The man looked foolish, and walked off, but I 'm sure he thought papa was mad. I wonder if he is—*is he?*'

She asked it vehemently, and as if she believed that her mother could and ought to answer her.

'Hush, hush! my darling,' she replied; 'it is not right to talk of a parent in that way. Your poor papa is a very clever man, and very superior to every one here, and he was never meant to be poor. He is not fit for anything but to lie on a sofa, in a silk dressing-gown, and read, and have letters brought him on a silver waiter. I suppose he cannot help his temper—at all events, we ought

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to think so; and you know, after all, that he is fond of us, and sorry when he has been angry. I am sure I don't know how I am to get that chair mended, and it is the only one he likes to sit on. Bryant would not mend it for less than half-a-crown, and I cannot spare the money. You had better put the pieces away somewhere, or he will say something about them. And mind, dear, there's One above who knows all, and does not let anything happen but for our good.—Now, play with baby while I sew on these buttons.'

This scene was a fair sample of the moral training given to Mr Secker's children. His wife did not again attempt remonstrance; and he dined occasionally—often on Sundays—with the Monseys, and spent frequent hours, early in the day, with Mrs Monsey, attracted chiefly by her good piano. He was an ardent lover of music, and played exquisitely by ear. It is due to him to say that he had never seen Mr Monsey intoxicated; that gentleman preferred to stand well in his opinion, and for the sake of his really pleasant companionship, deferred his deeper potations, willingly, till Mr Secker had started on his early walk home.

During their first two years at the Gray House, the little girls, Lotty and Teresa Monsey, had no manner of instruction, and were confided implicitly to Suzanne. They spoke French, German, and English equally fluently and ill; played a little by ear, danced by instinct, and were utterly unlike what young English ladies of their age are prescribed to be. Partly from indolence, and partly because she did not like to check them, Mrs Monsey did not trouble herself to seek a governess. At last, when Lotty was eleven years old, Suzanne suggested that the young ladies were old enough for a school-room, and that it would be easy to find an accomplished young Frenchwoman. She had heard, she said, from her sister, who was confidential servant to a certain Madame Montansier, of a Mademoiselle Jeanne Royer, an orphan, just about to leave the Ursuline Convent at Rheims, and highly qualified to impart education. It has been implied that Mrs Monsey's training had been very defective; this may explain, in some measure, the irregularity of her allowing her maid to find and introduce an instructress for her children.

Mademoiselle Royer arrived—a little childish-looking creature of eighteen, with large, dark, coquettish eyes, abundance of brown hair, a neat figure, small hands and feet. Not pretty; no, certainly not. Her mouth was too large, and her lips were not full enough; her white teeth were uneven, and her nose was insignificant; but she was sufficiently attractive to arrest attention, and had force of character to detain it at will, to have secrets, and to keep them.

'Madame conceives that she is young and inexperienced,' said Suzanne.

'Perhaps,' said Mrs Monsey; and her husband shrugged his shoulders.

The children flew to her, and pulled her long hair down, and kissed her over and over, and told her they were very glad she was not old, that they did not mean to learn lessons, and she should walk with them and play with them from morning till night.

Mademoiselle's manner was irreproachable—deferential, slightly plaintive, to her superiors; and to her pupils-elect, caressing. That her private views of her position were unsatisfactory, must be inferred from her conduct when she was left in her bedroom on the night of her arrival. She threw herself on the bed, cried angrily till she was too weary to unpack, and at length fell asleep with her clothes on. She woke early, alarmed to find that she had burned out the candle, and from fear of being discovered dressed. She opened her boxes hurriedly, filled her drawers, arranged the dressing-table, undressed, and got into bed in time to tell Suzanne—who had undertaken to call her—that her head had ached from the fatigue of the long journey, and that, darkness being dismal in a strange house, she had presumed to keep her light in.

CHAPTER IV.

Mrs Secker had an annual vacation. It was disturbed more or less by her husband's temper, and the chronic struggle with poverty; but the joys of that vacation deepened the pretty bloom, of which years and wrongs had not robbed her cheeks, made her step brisker, and her voice cheerier. Once in twelve months, her handsome, good, loving, first-born, Augustine, came to spend six weeks at home. He had learned Greek, Latin, and arithmetic from a clever, hard-working schoolmaster at St Breaca's, till he was thirteen. Then the shrewd, hearty surgeon and apothecary at Loganstone, who came sometimes, seven miles thence, to hear Mr Secker preach, and chat with him afterwards, offered to take him and teach him his profession. 'Mind, I don't want any money,' he said. 'I 've feathered my nest, and my daughters are married comfortably, and the old woman and I are not extravagant. So, if you like to let the boy come, he's welcome; and I 'll see that he keeps out of harm's way, and learns his business.'

Mr Secker winced at the familiar, homely form of the generous proposal, and said stiffly: 'Indeed, my dear sir, you do me infinite honour, and I am proud that you think well of my son; but there is the walking the hospitals afterwards, and you know what my income is.'

'Surely; but one need not look too far ahead. There's no knowing what may happen—some one may leave you a fat legacy. "Give us *this day* our *daily* bread," you know, Mr Secker.'

'Ah! you have me there, doctor; but when I glance at the expense, I cannot feel justified. My dear mother paid Mr Bagot—he had a first-rate practice at Streatham—one hundred pounds a year for my board only, when she intended me for your profession, which, pardon me, I never could endure. I am not a little proud, though, that I was dresser to the great Cline.'

'Well, I 'm only a Cornish general practitioner, but that 's not a bad thing, let me tell you. I shall call and talk to Mrs Secker.'

'Do, my dear friend, do,' said Mr Secker, contending with irritation, which he had not nerve to express. Unless in a fury, he did not speak offensively, and his wife had said once confidentially to her sister that he was a thorough coward. He intended, however, to write such a note as should overwhelm Mr Hoskins with a sense of his inferiority—intellectual, genealogical, social. The folly happily exhausted itself in saying to Mrs Secker: 'I shall give the purse-proud, vulgar gallipot to understand that we are not dependent on his beneficence, and that I consider I do him

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honour when I confide my son, and such a son, to his care!'

Augustine went to live with Mr and Mrs Hoskins, and became really dear to them—and they pretended not to understand, or not to have received, occasional queer, quarrelsome notes from his father—by which proceeding they secured the youth's love and gratitude more than by a salary of forty pounds, to which, when he became seventeen years old, Mr Hoskins said that his really valuable services entitled him. 'I hope you will put by some of it, Secker, every year, to begin a fund for hospital fees: if you do, and all else goes well with us, I will help you,' were the concluding words that accompanied the first payment.

Mrs Secker was watching for her son on a certain fine May evening in 1835. The weekly carrier had brought his box, and a hamper of comfortable good things from the Hoskinses. He would walk. On the box sat the little children, longing to have it opened. There were certainly presents in it for every one—there always had been—bought with Augustine's very own money. The day following would be his birthday, and Mr Hoskins had considerately arranged that his holiday should begin in time for him to spend it at home. Mr Secker had walked to the Gray House, and been kept, evidently, to dine. His wife and children were glad of it—his uncertainty of temper and artificialness were a restraint on them, and spoiled greetings. The room seemed to grow suddenly darker when they heard his voice, and not his only: he had brought Mademoiselle and the children. It was a favourite freak of his, and a special annoyance to Mrs Secker. She had always disliked the French girl, because she thought her forward and deep. She would have been ashamed to say so—for she might have been suspected of jealousy—but she was sure she tried to attract Mr Secker; and, in her opinion, he paid her by far too much attention. At that moment flashed the thought: if she should take into her vain head to 'set her cap at' Augustine! he was so innocent—yes, innocent, though in years as well as character a man. And in she came, chattering pretty imperfect English volubly, and speaking various languages with her eyes, only a few minutes before him. It was a great disappointment to him also. How could his mother throw her arms round him, and smother him with kisses? and how could the children seize him, and climb on him, and clamour to him, and about him, and enjoy him thoroughly before those strangers, to whom his father was doing elaborate politeness? Their pleasure was as completely spoiled as the tea and toast and crisp hot fish which had been calculated to a nicety for him. In about a quarter of an hour Mademoiselle said the children must go home, and there was some consolation in Mr Secker's saying that they must not walk alone, and that, as his son was dusty, he would have the pleasure of walking with them.

When their joint vexation had had some relief in words, Augustine said: 'So my father still goes there?'

'Yes; though he has taken offence several times, and written more than once to Mr Monsey; but he has never noticed the letters—perhaps he has not read them, or could not understand them. He must be often glad of some one to talk to, and your father is very pleasant when he chooses.'

'Yes, and how well he looks! And Mademoiselle is the better for Cornish air—does she come here often?'

'Oftener than I like—she interrupts me continually and most inconveniently. I suppose she does not know always what to do with herself, and your father will press her to come. He has taken an immense fancy to her, and she does not choose to see that I never ask her to come again, or say that I am glad to see her.'

'She does not understand, perhaps.'

'O yes; she does: she understands whatever she chooses.'

'I suppose I shall have to go and dine there two or three times. It is, of course, good-natured to ask me, but I do dislike it very much. I do not want to be patronised, and they are not in my line, and I am as well aware of it as they are; but if I say anything of the kind to my father, he will be irritable, and irritate me.'

'Yes; he will say you are consciously unfit for "good society," as he will persist in calling those people. It is very strange that he cannot see that they are really out of society. No one visits them. He is fond of calling himself a man of the world, but he is perfectly blind—I have never said anything to him about his visits there since he broke that chair, and I dare not say a word, except to you, about yourself—but it is not a house for a good young man to go to, particularly a clergyman's son. There is no doubt in the world that Mr Monsey drinks, and is unsteady; and I am sure Mrs Monsey has not been always what she ought to be. Before they came, Sir Geoffrey and Lady Monsey, who were so nice and unaffected that I quite liked to talk to them, told us that it was useless to conceal that painful family reasons sent Mr and Mrs Arthur Monsey here—that he had always given great trouble, and there was no hope of his reforming—but they hoped to save the boy—you see they never let him come here without a tutor, and then they stay at *The George*. Then that Mademoiselle Royer. What young girl, with prudent friends, would be allowed to stay there? And why should she choose to stay, if she had not some discreditable reason? She is clever enough to earn her bread anywhere. Perhaps they pay her very high. But how can she like to live in that wild lonely place, with no companions but two spoiled, wild, troublesome children? Of course, you ought not to go there, but I suppose you must, and pray God to keep you from the evil.'

'There's one comfort at anyrate,' said Augustine: 'the evil is, in this instance, no temptation to me.'

By this time Jeanne had been two years at the Gray House. Her pupils liked her: she was naturally obliging, and good-natured. Mr Monsey she saw seldom; Mrs Monsey took her for a drive sometimes, and had her frequently with her in the evening, and was civil to her. But she was often visibly depressed and weary. When released from the children, she took long wild walks, even late at night—sat on the rocks reading books, which she kept locked up, and wrote letters which she posted herself. This Mrs Monsey had remarked, for she kept the key of the post-bag, and had sometimes wanted Mademoiselle when she was writing. 'Perhaps she has a lover, Suzanne?'

'I am not in her confidence, Madame.'

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'I wonder if she would like to go and see her friends—she may if she likes, and stay a month or two. She has been here a long time, and behaved very well.'

'Would Madame make the suggestion herself? It would be more gratifying to Mademoiselle, no doubt.'

The young lady was much obliged—deeply grateful; but she had no nearer relative than aunts, and no special tenderness for them. She had become much attached to England, devoted to her dear charge, and Madame and Monsieur were all consideration.

'I do not quite make her out,' said Mrs Monsey to Suzanne: 'she is a thorough flirt, and has no one to practise on here but Mr Secker, unless she has picked up some young lawyer or doctor in the town. I forget how I heard of her.'

Suzanne reminded her.

'O yes; but I don't remember what Madame de Montansier said about her. She suits us well enough, at all events—the children like her, and she amuses them, and does not bore me.'

'Can I see Mademoiselle Royer?' was asked a few days later by a bright-looking little elderly man, with a foreign air and accent.

The servant believed so. What name?

'My name would be of no use,' said he; 'Mademoiselle is unacquainted with me; but will you say that I bring a message from Madame de Cöitgourden.'

Jeanne, who had started at the announcement, looked alarmed, yet defiant, when she presented herself.

The stranger bowed, and said: 'I am le Père Jolivet; I brought a postulant last week from Paris to the convent at St Petroe—of which you may have heard. My very good friend, Madame de Cöitgourden, desired that I would ascertain personally how you were situated, and if I could be of any service to you. She regrets that she has heard nothing directly from you since you came to England, and you understand that, irrespectively of other motives, she remembers that she is your godmother.'

'Madame de Cöitgourden is very good,' returned Jeanne coldly; 'but I support myself, and I require nothing.'

'Possibly nothing temporal, but Madame thought of probable spiritual difficulties. She has been informed that the Monsey family are Protestant, and that you are cut off from opportunities of practising your religion. St Petroe's is thirty miles hence, and there is, I know, no direct communication with the place. Madame de Cöitgourden has a relative who has been a professed nun there, and much valued, several years. At her request, the Reverend Mother will procure you lodging and every suitable accommodation for a week, whenever you choose to avail yourself of the opportunity to approach the sacraments, and will consider that in so doing she only acquits herself partially of a debt of gratitude to Madame.'

'I am overwhelmed with so much condescension,' replied Jeanne petulantly, 'but cannot take advantage of it.'

'But why not, my child?'

'I do not conceive that I am bound to give my confidence to a stranger.'

'A priest accredited by your early benefactress can hardly be regarded as a stranger. Let me have the satisfaction of taking such tidings of you as Madame deserves, and is desirous to have.'

'Tell her,' said Jeanne angrily, her eyes flashing, 'that the Catholic Church is not popular in England; that no one suspects me of belonging to it; that I do not intend to acknowledge that I ever was a Catholic; that, if I did, this house would be closed against me; that out of it I am, in England, homeless, and that to Paris I will not return. You may say too, if you like, that I have no religion, and that I do not want any.'

'Hush! child,' said the priest soothingly; 'you are beside yourself. How have you endured life with such a weight of concealment on your heart? You cannot have forgotten all your good early training?'

'I have forgotten everything but that I came into the world to suffer for a man's wickedness and a woman's weakness—to feel, before I knew this, that I was in some way marked: that I was pitied, patronised: to hate everybody; to resolve to make a position for myself; to have no past; to let no superstition, or, if you like it better, no religion, stand in my way.'

'This is mere raving. How do you propose to make a position for yourself? Music might do it, or dancing; but to succeed in either way not only are great natural gifts necessary, but careful and laborious training. Looking at your case for a moment in a purely human point of view, I do not see how your temporal interests are to be served by your forsaking your faith and friends. What, for example, do you gain by living in a remote province with a family who, alas! do not stand well socially? Believe me, my dear child, you make a great mistake. Quærite primum regnum Dei, et justitiam ejus; et hæc omnia adjicieantur vobis.' He thought she was softening, and went on more earnestly: 'Let me tell Reverend Mother that you will come next week—nay, I know I may presume to take you back with me; I have a post-chaise at *The George;* you need not return here at all. There are ladies in the convent connected with some of the first Catholic families in England; they would easily find you a more suitable place than this, and give you shelter till you were provided for; and you might make a little retreat, and recover lost peace, and begin life with new resolutions.'

She had kept her eyes fixed on the carpet the last few moments, and better nature was stirring within her. She grasped the truth of the priest's representations; she realised in how utterly heartless an atmosphere she lived, and how insignificant she was. She knew how welcome, how rejoiced over she would be in the convent; but, strengthened by the duplicity she had practised, the demon pride conquered, and she said: 'I thought, my father, that I had stated distinctly that I did not want shelter, or spiritual retreat, or patronage—that I prefer to be as I am. It seems that all human schemes are liable to failure, but I mean to stand by mine. I am sorry you have had so much unnecessary trouble; and you will forgive my reminding you that your visit may be disadvantageous to me. The virtues of Catholic priests are by no means appreciated in England.' She stood up; so did he. He looked wistfully, compassionately at her—his whole demeanour silently besought her to relent. She understood it, and said: 'I made my resolution rather more than two years

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ago, when, to escape from France, I stooped to accept a servant's mediation to procure me the place I hold. I parted with religion on the voyage. A small parcel containing my scapular, beads, and prayer-books is in the sea somewhere between Havre and Southampton.'

Her stormy eyes and hard voice seemed to him even worse than her words. With dignity, of which he had looked incapable, he said: 'Listen, you unhappy child, to words familiar to your ear in your better days: Qui enim me confusus fuerit, et verba mea, in generatione ista adultera et peccatrice, et filius hominis confundetur eum cum veniret in gloria patris sui cum angelis sanctis—and may God convert you!'

THE UMBRELLA.

Sir Gardner Wilkinson has engraved a delineation of an Ethiopian princess travelling in her chariot through Upper Egypt to Thebes, wherein the car is furnished with a kind of umbrella fixed to a tall staff rising from the centre, and in its arrangement, closely resembling the chaise umbrella of the present day. 'In shape,' says Mr Layard, 'it resembled very closely those now in common use, but it is always seen open in the sculptures. It was edged with tassels, and was usually adorned at the top by a flower or some other ornament. The parasol was reserved exclusively for the monarch, and is never represented as borne over any other person.' The umbrella represented on the Nineveh bas-reliefs in the British Museum is exactly like the *chattas* still in use among the Burmese and Indians.

The umbrella has, from time immemorial, been a symbol of authority in the East; it commonly accompanies the spherulæ and patellæ in the works of the old statuaries, and is laid at the feet of heroes. It, with the mystic fan, vannum or flabellum (also retained in the Roman worship), is specially an emblem of Bacchus. Pausanias and Hesychius report, that at Alea, a city of Arcadia, a feast called Scieria was celebrated in honour of Bacchus, in which the statue of the rosy god was carried in procession, crowned with vine-leaves, and placed upon an ornamental litter, in which was seated a young girl carrying an umbrella, to indicate the majesty of the god. On several bas-reliefs from Persepolis, the king is represented under an umbrella. In Aristophanes, we have the following stage direction: 'Enter Prometheus, muffled up and covered with an umbrella.' The word used is σκιάδιον (little shade), and the joke of Aristophanes is, that Prometheus, the great discoverer of all the arts, wishing to hide himself from Jupiter (the æther or atmosphere), covers his face with a parasol, as a lady now does who wishes to preserve her complexion.

It occurs on the Hamilton vases in the hands of a princess; it is of the modern form, with strips pendulous from the rim. The Romans used it, especially at the theatre, which was open to the sky, to keep off the sun. Women of distinction had it of ivory. The female slaves who carried it over the heads of their mistresses were called umbelliferæ. These parasols were made of green linen stretched upon a hoop. Du Cange mentions the custom of expanding or contracting them, and says that they were often made of skins. Coryat says that they were made of leather in Italy, something in the form of a canopy, hooped inside with divers little wooden hoops, to extend it.

In the basilican churches, that is, those built by the early Christians like the Roman halls of justice, the priest said mass with his face to the people standing behind the altar. In these basilican churches, a large umbrella was generally suspended over the priest; and it is said that the cardinal who takes his title from them asserts his privilege of having an umbrella held over his head in all solemn processions. All the cardinals had an umbrella with their red hats; but afterwards, the latter were limited to those only who took title from a basilican church. Beatiano, an Italian herald, says that a vermilion umbrella in a field argent symbolises dominion. In Liddell and Scott's *Lexicon*, σκιάδιον is given as equivalent to θολία, a round sun-hat—that is, an umbrella.

The distinctive appellation of the Mahratta princes who reigned at Poonah and Sattara was *Ch'hatra-pati*, or 'lord of the umbrella.' This was probably the origin of the term *satrap*, applied by Herodotus and the early Greek writers to the Persian governors of provinces in Asia. The *ch* in *ch'hatra* is pronounced like *ts*, so that *tsatrapat* comes very near the Greek σατράπης. Among the orientals, persons of rank not invested with the imperial privilege of the umbrella, use a flat, vertical, circular disc, called an *aftab-gir*, in contradistinction to the horizontal convex parasol.

The following is the superscription of a letter addressed by the king of Burmah to the Marquis of Dalhousie, Governor-general of India, dated October 22, 1855: 'His Great, Glorious, and most Excellent Majesty, who reigns over the kingdoms of *Thuna-paranta*, *Tampadipa*, to all the great *umbrella-bearing* chiefs of the eastern countries;' &c. (Yule's *Ava*, 354).

That umbrellas were known to the Anglo-Saxons is proved beyond a doubt by a figure in one of the Harleian Manuscripts, in which a servant is holding an umbrella over the head of a man who appears to be covered at the same time with a cloak or mantle.

We can find no mention of the umbrella in this country during the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries.

Florio, in his *Worlde of Wonders* (1598), says: '*Ombrella*, a fan, a canopie, also a testern or cloth of state for a prince, also a kind of round fan or *shadowing* that they use to ride with in summer in Italy, a little shade.'

Thus, Thomas Coryat, in his *Crudities* (1611), i. 134, gives a curious account of the early use of the umbrella in Italy: 'Also, many of them' [the Italians] 'do carry other fine things of a far greater price, that will cost a ducat at least, which they commonly call in the Italian tongue *umbrellas*—that is, things that minister shadow unto them for shelter against the scorching heat of the sun. These are made of leather, something answerable to the form of a little canopy, hooped in the inside, with divers little wooden hoops, that extend the umbrella in a pretty large compass. They are used especially by horsemen, who carry them in their hands when they ride, fastening the end of the handle upon one of the thighs; and they impart so long shadow unto them, that it keepeth the heat of the sun from the upper parts of their bodies.'

An umbrella was actually an article of curiosity in the seventeenth century, for it is mentioned

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in the *Museum Tradescantianum, or Collection of Rarities preserved at South Lambeth, near London, by John Tradescant*, in 1656. In Blount's *Glossographia* (1674): 'Umbello (It. *ombrello*), a fashion of round and broad fans, wherewith the Indians (and from them our great ones) preserve themselves from the heat of the sun; and hence any little shadow, fan, or other thing wherewith the women guard their faces from the sun.'

Kersey, in 1708, described it as a 'broad fan or screen commonly used by women to shelter them from rain.' Swift, in his description of a city shower (*Tatler*, 238, 1710), mentions umbrellas as in common use by women:

Now in contiguous drops the flood comes down,
Threatening with deluge the devoted town;
To shops in crowds, the daggled females fly,
Pretend to cheapen goods, but nothing buy;
The Templar spruce, while every spout 's abroach,
Stays till 'tis fair, yet seems to call a coach;
The tucked-up sempstress walks with hasty strides,
While streams run down her *oiled umbrella's* sides.

In the portrait of the beautiful Duchess of Bedford (who afterwards married the Earl of Jersey) at Woburn Abbey, painted about 1730, she is represented as attended by a black servant, who holds an open umbrella over her.

In Bailey's *Dictionary* (1737), a parasol is described as 'a sort of small canopy or umbrella to keep off the rain;' just reversing our order of description. And Lieutenant-colonel (afterwards General) Wolfe, writing from Paris in the year 1752, says: 'The people here use umbrellas in hot weather to defend them from the sun, and something of the same kind to secure them from the snow and rain. I wonder a practice so useful is not introduced into England (where there are such frequent showers), and especially in the country, where they can be expanded without any inconveniency.' This remark seems strange after the extracts before given. Horace Walpole (*Memoirs of the Reign of George II.*, vol. iii. p. 153), narrating the punishment of Dr Shebbeare for a libel, December 5, 1758, says: 'The man stood in the pillory, having a footman holding an umbrella to keep off the rain.' This seems a very aristocratic way of bearing that punishment.

In 1778, one John Macdonald, a footman, was ridiculed for carrying in the streets an umbrella he had brought from Spain; however, he tells us he persisted for three months in carrying it, till people took no further notice of the novelty. It was considered a mark of effeminacy to carry an umbrella, and the hackney-coachmen were loud in their complaints against their use, for it was during wet weather that these men made their harvest. In fine weather, people generally preferred walking to being jolted in a coach.

Disraeli says, that at first a single umbrella was kept at the coffee-houses, and lent, as a coach or a chair, in a heavy shower. The *Female Tatler* advertises: 'The young gentleman belonging to the custom-house, who, in fear of rain, borrowed *the umbrella from Wilk's Coffee-house*, shall the next time be welcome to the maid's *pattens*.' At noblemen's and gentlemen's houses, a large one was kept hung up in the hall, to hold over a lady or a gentleman, if it rained, between the door and their carriage.

In Beaumont and Fletcher's *Rule a Wife and have a Wife*, Altea says:

Are you at ease? Now is your heart at rest?
Now you have got a shadow, an umbrella,
To keep the scorching world's opinion
From your fair credit.

The umbrella was first introduced at Bristol about 1780. It created a great sensation, its colour being red; and it probably came from Leghorn, with which place Bristol at that time maintained a great trade.

James Hanway the traveller, who lived and died in a house in Red Lion Square, is often spoken of as the first man to walk the streets of London, in 1756, with an umbrella over his head; and after carrying one nearly thirty years, saw them come into general use. But this is clearly an error.

In the following passages from Cowper's *Task*, the umbrella appears to be equivalent to what would now be called a parasol, the two words being very loosely applied in the extracts given above:

We bear our shades about us; self-deprived,
Of other screen, the thin umbrella spread,
And range on Indian waste without a tree.
BOOK I.

Expect her soon with footboy at her heels,
No longer blushing for her awkward load,
Her train and her umbrella all her care.
BOOK IV.

As we call a cumbrous umbrella a 'Gamp,' in fond remembrance of *Sairey*, so is such a one called 'un Robinson' in France, from the machine beneath which the hero of Defoe sheltered himself from the rays of the tropical sun.

A writer in the *Book of Days* (i. 243) says, about thirty-five years ago, there was living at Taunton a lady who recollected when there were but two umbrellas in that town; one belonged to a clergyman, who, on proceeding to his duties on Sunday, hung up the umbrella in the church porch, where it attracted the gaze and admiration of the townspeople coming to church.

A FISHING-TOWN.

QUAINT clusters of gray houses crowding down
Unto a river's edge: the river, wide,
And flecked with fishing-boats beyond the town,
Incoming with the slow incoming tide.
Moored to the old pier-end a smack or two,
Slow dandled by the shoreward-setting swell,
And with their nets with every dip wet through,
Shew their black, pitchy ribs. Some far ship's bell
Comes in the capful of light wind that hails
From seaward; while still louder and more loud,
Beneath the lowering hood of ashen cloud,
Rings the hoarse fisher's shout. The nearing sails
Loom large and shadowy; and the sunset gun
Tells that another day is o'er and done.

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LOT 217.

'AT forty shangs!—going at forty shangs! Did I hear two guin-ness offered?—Thank you, sir. Two guin-ness is in time. For the first time, at two guin-ness! For the second time! Any advance on two guin-ness? For the third and last time—going at two guin-ness!'

Rap!

'Name, if you please, sir?'

'John Trumway,' I said, for the lot was mine—Lot 217. Whatever made me buy the lot? I am sure I didn't want it. I am afraid I am one of those great grown-up children who are not safe to be trusted out with money in their pockets, unless coppers. The coins in my purse always leap up with frantic desire to buy everything I see, and the result is, that no matter what sum I go out with, I always come home penniless.

What on earth could I want now with a second-hand, patent fire-proof, powder-proof, bomb-proof, thief-proof iron safe, constructed to resist fifty burglar-power (nominal), case-hardened, undrillable, unpickable, to be sold a bargain, owing to the key being lost, and the only man who knew how to make another having gone to sleep with his fathers? When I reflected about my purchase, I began to feel quite hot. There is no doubt it was a bargain, or might have been, to somebody; but then, patent, unpickable iron safes with the keys lost, and owner-proof as well as thief-proof, are not everybody's money, however cheap. I had a cold creeping doubt if they were mine. While the auctioneer was describing it, and the people all round the room were yearning for it in bids, I seemed to see many remarkable qualities emanating from the safe, like perspiration, so that its acquisition appeared to me then peculiarly desirable. Other people seemed similarly affected, for its value increased momently. Some ten or a dozen persons had all in turn desired to be its fortunate possessor, and all at increased rates. The man who bid 'forty shangs' certainly must have seen his way to turn the safe to account, or why have bid 'forty shangs' at all? And if so, of course it was plain there must *be* a way to turn it to account, and one which a few moments' quiet reflection, apart from the excitement of the saleroom, would doubtless reveal. It was something of this feeling made me bid the 'two guinness,' or, it may be, the vaguer conviction that here was an object suddenly become extremely desirable to a number of my fellow-creatures, which evoked a corresponding and envious desire in my own breast. But now that the thing was mine, all the latent value which had before perspired from it under the auctioneer's hands seemed absorbed again into its shamefully rusty iron sides—it had become a miserable hundredweight of useless old iron—and I loathed the very sight of it, especially when I thought of Mrs Trumway.

My wife is not a woman of many words; by no means the kind of woman verbally to upbraid me for buying inconvertible bargains, and she has had previous opportunities for so doing, if so disposed. Mrs Trumway never *says* anything. She didn't when I once bought two hundredweight of puffy, bloated cheeses at twopence per pound, and sold portions afterwards to some poor people I knew—as a kindness—at a trifling profit, and made them all very poorly; and got summoned before the magistrates, and fined for selling cheese unfit for human food; and lost cheese, temper, reputation, and L.4, 10s. No; at such times Mrs Trumway makes no remark; she only sniffs. But the amount of meaning conveyed by one of Mrs T.'s sniffs is voluminous—nay, encyclopædic. It means: 'O dear, yes; I knew how 'twould be. You 've been at it, again, have you? Been out with money in your pocket, and come home with nothing but your pocket left? Just like water in a cullender: the cullender don't run away—more 's the pity. No; it 's always ready for more. And here am I, pinching and screwing, and saving money, and allowancing the house down to one box of "Tandstickors" a week, and you going fooling money away like this. Remonstrance, John, is perfectly useless. I have awaked to the conclusion that I have married an incorrigible idiot; but I don't complain. No; a noodle you may be, but I

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am your affectionate wife, Martha Trumway.' It means far more than this; it means every recriminatory epithet which a naturally sensitive person, like me, can apply to himself, after making the pleasing discovery that he has taken himself in.

I went home to dinner, which had been waiting an hour. I said nothing about my purchase. There was a small sniff—a very small one—expressive of: 'It 's not at all unlikely, John, though, mind, I don't accuse you of it without evidence; but, now I come to consider, it 's rather *more* likely than not that you 've something on your mind, and nothing in your purse.' After dinner, I escaped up-stairs to my study. In the evening, I saw It coming up my garden-path on a pair of trucks. Should I go down? No, I reflected; I would not go down. How I detested the thing now! It didn't look worth half-a-crown.

'Yes,' I heard the servant say in answer to the man with the trucks; 'this is Mr Trumway's.'

'So 's this,' said the man; 'and I wish him joy of it, and I shouldn't mind a glass of beer to wish it him in.'

Which conversation had the effect of bringing out Mrs T. Her comprehensive mind must have taken in the situation at a glance.

'Where is this from?' she asked the man.

'From the saleroom, 'm.'

'John!' It was the voice of my affectionate wife addressed to her husband. 'Have you been buying anything at a sale?'

'O dear, yes,' said I, calling down-stairs. 'Didn't I tell you? It 's a—a—safe.'

Although two pair of stairs separated me from the partner of my bosom, I was aware of the sniff which succeeded, and implied: 'O yes; you 're quite right, my man; this is Mr Trumway's. You needn't be afraid you 've mistaken the house. There isn't such another man in the neighbourhood as lives at No. 19.' But aloud, she proceeded: '*Quite* right; bring it in, please.'—'John! Do you wish the man to leave it in the passage?' Sniff (being interpreted): 'Or would I like it taken into the drawing-room; or placed on the dressing-table of the spare room, perhaps; or on the study mantelpiece?'

I thought it better to go down-stairs. 'Oh, leave it in the passage,' I said. 'No one will steal it.'

'O dear, no,' said my wife with a little smile. 'No one will steal it; that 's quite certain.' I admit it was not a seductive-looking object now.

When we were alone, Mrs Trumway asked me what I intended to do with the safe, which was the very question I had been asking myself ever since returning from the sale.

'What do I intend doing with it, my dear?' I repeated, to gain time. 'Why—yes—ah!—that is—do with it? Why, open it, of course.'

She sniffed a sniff equal to two columns of printed matter. Although my answer was not premeditated, I didn't think it altogether a bad notion. Accordingly, for the next two or three weeks my house became the constant resort of blacksmiths, whitesmiths, locksmiths, and people in the engineering way, all of whom, however, failed utterly in the attempt to open the unpickable, undrillable fire and thief proof Lot 217. They fairly owned it beat them. I wanted the safe opened, however, for the reason that, being opened, it might become an article perhaps useful or saleable, whereas now it was neither. One morning, an idea of unusual brilliancy occurred to me, and I put on my hat, and went out to put it in practice. I walked up to our great model jail, and saw the governor, with whom I had previously some acquaintance. I told him I should feel deeply obliged if he could render me assistance, and then came to the purport of my visit.

'Have you, my good sir, such a thing as a good strong burglar on the establishment that you could lend me for an hour or two?' And I explained what I wanted him for. But the governor shook his head, and said he was sorry to disoblige me, but it really couldn't be done, as all their burglars were in use, and couldn't be spared off the premises. —Very good; but supposing I were to send the safe up to the jail, did he think he could allow a burglar to while away a few hours of his leisure at a congenial pursuit?—No. He didn't see that he could: it would be against the rules; besides which, their burglars had become so reformed by attention to the ministrations of the chaplain, that it was exceedingly doubtful if they would be willing to return to sinful ways, such as breaking open safes, lest it might shew a worldly spirit that would interfere with their tickets of leave; and then, again, there were no burglars' tools in the jail.

'I 'll tell you what, though,' he said after a bit; 'I daresay I could find you a ticket-of-leave man who would do it. They report themselves to us at stated intervals, so that we always know where to find them. Indeed, I think I know just the very man, and will send him to you.'

One evening in the twilight, about a week afterwards, our servant came in, in some alarm, to say that two very ill-looking men were at the back door, who said they had 'come to crack the gov'nor's money-box.' They were not nice-looking men. One of them, a great brawny ruffian, with a head and neck like a bull, and a wisp of coloured handkerchief over a shirtless chest, hairy as Esau's, gave me a stolid nod when I went out.

'The boss up at the Model,' he said, pointing with his thumb over his shoulder in the direction of the jail, 'asked me if so be as I would oblige you by crackin' a little bit of a box you 've got. You see, guv'nor, I ain't any tools o' my own, so I 've brought a pal who 's got his "Lady's Companion" with him, to do the job;' indicating his friend, who carried a parcel of tools done up in matting. I should say he was not a nice man to have for a friend. A spare, short, cunning little fellow, with restless eyes; a face that gave you the impression of a weasel's; and a thin nose, with a continual nervous twitching in the nostrils, like a rabbit's, as though he was an animal always on the scent for game or hunters, which perhaps he was. His name was Toney.

I brought them in, and pointing out the safe, asked if they thought they could open it.

'Open it!' repeated Toney, with ineffable contempt, 'why, a kid could open it with a pen-nive! —It 's one of them Unimpeachables, Bill,' he said to his mate; 'you remember 'em; like what we had at ——' (some name I couldn't catch).—'Why, I could blow it open with an ounce of baccer in a quarter of a hour.'

'Well,' I said, 'I would give you five shillings to open it.'

'Would you, be-gar?' growled the big man. 'Our terms is 'arf a suv'rin—me and Toney—and two pots of beer, and two ounces of baccer; and

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then it's a favour, on account of our doin' it to oblige the boss. And we ain't a-going to do it here, un'stan; but if you've got e'er a bit of a out-house out at the back, where we can be private, we'll do the job there on the quiet.'

I was obliged to accede to their terms (indeed, they were both persons I would not have had a difference with for the world). So they carried the safe into the tool-house in the garden, where I supplied them with the quantity of ale and tobacco agreed on, and they shut themselves in.

'It's only a case for the "alderman," Bill,' I heard the little man remark as I left them.

In twenty-five minutes, by my watch, the bull-headed man came and told me it was done. 'Not that we've been all this time about it, though, guv'nor, for Toney he prised it open in five minutes, easy as a oyster, but we've been settin' and doin' a quiet pipe together.'

They certainly had opened it—not by picking the lock, as I anticipated, but by wrenching off the back, so that the safe was completely destroyed. They had drilled two holes in the back-plate, to allow of inserting two immensely powerful steel crowbars in such a position that the leverage of the two bars would tell one against the other, and wrench out the intermediate piece. From the appearance of the holes and the smell in the out-house, I judged the men had previously lowered the temper of the steel back with a blow-pipe in the places where they intended to drill. I felt disposed to be angry at the destruction of the safe, and was going to say so, when Toney pointed out a dirty roll of papers lying inside. I took them out, unrolled them, and forgot my wrath immediately. A prize indeed! Fifty share certificates, each for twenty pounds, in the 'Undeniable Security and Unlimited Discount Banking Corporation (Limited);' Offices, Lud Street, City. I paid off my two burglars with a light heart, and returning to the house, I believe I danced a war-dance of triumph round Mrs T., exhibiting a thousand pounds worth of property, which had cost me but three.

'*There*,' said I, 'that's the good of going to sales!'

'Well, but, John, these shares are not yours.'

'But they are,' I retorted. 'I bought them, and they are "to Bearer," and no name on them to indicate whose they are.'

'But had you not better see the auctioneer, and tell him what you have found?'

'Why, no. I bought the lot, faults and errors of description, and all; and it is as much mine as if I had paid a thousand pounds for it.'

'Yes; but some poor man may be ruined by the loss of these shares.'

'Well,' said I, 'what I will do will be to go up to London to the company's offices, and ascertain whether these certificates are claimed on behalf of any one else, and if not, to claim them for myself.'

I found the offices of the 'Undeniable Security and Unlimited Discount Banking Corporation (Limited)' a most imposing edifice of Italian architecture, with immense plate-glass windows, and Purbeck-marble columns, and the name of the company, in medieval gold letters, running the whole length of the building. Evidently a very prosperous concern. On entering, there was not that amount of business doing which I should have liked to see; in fact, beyond two clerks—one of whom was paring his nails with the office penknife, while the other, and more elderly, was reading the newspaper—the place was empty. I stood quite five minutes at the massive Spanish-mahogany counter apparently without either of the clerks becoming officially aware of my presence, so intent were they on their duties. I therefore rapped on the floor with my umbrella, which made a great noise in the empty office, which was church-like for size and echoes. The elder clerk looked up impatiently from his paper, but resumed its perusal immediately. The younger got off his stool, and went to a looking-glass, where he commenced arranging his hair with a pocket-comb.

'I have called,' I remarked in a somewhat loud tone, 'about some shares in this company, the certificates of which I hold.'

'Eh?' said the old clerk, at last detecting my intrusion.

I repeated my business.

'Certificates Nos. 2034 to 2083—they are in my possession; in fact, I bought them.'

'Well, what do you want? Do you wish them registered in your name?—Simpson' (to the young clerk), 'get down the transfer book.'

'That is the difficulty,' said I. 'In the event, for instance, of any one else claiming the shares, for they came into my possession in a rather singular manner.'

'No difficulty at all. You say you've got the certificates, and you've bought them. It doesn't matter to us if you've stolen them. Just produce the scrip, and write me an authority to register the shares in your name.'

He looked over the certificates, and counted them, while I wrote the required authority.

'But,' I said, when I had done, with a view to satisfy my conscience in the appropriation of the property, 'I assure you the circumstances under which I acquired the certificates are so singular, that'——

'You needn't trouble about that,' he interrupted; 'our office takes no cognizance of the way you became possessed of them. You are the holder and the registered proprietor of the shares, and you may be *quite* sure no one else will ever claim them.'

This sounded satisfactory in one way; but the man's manner of saying it did not, I confess, leave a favourable impression on my mind. I went home rather uncomfortable, and feeling so oppressed with the notion of having property which my conscience would not concede was mine in strict justice, that it would have been a relief to have had an accomplice with whom to share the proceeds and the responsibility.

It may seem singular that when in town I had taken no steps to ascertain the value of my property; but, in the first place, I know very little of the ways of the money-market, and the share-list is as great a puzzle to me as *Bradshaw;* and in the next, to tell the truth, I felt timid at asking questions which might lead me to betray how I became the owner of the shares.

A month after this, I had been out for the day to a picnic with my wife. We had both enjoyed ourselves hugely, and come home flushed with the summer heat and braced up with the fresh air. I had got over all my qualms about the possession of the property, and begun to look upon it as

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promising a very acceptable addition to my income. I am not sure I had not been regarding the scenery of trees and sky and rippling water with something of unusual complacency, for feeling that the acquisition of a thousand pounds removed me so much the farther from anxiety as to enable me to enjoy it in the greater peace.

A great oblong official blue letter awaited my return. It contained a blow—most letters dated from Basinghall Street do.

Re THE UNDENIABLE SECURITY AND UNLIMITED DISCOUNT BANKING CORPORATION (LIMITED).

SIR—I beg to inform you an order has this day been made by the registrar, calling upon you as a contributory in respect of your fifty (50) shares held in the above company (now under a winding-up order), numbered respectively from 2034 to 2083 inclusive. The amount of the call is five pounds ten shillings (L.5, 10s.) per share, making a total of two hundred and seventy-five pounds (L.275); which sum must be paid at my office between eleven and four on Thursday next the 26th inst. (Signed) ——,

Official Assignee in the Bankruptcy.

O fool! I began to vaguely see now why the clerk told me I might be *quite* sure no one else would claim the shares. They were not only of no value, but their possession was subject to heavy liability. And I, to be idiot enough to go and claim them when the company was actually bankrupt and worse!

Night as it was, I determined to go at once and see my wife's brother-in-law, Mr Blode. He was a barrister—had been one for ten years—but had never had a brief.

'Oh, I shouldn't take any notice of that,' he said: 'I don't think they can fix you with liability. I'll write to the assignee and manage it for you. Let me know if you hear any more of it. You are an innocent party; you didn't buy the shares, but the iron safe. But how on earth did they know you held the certificates?'

I told him I had given an authority to have them registered in my name.

He drew in his breath, and produced a long whistle like a sigh. 'Then you've endorsed their possession. You should have consulted me. However, I wouldn't trouble about it. Leave it to me.'

It would take too long to describe the harassing anxieties which each week brought me, while my case as a contributory was dragging along first through one court and then another; but the different lights which various luminaries of the law shed on my unfortunate two guineas' worth deserve to be particularised.

It was argued that, in buying the safe, I could not have bought the contents—that the safe was described in the catalogue *as* a safe, and nothing more, and that, consequently, as I had only bought a safe, whatever was found in it was no more mine than any other distinct article in the catalogue, and I could not therefore be responsible for liabilities attaching thereto. It was retorted by the opposing counsel, that should his ludship acquiesce in the view of the case propounded, certainly to his astonishment, by his learned friend, and decide that the certificates were *not* purchased by me, and *not* therefore mine, he would agree to a verdict, and immediately indict me for felony, for appropriating the shares to my own use, and authorising their registration in my name. He submitted that if I had bought the shares, I was liable as a contributory; and if not, as a felon. The learned judge said he could not entertain the issue of felony, as that was a question for a distinct tribunal, but he was inclined to rule that I *had* bought the shares. The conditions of sale were sufficiently explicit to his mind on that point—'the lots to be cleared with all faults and errors of description.' Indeed, the very term employed by auction custom appeared decisive. The item in question was described as 'Lot 217—an iron safe.' It was the 'lot' which was put up to competition, and, to use a common expression, Mr Trumway had bought '*the lot*'—that was, 'all the lot.' The question then arose: Could I be held liable as a contributory, when in fact I had purchased the shares on the very day of the company's bankruptcy, and the registry in my name was not completed until some weeks later? In other words, that seeing the company had contracted no liabilities during the time I held the shares (having, in fact, ceased business), could I be made a contributory? Against this it was urged that shares represented past responsibilities, and that as I should have been entitled to share in a dividend on the past year (had one been declared), so it was just that I should bear my proportion of the burdens. And again: it was clear that somebody must be liable as a contributory in respect of these fifty shares for twelve months prior to the bankruptcy, and the burden of proof as to the person so liable, if not myself, must be supposed to rest with their present possessor. The judge thought not, as it was not to be contended I could have had either interest or liability in the company before the date of the sale. The case, however, was complicated still further by the opposing counsel bringing evidence as to the previous owner of the iron safe, and endeavouring to prove that his liability in respect of the shares actually terminated twelve months previous to my purchase, so as to fix me with responsibility for the interim. It appeared that the safe and its contents, some eighteen months back, had belonged to a Mr Wendle, a shareholder in the company; that, in addition to the certificates, it had contained his cash-box and a quantity of gold and notes, and that the safe had been stolen from his office, the notes and gold and cash-box removed by the robbers, who had obtained a wax impression of his key, and the valueless safe, containing the shares, sold to an ironmonger, who put it into the sale. This Mr Wendle had applied for duplicates of the share certificates, which were refused by the company until he could prove the destruction of the old ones. Unsuccessful in this, and distrusting the reckless business of the 'Undeniable and Unlimited,' he at last applied to have the shares standing in his name cancelled, *which had been done*. It would therefore follow, it was contended, that my liability embraced the whole twelvemonth, from the time Mr Wendle's name had been erased, to the stoppage of the company, I being the next registered proprietor. Against this it was argued that whatever Mr Wendle might have written to the company, the certificates, *when found*, were *his* property; and that after they were stolen, they none the less ceased to be his property. And if

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so, my counsel proceeded, there would be a very remarkable point for the decision of his ludship. For he went on to elicit that Mr Wendle, after losing nearly the whole of his money, had committed suicide under such determined circumstances, that even the charity of a coroner's jury had been constrained to pronounce it *felo de se*, and he had been buried without funeral rites. Wherefore, as the certificates of which he had been robbed were still his property in the eye of the law, it would follow, from his being a *felo de se*, that they became the property of the crown, consequent on his act. But if they were the property of the crown, the crown was liable for that twelve months; and again, the safe could not be legally sold without authority from the crown; and his client could not be the legal buyer, nor, consequently, have any right, title, interest, or liability in the shares aforesaid.

In addition to all this—— But no; I will spare the reader the further particulars of this involved case; suffice it to say that it was decided in my favour. But it was carried to a higher court, where I was required to shew cause why the verdict should not be set aside, and entered for the plaintiff, on the ground of the decision being contrary to evidence. There it was all gone over again, with the addition that the original thieves were produced, one of them no other than my burglar's friend Toney (and I was threatened with an action by the maker of the safe for stating that Toney broke open the 'Unimpeachable' in five minutes in my outhouse). Here the decision went against me. Finally, the case came before the bench of judges, where a majority of one reversed the ruling of the lower court.

I was therefore at last so far successful in the issue as to find myself in the Bankruptcy Court, on account of the legal expenses my precious trial had accumulated. The one satisfaction attending this result was, that I must inevitably have gone there had I lost.

The very sight of a sale-catalogue is now sufficient to produce from Mrs T. a sniff of about the capacity of a three-volume novel.

THE FRENCH ATLANTIC TELEGRAPH EXPEDITION.

It is now nearly three years since it was our agreeable task to lay before our readers a description of the laying of the Atlantic Cable of 1866, and the recovery and completion of the lost cable of 1865. Since that time a great many telegraph cables have been laid; but none have been of so much importance, or possessed so many features of interest, as that just successfully completed between France and the United States. In the first place, it is interesting as being longer by about fifteen hundred miles, and laid in deeper water by five hundred fathoms, than any direct submarine line yet in existence; then its track lies through a part of the Atlantic which until very recently had been unexplored, and the nature of the bottom comparatively unknown; and thirdly, we look upon it with interest, because it shews that the importance of submarine telegraphic communication is commending itself to other countries besides our own. Hitherto, nearly all the more important submarine lines have been the direct offspring, and have remained in possession of English companies; but the present cable, although manufactured and laid by an English firm, is the result entirely of French enterprise, and to a large extent owes its existence to French capital.

The English Atlantic cables have hitherto been the only means of conveying messages between the continent of Europe and America; but in the course of last year, it was very justly thought that the continental messages were of quite sufficient number to maintain an independent line from France. A company was accordingly started, the necessary capital raised, and the manufacture of the cable commenced. The design of the company was to connect by submarine lines exclusively Brest and Boston, thus having a means of communication altogether independent of land-telegraphs, such as the English company is compelled to use. It was also proposed to have the cable in two sections—from Brest to St Pierre, a French island to the south of Newfoundland, and from St Pierre to Boston—making altogether about three thousand five hundred miles.

In this sketch, we propose to give a history of the cable from its manufacture to its final submersion, passing briefly over those details which are by this time generally known.

Referring to the longer section of the cable—Brest to St Pierre—the vital part, or technically the 'core,' is a copper conductor of seven wires twisted together, insulated by four concentric coatings of gutta-percha, separated from each other by an equal number of coatings of the material known as 'Chatterton's compound'—exactly after the pattern of the cores in the last Atlantic cables—the only difference between them being in the weight of the conductor, which in the present case is four hundred pounds per mile, instead of three hundred pounds. This increase is to compensate for the additional length of the cable. Experiments have shewn that the speed of signalling through submarine cables varies *inversely* according to their length, and *directly* as the weight of the conductor; so that, by adding to the weight in due proportion to the increased length, the speed obtained is the same as through a shorter cable.

The core is surrounded with a serving of yarn, called the 'wet serving,' allowing of the ready access of the water to the core. Until comparatively recently, this serving was saturated with tar, but experience shewed that, should a slight defect occur in the gutta-percha, the tar from the serving being in itself an insulator would sufficiently stop it up to prevent its being discovered by the electrical tests, until perhaps it was too late to remedy it. The present wet serving, however, containing no insulating fluid, permits of the instant detection of a fault.

Around the serving are twisted spirally ten homogeneous iron wires galvanised, each of them embedded in five strands of Manila hemp. The

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cable thus completed is of a diameter of about one and a quarter inches, weighing about thirty-six hundredweight to the nautical mile, and capable of bearing a strain of seven tons.

The core of the shorter section—St Pierre to Boston—is of the same description as that of the Brest to St Pierre section; but owing to its much shorter length, the weights of the copper conductor and insulator are only one hundred and seven pounds and one hundred and fifty pounds per mile respectively. This core is also covered with the wet serving, and then surrounded with about a dozen iron wires galvanised—the outside covering consisting of a silicated material known as 'Clark's compound;' the whole forming a cable of about one inch in diameter, weighing about two and three-quarter tons to the mile.

The Brest to St Pierre section was manufactured at the Telegraph Construction Company's Works at Greenwich, and transmitted piece by piece in old hulks to the *Great Eastern* steamship, lying off Sheerness. This section is of three kinds—namely, 1. The heavy shore-ends for protection against ships' anchors, tides, &c., weighing 360 hundredweight per mile. 2. The 'intermediate,' of a size between the shore-end and the deep-sea portion, 127 hundredweight per mile. 3. The deep-sea portion already described.

The whole of the above, 2788 knots in length, with the exception of 15½ miles of shore-end, and 20 miles of intermediate, was taken to the *Great Eastern*. We calculate that if the various component parts of it were laid end to end, they would make a chain of over 192,000 miles in extent, or nearly eight times the circumference of the globe. The whole of the work, including the manufacture of the two sections, and the fitting out of the *Great Eastern*, occupied little more than eight months.

For the accommodation of the cable on board the *Great Eastern*, three gigantic tanks were constructed, situated in the centre, stern, and fore part of the ship, and known as the main, after, and fore tanks respectively. Their diameters were as follow: Fore, 51 feet 6 inches diameter, by 20 feet 6 inches deep; main, 75 feet diameter, by 16 feet 6 inches deep; after, 58 feet diameter, by 20 feet 6 inches deep; with a total capacity of 169,760 cubic feet—being 27,750 feet greater than the capacity of the tanks in 1866. These immense structures were fixed to the sides of the ship, and supported by about 30,000 cubic feet of timber. The weight contained in them was about 5520 tons, distributed as follows: Fore, 1270 tons; main, 2580 tons; aft, 1670 tons: total, 5520 tons.

The cable paying-out apparatus, consisting of an elaborate series of break-wheels and stoppers, with the measuring-machine, and the 'dynamometer,' a machine for constantly recording the strain on the cable, contained all the improvements that science and experience have suggested. The dynamometer especially claims our notice, as being, to our mind, one of the most ingenious and useful contrivances connected with the apparatus. It is placed between the stern of the ship and the paying-out breaks, and consists of a vertical framework of iron, in the centre of which is fitted a grooved wheel, for the cable to pass under as it runs out over the stern of the ship. The wheel is made to slide up and down the frame, as the strain on the cable varies, or, in other words, as the cable becomes tighter between the stern and the breaks. At the side of the machine is a scale, with the calculated strains in hundredweights marked upon it; and a hand fixed to the sliding-wheel traverses this scale, and indicates at any moment the strain on the cable. From the indicated strain, of course, the depth of water may be judged, and the breaks arranged accordingly; but the dynamometer is of most service in cases of hauling back the cable, such as will be afterwards described.

The ship was also fitted with a powerful set of picking-up machines and tackle, together with buoys, buoy-ropes, mushroom-anchors, and everything requisite for picking up the cable in case of a breakage, as in 1865.

We must not forget to mention that the ship was also fitted with a complete set of 'Wier's Pneumatic Signals,' such as we believe are in use on several of the Cunard steamers. The uses to which this excellent apparatus is put are as numerous as they are effectual. The apparatus is rather complicated in its details, but simple enough in the principle on which it works. By pressing down a lever on a series of chambers of compressed air, the air from the latter is forced along a very small leaden pipe, producing instantaneously at the distant end some mechanical effect—either ringing a bell, or moving a hand, or lifting up a small flap, under which is written the signal meant to be observed. On the *Great Eastern* there were—1. An apparatus at both ends of the ship for communicating various messages to both screw and paddle engines; 2. An apparatus at each of the three cable tanks for signalling to screw and paddle to stop and reverse, in case of a hitch or foul-flake in the tank; 3. An apparatus connected, by means of cams, with the shafts of the screw and paddle engines, registering the revolutions of the same on a clock placed in the engineer's office; and 4. A communication was placed between the bows and the steering-wheel, to be used in case picking up should become necessary. Connected with some of the apparatus was also a tell-tale, which by an automatic action would indicate whether the order sent had been obeyed or not.

We have given so lengthy a description of this pneumatic apparatus, because we believe it to be one of the most useful inventions in the signalling department yet made. If properly fixed, it is almost impossible for it to get out of order.

With reference to the ship itself: so much has been said about the *Great Eastern*, that we do not wish to trespass upon our readers' patience with any long discourse upon the subject; but still the ship remains one of the wonders of the world, and we cannot pass on without some slight reference to its astonishing size and capabilities.

The increased size of the cable tanks has taken away considerably from the convenience and appearance of the cabin and saloon accommodation, but still the cabins more resemble rooms in a hotel than what we usually understand by ships' berths; and the saloons, especially the grand saloon, are still far beyond our ideas as to the size of any rooms to be found on board a ship. In fact, the

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ship more resembles a floating town than anything else we can think of. On what other ship can one find full-sized premises for butchers, bakers, plumbers, carpenters, blacksmiths, and fitters, with sawmills, roperies, farmyards, sheep-pens, pigsties, and store-rooms big enough to contain stores for a small army? It cannot be doubted that for anything else besides cable-laying, the *Great Eastern* is *too* big. The expenses of keeping her in trim, and her daily expenses while at sea, are such that no ordinary number of passengers would, at the usual fares, make her pay. But for cable-laying, she is the ship *par excellence;* and we doubt very much whether either of the present Atlantic cables would have been laid but for her size and general adaptability to the purpose. In the first place, no other ship could have taken the entire cable on board, thus obviating all the risks attendant upon changing from one ship to another in mid-ocean, as was done with so much danger with the first cable in 1858. In the second place, her behaviour at sea fits her better than any other ship in existence for cable-laying. She rolls to perfection when she has a heavy 'swell' to encounter, but all her movements are of so regular and easy a character, that, in even heavy gales, the operation of cable-laying can proceed without any interruption whatsoever.

When the ship left Portland for Brest, after taking in her supply of coal, she had on board about four hundred and fifty persons, including the members of the electrical and engineering staffs, the cable hands, and the crew; and one would think, looking at the list of stores, that the whole of London had been ransacked for the sustentation and inner edification of this miniature army during the voyage to Newfoundland and back. Leaving out a thousand items of but little consequence, we need only refer to the 100,000 pounds of meat and poultry, 30 tons of vegetables, 35 tons of bread and flour, 15,000 eggs, and over 2000 dozen of liquors of various kinds, to give our readers some idea of the provision necessary to be made for a six weeks' trip.

We have made a rough calculation of the cargo of the ship, including her engines and boilers, when she left Portland, and believe the following to be a very near approximation—it is certainly not *over* the mark: Cable, 5520 tons; cable-tanks and water, 400 tons; timber shorings for tanks, 500 tons; paying-out and picking-up machinery, 120 tons; ship's stores, 250 tons; coals, 6400 tons; engines and boilers, 3500 tons: total, 16,690 tons. Her draught at starting was about 34 feet aft, and 28 feet forward. This, of course, decreased as the cable was paid out, until, at the end of the voyage, it was only about 25 feet aft, and 23 forward.

Before proceeding with a narrative of the laying of the cable, we wish to describe the arrangements made for the electrical testing of it during submersion. These were, with one or two slight exceptions, identically the same as in 1866. Their most interesting feature is the keeping up of a constant test on ship and shore for insulation, by a plan devised by Mr Willoughby Smith in 1865, at the same time allowing of tests for the continuity of the conductor, and free communication between ship and shore to be kept up without in any way interfering with the insulation test. By this means, should a 'fault' pass overboard into the sea, it is detected at once, and the paying-out may be stopped before any considerable length of the cable has been allowed to run out. The advantage of this system over the old is apparent from the fact, that formerly it was possible for three or four miles of cable to run out between the occurrence of the fault and its detection; whereas now, except under very peculiar circumstances, within two or three minutes after a 'fault' passes overboard, it can be detected, and the signal given to stop the ship.

In conclusion, nothing that could in the least possible way facilitate the execution of the great work was left undone. All the arrangements were of the most complete character, and were placed in charge of men who are unrivalled for their practical knowledge of submarine telegraphy.

The expedition started from Brest on Monday the 21st June, and the American end of the cable was safely landed at Duxbury, near Boston, on Friday the 23d July. The five weeks which elapsed between those two dates were enlivened with incidents of the most interesting nature, and it is to these we shall now refer.

For the first three days all went well. The weather was very fine; the paying-out of the cable proceeded without a hitch, and all were beginning to indulge hopes that, as in 1866, the voyage would be made without the occurrence of those unfortunate 'faults' which cause such delay and trouble. But our hopes were soon upset, for on the fourth day, the 24th June, shortly after daybreak, we were struck with consternation by the intelligence that there existed an electrical fault in the cable. The intelligence was conveyed all over the ship by means of a powerful gong, which was planted outside the electrical room, ready to be hammered upon as soon as anything of a suspicious nature was indicated on the testing instruments. In obedience to the gong, the ship was speedily stopped, and the engines reversed. The tests shewed the fault to exist very near the ship; so, without any more ado, the picking-up engines were set to work, and hauling back commenced. At every three hundred or four hundred yards of cable hauled back, a fresh test was made, until, in about a couple of hours, it was found that the faulty place had come inboard. Other two hours were sufficient to make a fresh splice between the cable paid out and that remaining on the ship, and then operations were resumed as if nothing had happened. Fortunately, the weather was very fine and the sea calm, and the hauling back was in consequence attended with but little danger. The occurrence of the fault was perhaps advantageous, inasmuch as it served more fully to impress the staff with the importance of having everything in complete readiness for an accident.

The fault was afterwards found to consist of a minute hole penetrating the coatings of gutta-percha; whether caused accidentally or purposely it is impossible to say. It may be asked why it could not have been discovered before it left the tank. The answer probably is, that it was of too minute a nature to indicate its existence on the testing instruments, until, by passing through the paying-out machines, and then undergoing the pressure of the sea, it became more fully developed.

To give our readers some idea as to how a fault is detected, we may (for this purpose only) compare the cable to a long pipe, sealed up at one end,

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into which water is being forced. As long as the pipe remains perfect, only a certain amount of water can be put into it, according to its capacity, and once filled, there is no flow of water; but if, when the pipe is full, a small hole be made in it, the water will of course rush out at once, indicating the existence of the hole by causing a fresh flow of water into the pipe. Now, the cable is always kept charged with electricity up to its full capacity—or, in other words, till it can take no more—and as long as it remains perfect, there is practically no current flowing from the battery into it; but immediately on the development of a fault, or communication between the conductor of the cable and the earth, a portion of the charge escaping through the fault causes a fresh supply of electricity to flow from the battery. By having a delicate instrument fixed between the battery and the cable, this increased flow is at once made apparent.

Another similar fault occurred on the 26th, fortunately unattended with any more serious consequences than in the first case.

On the 29th June, the weather, which had up to that time been so fine, suddenly changed. A strong breeze sprung up towards evening, which, by the morning of the 30th, had increased to a heavy gale. The sea was very rough indeed; and the frequent violent lurches of the ship began to cause some apprehensions as to the safety of the cable. Everybody devoutly hoped that we might get through the gale without having to stop and haul back on account of a fault; but our hopes were frustrated, for just in the very height of the gale, the dismal notes of the gong announced that another fault had indicated its existence on the testing instruments. The engines were reversed, and the hauling back commenced, amid the greatest excitement. At every lurch of the ship, the strain indicated on the dynamometer rose to an alarming extent, and as the hauling-in proceeded, it seemed continually as if nothing could prevent the breakage of the cable. Still the testing shewed the fault to be outside the ship, and still the strain on the cable kept increasing, until at last, in one tremendous lurch of the ship, a whiz was heard, sending a thrill of horror into the bosom of every one on deck. The cable had parted; but by the greatest good fortune the rupture occurred inside the ship, and by a most admirable promptness, the breaks were successfully put on before the broken end could run out over the stern.

The gale was still far too heavy to risk hauling-in any longer, so, with not a moment's delay, the end of the cable was secured to a huge buoy, and sent adrift, to be picked up again as soon as the weather became more moderate. The remainder of that day and the whole of the next were spent in steaming about in the vicinity of the buoy, keeping as near to it as possible—the great ship continually rolling in a most ungainly fashion. On Friday the 2d July, the weather was sufficiently fine to enable us to pick up the buoy to which the cable was attached, and a very few hours sufficed to get the end of the cable on board. After hauling-in about a quarter of a mile of cable, the faulty place, which had been the original cause of the stoppage, was brought inboard, and very speedily the ship resumed her course.

These three faults well illustrated the advantages of the system of testing employed; for in each case, the existence of the fault must have manifested itself within three minutes after it left the ship—in fact, as soon as the pressure of the sea could force the water into the flaw. After stopping the engines, of course the 'way' of the ship would carry her seven or eight hundred yards before the paying-out could come to a *dead stop*, and this, added to perhaps a quarter of a mile run out previous to the detection of the fault, would account for the three-fourths of a mile more or less which in each case had to be hauled in before the fault was secured. Practically, however, we may say that each of the faults was discovered immediately on its leaving the ship—and this is the great advantage of Smith's system. Neither of the faults was bad enough to prevent the most perfect communication taking place between ship and shore while the tests for localising the fault were being made, so that ship could give any instructions whatsoever to shore which were considered necessary.

On the 5th July, we experienced another heavy gale; but as the testing of the cable remained perfect, the paying-out was not interrupted at all. In fact, after the 2d July, nothing occurred to interfere with the progress of the work. The St Pierre shore-end had been laid in readiness for our arrival by the *William Cory*, and the work of the *Great Eastern* was completed on the 13th July.

The rate of paying-out the cable was from five and a half to six knots per hour, the ship running five to five and a half knots. Very likely this speed might have been increased without incurring danger; but, considering the immense size and weight of the ship, and the difficulty of stopping her in case of accident, it was no doubt best to keep the speed within narrow limits.

As to the track of the cable, it seems from the soundings taken that the bottom is composed, the greater part of the distance, of the fine mud usually called 'ooze,' consisting of very minute shells—so minute that without a microscope the shape is not discernible. This 'ooze' constitutes the very best bed for a submarine cable. In fact, judging from the experience of 1866, the cable lies in it as securely and as free from harm as when coiled in the tanks at the manufactory; and if picking-up should become necessary, the softness of the 'ooze' renders the grappling of the cable comparatively easy.

The position of the present cable has one advantage over that of the English cables—namely, that it has been kept carefully off the Newfoundland Banks, and will therefore not be liable to the breakages by icebergs which have already caused such expense and trouble to the English company. The cable is conducted several miles to the south of the 'Great Newfoundland Bank,' and then proceeds in a north-westerly direction to the western side of St Pierre Island, passing along a deep gully between the 'Green Bank' and the 'St Pierre Bank.' The length of the course selected is about 2330 knots, and the amount of cable paid out 2580 knots—making about ten per cent. allowance for 'slack,' or spare cable paid out to cover the inequalities of the bottom, and to allow of picking up, should such become necessary. Without taking notice of the 300 knots from the Brest shore, and the 500 knots from Newfoundland, where the water is shallow, the depth varies from 1700 to 2700 fathoms, the deepest part being

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situated in about latitude 45 degrees north, and longitude 43 degrees west.

Two days after the completion of the Brest and St Pierre section, the laying of the section from St Pierre to Boston was commenced. This cable was divided into three pieces, coiled respectively in the *William Cory*, the *Scanderia*, and the *Chiltern*.

The course of this cable runs through shallow water nearly the whole distance, and therefore the paying-out of it was not attended with that excitement which existed during the voyage from Brest to Newfoundland. It was felt that if even the cable should break, and be for a time lost, it would be a perfectly easy matter to grapple for it and pick it up; so that when, on the 20th July—through a 'foul-flake' or tangle in the tank of the *Scanderia*—the cable did actually snap, a very few hours sufficed to drop the grappling-iron, haul up the cable, make a fresh splice, and resume operations in the usual way. This foul-flake was about the only thing that caused any considerable delay in the paying-out of the cable, which was completed on Friday, the 23d July, in the presence of a large number of spectators, including about a hundred representatives of the American press, who came down *en masse*, each of them struggling to obtain the earliest information.

The landing-place of the cable was at Duxbury, a few miles from Plymouth, celebrated as the spot whereon the Pilgrim Fathers first landed—a coincidence which the Americans did not fail to make the most of in the speechifying which followed the completion of the work.

The length of this shorter section of the cable was 750 knots; adding which to the 2580 knots from Brest to St Pierre, we have continuous submarine communication for 3330 knots. The signals through the whole of this immense length are as distinct and readable as between any two points on an English land line, and can be sent at a much greater speed than the business of the line is likely to require. The signals at present consist of the oscillations of a spot of light on a screen, reflected from the mirror of a 'Thomson's Reflecting Galvanometer,' as in the English cables; but we believe this is likely to be superseded by a very delicate printing-instrument, also, if we are rightly informed, the invention of Sir W. Thomson.

Thus is completed the first direct line of submarine communication between Europe and the United States. No doubt there will be found plenty of room for it, without injuring, in any material degree, the interests of the English companies. We notice that the latter have already reduced their tariff, in order to keep up with the French company. This, of course, will be a great boon to a large section of the commercial fraternity, to whom the high tariff hitherto existing has been an insuperable barrier to frequent communication with America.

But, setting aside the interests of private companies, which are of comparatively little consequence, we believe that the present cable will serve still more strongly to unite in sympathy the Old World to the New, and to make it more apparent that the interests of the two worlds are bound up together. We would fain hope that by the increase of traffic induced by a decreased tariff, there will be found room for still another cable across the Atlantic.

We confess to a slight feeling of pride that this great work has been accomplished by Englishmen; but waiving this, we rejoice that the three greatest nations of the world—England, France, and the United States—have joined in the execution of a work which cannot fail to help forward in a high degree the progress of civilisation.

A COUNTY FAMILY.

CHAPTER XLI.—WHICH PLACES OUR FRIENDS.

Herbert Stanhope had not exaggerated the matter when he said that Mr Waller blamed himself exceedingly for his late obstinacy in resisting Denton's appeals, and was deeply touched by the fatal consequences arising from it. But in a day or two, and by the time the public inquiry was commenced, the quick-witted man had not only recovered his mental balance, but had persuaded himself that if he had not absolutely acted for the best, he had only committed an error in judgment, after all. By the time the inquest was concluded, Lucy, who remembered with a sharp but secret pang her father's statement with respect to the depreciation of the reservoir shares, was perhaps the only one not brought over to his own conviction, so earnest and plausible were his explanations. Had he not Mr Flywheel's letter, upon which, laying his hand upon it in the solemnest manner, he shewed that that eminent engineer, whose reputation was European, had had no misgiving of the embankment's stability, and had ridiculed those entertained, only a few months before, upon apparently precisely similar grounds, by Mr Denton? It was true that the latter gentleman had proved himself to be in the right, and thereby won a place for himself in his profession, elevated indeed for one so young; but was he, Mr Waller, to be blamed for taking his views from the master, and not the pupil? As to interested motives, of which, thank Heaven, he had, however, not heard a whisper, it was evident that he was the very last man to be accused in that respect. The expenses of such an official inspection as Mr Denton had demanded would have been trifling, though it was true, as one of the chief shareholders, he (Mr Waller) would have had to bear a considerable portion of it; but even as a matter of insurance to his property at Mosedale, it would have been worth his while to disburse a few pounds, if he had really thought there was occasion for it; whereas, what had actually happened to him, in consequence of his unfortunate though not wilful neglect to do so, was total and irremediable ruin. Yes, he stood before that court a ruined man; since, even if the result of that inquiry should not be to compel the reservoir Company to repay the enormous pecuniary losses which had been incurred by the catastrophe, let only the price of the shares at present be compared with what it had been a few days ago—but he did not care to enter into that subject. What was liability or pecuniary loss, that it was to be mentioned at such a time as that, when Rachel was weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they were not! And what was ruin or poverty to *him*, compared with the sting of that remorse which would never cease to torture him for having, however innocently—however much in accordance with the highest scientific authority—neglected precautions by which this great calamity, which had not spared even those who were nearest and dearest to him and his, might have been averted!

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So ingenious and eloquent, indeed, was the ex-M.P.'s defence, that, next to the immediate sufferers by the catastrophe, there was no one who attracted so much public pity as the chairman of that Board which at first was looked upon as having been the culpable cause of all that had happened. Even John Denton, to whose sagacity Mr Waller paid so many compliments at the expense of his own, felt half convinced, and his evidence certainly bore less hardly upon the latter than might reasonably have been expected. Indeed, so far as his pecuniary affairs were concerned (if one left out of the question the expectations he had cherished respecting a rich son-in-law), Mr Waller was upon the whole exceedingly benefited by the bursting of the embankment, since, under shelter of it, he was able to become bankrupt himself—which must have happened at all events sooner or later—in a most honourable and gratifying manner, as he always spoke of it (and honestly believed it to be), though he only paid threepence in the pound.

There was no such excuse for Herbert Stanhope, who was greatly blamed in the county for disposing first of the great Firgrove, and immediately afterwards of the whole Curlew Hall estate, which was purchased by a commercial person of no family, and, it was greatly feared, with an eye to dispose of it on building-leases. He paid, however, a much larger price for it than had been expected; so that, after the mortgages were discharged, there was sufficient to pay all Stanhope's turf debts, and yet leave him a thousand or two to begin the world afresh with. Advisers were not wanting as to the most judicious investment of this little property. Sporting Dawlish, who had been rather 'hit' on the last Derby, pressed his friend very much to lay it out on a 'perfect certainty' for the ensuing Leger—no gammon about an animal that can't be beaten, like your *Vignette*, but a really foregone conclusion—a secret so valuable and momentous that it could not be trusted to ink and paper. Never since lords became blacklegs had there been such an opportunity, upon his honour. But Herbert, with many thanks for that and for a past kindness, which, he said, and truly, he should never forget, declined this tempting offer. He had 'a perfect certainty,' he wrote, as far as a promise could go, of his own, which was quite sufficient for him; in point of fact, he was engaged to be married to Miss Lucy Waller.

'Then Herby is distanced, and that fellow Denton has taken up the running with the other filly,' exclaimed Dawlish when he reached that part of the letter; and we, who have had such opportunities of observing for ourselves, may easily imagine that the sagacious young gentleman was right.

A second astute counsellor as to the disposal of the relics of Stanhope's property offered himself in the person of Mr Waller, who had consented, in the handsomest and most agreeable manner (though not till he had found opposition useless), to Stanhope's marriage with his daughter. Those two or three thousand pounds of his, he assured him, could be quadrupled in a year or two, by investing it in the submarine tunnel about to be constructed between Weymouth and St Heliers, in which adventure he could, by favour, still procure for him a few shares. But Stanhope declined even this glittering bait.

John Denton, on whose judgment he had had such good cause to rely, and who never expressed himself upon any subject of which he had not obtained considerable mastery, had communicated to him some facts received from a sure hand concerning a certain property on the Murray, near Sandhurst in Victoria, and he made up his mind to emigrate thither, and, if possible, to purchase it. He knew something of stock-farming; he was strong and active, and impatient for work for its own sake, even if he had not had the strongest incentive to it in Lucy, who herself in nowise shrank from the prospect of a new life, which, if somewhat hard and rough, should be at least neither hollow nor dishonest. She longed to leave Mosedale, with all its bitter associations, and where she could not persuade herself that her father was regarded by his neighbours as he believed himself to be; and the greater distance that was placed between them and it, even though it were half the world, the better. But, unfortunately, the relics of Stanhope's fortune only just sufficed for the purchase of the stock and land in question and for passage-money, leaving nothing for outfit, and the necessary expenses of setting up an establishment in the bush.

'You should have at least an additional five hundred pounds,' said Denton thoughtfully.

'That, at all events, makes my decision easy,' answered Stanhope, with the ghost of his old careless laugh, 'for it's plain I can't take the farm.'

'If you are not too proud to borrow the money from me,' said Denton simply, 'I shall have a real pleasure in lending it to you.'

Stanhope coloured to his very temples. 'No, I could not think of that,' said he decisively.

At this, Denton turned as red as he. 'I am sorry,' said he stiffly. 'I was in hopes that our relations with one another would have admitted of that at least, even if I had offered it as a favour, and not as I honestly meant it—as an eligible investment.'

'There is no man's money which I would borrow—nay, if you come to that, accept as a gift—so readily, and with so little sense of humiliation, as yours, sir,' said Stanhope warmly. 'Do not let us misunderstand each other again, my friend.'

'Oh, I see,' exclaimed Denton; 'you do not give me credit for having so large a private purse. You fancy I should be obliged to apply elsewhere.'

'Yes, to some one whom I respect and esteem above measure, but to whom I could not be pecuniarily indebted.'

'Well, she would not like to hear that, I know,' said Denton softly. 'But perhaps you are right. It is a delicacy, at all events, which does you honour. But, as I was about to say, this money is my own, worked pretty hard for, I flatter myself, and you will much oblige me by taking it. It is as good an investment as can be found, in my opinion, anywhere; so take it, and no thanks.'

'And this is the man whom I have been idiot enough to call "no gentleman,"' thought Stanhope, as he shook hands over that bargain.

We may say here that Stanhope and his bride went out to Sandhurst accordingly, and prospered fairly for some years. We trust even the fair sex will forgive Miss Lucy for not immolating herself, after the fashion of suttee, on the funeral pyre of a husband *in posse*. She frankly informed Herbert that she could never love him exactly as she had loved young Richard; but he quietly acquiesced in that arrangement, acknowledging bluntly,

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Tartuffe that he was, that he had not merited such adoration. He had no doubt she had sufficient capabilities for affection left for the deserts of a vagabond like him; which indeed proved to be the case. She had always liked him; and when, after her lover's death had softened her, and made her sensitive to all such matters, she saw her once playmate and neighbour about to commit a baseness in endeavouring to win a hand that he knew had been promised to another, she took him soundly to task, received the confession of his enormous liabilities, and began to pity him immensely. *Facilis descensus amoris.*

They married, as we have said; and when they sailed across the world, Mr Waller accompanied them. He was not a man to bury his talents in the wilderness—good wine needs no *Bush*, he was won't, rather egotistically, to observe—but established himself in excellent quarters at Melbourne, where he became a great social success; entered the legislature, and is not without good grounds for believing that, on the next change of ministry, he may be intrusted with the management of the colonial finances. '"Advance Australia," will then,' he epigrammatically observes, 'be indeed its motto;' for he has several speculations on hand, which only need a little help from the government to turn out Eldorados, and they shall have it.

Of course we are much anticipating matters; but after some years of that fair prosperity to which we have referred as having been Stanhope's lot, the information which Denton had received from a scientific friend respecting the probable value of the Sandhurst property at length bore fruit. The very last gold discovery, known as 'the Spring Creek Rush,' took place upon Stanhope's own land, and he sold that portion for what his father-in-law, with some exaggeration, considering that it was hundreds of acres of the usual thickness, describes as 'its weight in gold.' At all events, Mr and Mrs Stanhope were among the arrivals from Melbourne in one of the Australian steamers this very year; and it is 'understood' by the chroniclers of such local pieces of information, 'that, thanks to a lucky but well-deserved stroke of Fortune's pick,' the estate of Curlew Hall is soon about to pass back into the hands of the same family that have held it for many centuries. In the meantime, the 'wealthy and respected pair' are staying at Blackburn Manor, the seat of John Denton, Esq., M.P. It is also announced by the same authority, that the whole of the debts of 'our late talented fellow-townsman, Mr Waller,' have been discharged, notwithstanding there being no legal necessity for such an act, in full.

John Denton, although a wealthy man, by no means owes his prosperity to the fact that he has married an heiress. He is a magnate of the world of cogs and wheels, a prince in his own right of the powers of steam and iron; idleness, albeit of course he has no need (in the vulgar sense) to toil, is impossible with him. But nobody grudges him either money or influence, since he uses both for good. Every man who shews signs of promise, no matter what his calling, yet lacks means, finds a friend, not a patron, in John Denton. His landed neighbours, who looked on him at first with considerable suspicion, and repeated to themselves their favourite shibboleth that 'it takes three generations to make a gentleman'—as if thirteen did not as often as not produce a scoundrel—have made up their minds that, notwithstanding those infernal radical notions of his, there is nothing very dangerous about him, after all. But in their secret hearts they are afraid of him. Mrs Denton herself, it is acknowledged on all hands, is one of the sweetest of gentlewomen; and notwithstanding that early experience of hers—'she was quite poor, my dear, at one time; indeed, abjectly poor; worked at pillow-lace for a livelihood; in fact, it's too shocking to talk about'—with manners not inferior to those of the lord-lieutenant's wife. 'But then she comes of a good old stock, and her children at least, of whom she has several, may be held to be members of *a county family.*'

CHAPTER XLII., AND LAST.

One of the most favourite of the evil phrases of the critic runs as follows: 'This story has been hurried to a conclusion;' and we are quite aware, under ordinary circumstances, that such a remark would not be wholly inapplicable to our present narrative. But then we submit that the being swept away *en masse* by a burst reservoir does really hasten the disposal of one's *dramatis personæ* most uncommonly. Suppose, for instance, the critics themselves had been feasting that sad night on the river Curlew, as they often do at Greenwich—which perhaps accounts, in one or two of them, for just the least tinge of biliousness in their reviews—suppose, I repeat, *they* had been assembled at 'the cottage,' discussing some whitebait, let us say, which had been discovered in the mill-stream above, what would have saved even them—let alone a respectable, but humdrum county family like the Blackburns—from being 'hurried to a conclusion?' The author, of course, would have risked his life in the attempt to preserve his friends and patrons; *he*, like Denton, would have thundered down the valley upon any quadruped—or bicycle—which his limited means might have enabled him to have hired. But unless the whole of the excellent company had happened to come out, like Ellen, into the garden to take the air (as is sometimes necessary after whitebait), what could have been done for them? It would have been no use for the poor fellow to—how shall I write it?—holloa. When did critic ever pay the least attention to an author's cries? The whole 'biling' of them, if one may use so vulgar a term in speaking of so sacred a subject, would have instantly been swept to their allotted places in paradise. Perhaps, being of a more ethereal construction than our commonplace tenants of the Fishery, they would not have been dibbled into the rose-garden, but have been carried down stream with the rocks and trees in a manner shocking to think of, so mutilated, perhaps, that the representatives of the *Saturday Review*, for instance, could scarcely be discerned from those of the *Pall Mall Gazette*. The subject is too frightful to dwell upon; but we repeat it *might* have happened; and in that case, would a surviving critic, when noticing some agreeable story founded on the catastrophe which had befallen his brethren, venture to say that it was 'hurried to a conclusion?'

Thus much of apology we think it right to make for having caused the funeral-baked meats, as it may have seemed, to furnish forth the marriage

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tables. But time has fled, if we have taken no count of it, since that fatal night: though Stanhope and Lucy had married and quitted England within six months, at least a year elapsed before John Denton was wedded to his Ellen. In Mrs Blackburn they found no obstacle to their engagement, now that her Willy had been snatched away from her: she never had had any real objection to it, except in so far as it seemed to militate against her son's prospects; and indeed the young engineer had, but for that, been always a favourite with her. And he deserved to be so: though she never knew how deeply she was indebted to him, she felt grateful for the tender solicitude with which he endeavoured to soothe her declining days, and perhaps even for the reticence which his courteous delicacy used with respect to those weary eighteen months of unjust exile he had suffered partly at her hands; but she never guessed that, for her sake, he had hidden a secret in his own breast, and kept it to the end, a secret a hint of which would have brought her gray hairs with more than sorrow to the grave. At present, next to the loss of her son's life, what grieved her most was that his body had not been recovered, or rather, that it had formed one of that score of undistinguishable victims of the catastrophe whom not even their own mothers could have known. She had not even the sad consolation of feeling that her boy lay in the neighbouring vault with the rest of his long line of ancestors, and that one day—which was not far off, for she only survived old Anthony two years—she should be laid beside him. Thanks to her grandson-in-law, she was spared a far more terrible woe.

Denton of course had been one of the chief witnesses at the inquest, and among the dreadful incidents of which he had been the spectator was the identification, or the attempt at identification, of the victims of the flood. Now, there was one body—that of a female—which, although totally uninjured, remained unidentified to the end. It was recognised by a widow in Mosedale in humble circumstances, who let lodgings, as having been a tenant of hers for a few days, but she neither knew her name nor where she came from. The features were strange to all who looked upon them—except one man. Denton alone knew that it was no other than Mrs William Blackburn—poor Bess; and instinct, stronger even than his sense of justice, bade him hold his peace. There was much talk about this particular incident, for the case was very peculiar: this body had not been hurried down the river, like the rest, but was found in the reservoir itself, when the waters had drained themselves away; and, moreover, it was the opinion of the doctors that death had occurred some days before the general catastrophe. It was supposed that the unhappy woman, whoever she was, had gone up to that desolate moor, and there committed suicide. And in this idea Denton himself had at first coincided. It seemed to him, who knew her timid nature well, probable enough, that, being deserted by her husband—for it was now evident that his story of her having died at Formosa was false—she had ventured to come into the neighbourhood, perhaps with the hope of even yet winning him back to her, perhaps only with the fond desire of looking at his newly acquired greatness afar off; and that then having heard, as she was certain to do, of his unprincipled courtship of Lucy Waller, wretchedness and despair had caused her to commit self-destruction. But afterwards it was his lot to hear from Mrs Blackburn's own lips—how little she knew with what horror they were filling him!—a circumstance which convinced him that her son had been a guiltier wretch than even he had deemed him.

She was talking, as she took that grim pleasure in doing which may be noticed in all persons of her class, of the terrible events which had deprived her of son and husband at a blow; and Ellen, striving to evade the subject, had used some commonplace about the terrible unexpectedness of the calamity, when Mrs Blackburn said: 'Nay, Ellen; it may have been unexpected; but now that it has happened, I may tell you both that it did not come without warning—I mean without another sort of warning than that which John gave us; for I myself had a Message from the Dead.' Then she told them how she had seen the ghost of Bess in Redmoor Firgrove, and how, since she knew it boded ill to the Blackburn race, she had revealed it to her Willy.

'Then that accounts,' said Ellen gravely, 'for poor Uncle William's strange behaviour in that very wood when we were moving to the cottage;' and she narrated—of course omitting all mention of William's brutal conduct to herself—his wild bearing during that journey.

'Ay,' said Mrs Blackburn, 'doubtless that was the cause. I know for many a day after I had told him, my Willy used to go over the moor, in hopes, may be, of seeing his poor Bess once again, even though she was no longer flesh and blood. Heaven only knows whether he did or not; though it is now clear to me that she came on his account.'

Once again that day, when Denton was alone with her, the widow again reverted to this subject.

'I didn't like to talk more about it before Ellen this morning,' said she, 'because just now, you know, in her delicate condition, it might not be so well'——

'Forgive me, my dear Mrs Blackburn,' interrupted the young man gravely; 'but it is a subject that you should not talk of to *anybody*, and upon which, if you will take my advice, you will for the future be silent.'

'What! it's unlucky, is it? Well, I daresay it is; and I am sure we have had misfortunes enough without our bringing them upon ourselves; so I will never mention it again—only just tell me, John—you who are so wise about everything—do you think it possible that my poor dear Willy ever *did* see Bess on Redmoor?'

'Yes, madam,' replied Denton, with averted face and involuntary shudder—which Mrs Blackburn ascribed to superstitious fear—'I think he did.'

THE END.

SOME VIEWS OF A UNIT.

THE ROYAL CHERRY-STONES.

In days of old, it would have been in the highest degree impertinent in a Person of No Consequence, like myself, to entertain either views or opinions, and far less to express them. But to-day I am the cynosure of all intelligent eyes. I am one of those Units which form the Masses, and it is for my benefit (as I am informed) that the two great parties in the state are for ever toiling. To improve my condition, mental and bodily, is the end and aim of all modern statesmanship. The idea of

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my necessities pains the Conservative nobility more acutely than the gout itself; and afflicts aristocratic Whigs more keenly than loss of office. The Church desires to retain its revenues solely with the object of applying them to my needs; and even the Law is being shaped and hewn into such forms as may most conveniently suit my exigences. If they do but succeed in pleasing *me*, Mr Gladstone will no longer cast about for his three courses, and Mr Bright will nod his head approvingly, and cease to speak his burning words. The misfortune is, however, that all these good designs are frustrated from the ignorance about me which is prevalent not only in exalted circles, but in those which profess to understand me thoroughly. The Press, for instance, rests its highest claims to respect upon the fact that it is my mouthpiece; that if I could speak (only unhappily I am inarticulate), I should talk exactly like a Leading Article.

Far be it from me—being what I am—to contradict any voice of authority: my notions, as I am aware, are of themselves absolutely valueless; it is impossible to be too emphatic in that statement; but then, on the other hand, it cannot annoy anybody to hear them stated. People—I mean people of real intelligence, and education, and position—people who possess wealth, and trained wits, and learning, and everything, in short, which I do *not* possess—have only to reflect that I am a Person of No Consequence, and to forgive me. It is not worth while to be angry with a worm. Moreover, since these excellent folks do take such a marvellous interest in me, it is surely right that they should know what I really am. Some of them can only mark me from afar off, and at a great elevation—'Up in a Balloon' was the expression used by Somebody in parliament—and even those better situated can only use one eye at a time, watching me through a microscope; and that is not half so satisfactory, because (among other things) it compels them to wink at so much. The prevalent weakness of my superiors seems to me to be the use of one eye only; but there—I mean no offence: once more please to remember that if I happen to tread on anybody's toes, it is not designedly; if I ask a question or two which may seem impertinent, I do so like Miss Rosa Dartell, 'merely for information,' not at all with the idea of embarrassing my betters.

I want to know the reason of a number of things, which I daresay are simple enough and easily explicable, and which it would only occur to a Person of No Consequence to ask. Here is one of them.

Why is it that society generally—that is, Good Society—and all the Newspapers, are so enraged with that Unknown Individual, who, at a late horticultural fête in London, followed the Prince of Wales about, as he was eating cherries, and preserved the stones which he threw away? To be sure, it was rather a disagreeable case of sycophancy, but surely not an extreme one! It seems to me that H.R.H. himself could scarcely have been astonished at such a proceeding. Every word that poor young gentleman speaks is pounced upon as though he were the girl in the fairy tale who discoursed pearls and diamonds; he can't open his mouth but a reporter is ready to telegraph every syllable to headquarters, where it is set up in type. And, indeed, it would really seem that he is dowered with great peculiar graces of expression: he does not articulate like a common person at all, but always 'remarks in a condescending manner.' One might imagine that a young fellow who is a good deal mixed up with the military might occasionally indulge in the adjective 'jolly;' but this is not the case. On occasions to which that word might apply, 'he is graciously pleased to express his approbation.' He does not laugh, as Persons of No Consequence do; but it is sometimes 'not difficult to perceive that H.R.H. was considerably amused.' When he leaves town for some attractive spot—the lakes, or the moors, or the sea-coast—'he honours the neighbourhood with his august presence.' The works of Providence are expected to be in high spirits at the approach of this young man, and especially if any object should 'especially attract his attention.' Wherever he is announced to appear, a mob of more or less genteel folks gather together to applaud him. Even when he hurries through a railway station in a special train, both sides of the platform are lined with expectant faces and bare heads. If he takes a drive in a pony-carriage, it is reported; if he walks out with a gun and a dog, it is recorded; if he stops within doors, the affair is serious, and gives rise to 'alarming rumours.'

Is all this 'Loyalty?' Because, if so, it does not quite answer to the definition of that virtue in the dictionaries. And if not; if it is mere rank sycophancy and toadyism, what do you imagine that H.R.H. thinks of it all? What *can* a good-natured young gentleman, who has no absurd and conceited views of his own individuality, and who is sensible that his words are not the distillation of wisdom, nor his tastes the most exalted and appreciative that can possibly be conceived, think of it all? Above all, what can he think of his fellow-creatures who thus voluntarily abase themselves before him? What can he think of the distinguished fashionables who have to be appealed to by the *Times'* correspondent *not* to go to Wildbad, who are adjured to leave H.R.H. one summer month in peace and free from British snobbism? I know what *I* should feel if I were he. I should come to the conclusion—but then, to be sure, I am a Person of No Consequence, and my conclusions are not worth coming to—that since the public, over which I am eventually to reign, are such born sycophants, it would not much signify how I behaved to them as their Ruler; that, whatever I did, they would be sure to bow, and smile, and applaud; and that, in particular, this Newspaper Press, which was said to be the guardian of liberty and the fosterer of independence, would be sure to be my most obedient humble servant.

If in all this lip-homage there was any recognition of merit—or even an approval of one thing above another thing—there would be less to complain of, although even then the flattery would be laid on coarsely enough, and as it were in slabs; but, as the case stands, it is a mere senseless adulation, which would be loathsome, if it were not absurd. Whether or not it is a sign of the Americanisation of our institutions, I know not, but no one can fail to have observed that side by side with the broadening of our basis of representation has grown a certain fulsome behaviour towards persons in eminent positions, quite distinct from due respect, and quite apart from any merit or public advantage in themselves.

Many titled, but otherwise obscure individuals, have, as it happens, of late appeared in our courts

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of justice, to meet with a reception, to say the least of it, very indecorous in such places. There is only one police magistrate in London, and (as it seems) not a single judge upon the bench, who can refrain from addressing a witness, or referring to a defendant, if he chance to be a lord, in the following terms: 'Now, my lord, I shall treat you exactly as though you were a common person;' or (in a case where the minister of justice evidently wished to appear the moral successor of that judge who sent the heir-apparent to prison): 'My lord, your rank has no effect upon me whatever; I shall do my duty just as though you were a chimney-sweep.'

'Why, good Heavens!' one would say, 'of course he would!' Where is the necessity of his saying that? Methinks he doth protest too much. It is generally understood that a court of justice is indifferent to gradations of rank. But the fact is, that so rampant has Snobbism of all kinds become, that even those excellent and honest folk, the judges, hasten to free themselves from the suspicion of the universal contagion, and in doing so, appear considerably infected with the very disease they would appear to have escaped.

And as it is with the judges, so it appears to me is it with a free and independent press. Conscious of its own vulgar prying and persistent dogging of the footsteps of royalty, conscious of its daily chronicle of the most trivial acts of Eminent Personages, it affects a fervour of indignation against the devotee who picked up the cherry-stones discarded by the heir-apparent. This much-abused collector of curiosities (whose wife is perhaps now wearing a necklace formed of those precious stones with great satisfaction) is only one step lower in the scale of sycophancy after all; and, moreover, he may not be a Teacher and an Elevator, as the third estate aspires to be, but only a Unit among the Millions, like myself.

P.S.—After these remarks were penned, news arrives from the Underworld, that even that part of the globe is similarly infected. 'The sheets and towels used by Prince Alfred while in New Zealand are to be sold by auction, and it is expected will bring a high price.'

LIFE AND DEATH AT ST BREACA'S.

IN EIGHT CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER V.

Mrs Secker's prepossession against Jeanne increased rapidly as she perceived that she tried to entangle Augustine's affections; just as, before his return, she had laid herself out to attract his father's admiration. She was by no means the wife she would have chosen for her pure-hearted boy, and it was really distressing to have him unsettled just as his prospects were so good. She had no doubt that Mr Hoskins would do for him as if he were his own son, provided he continued to please him; but he could not contemplate marrying for many years; and this foreigner had it not in her to be the wise, tender, constant friend to whom it is safe to be bound for a long engagement. If she saw any one who would be a better match, she would throw Augustine over, and he would never recover the blow. Yet she, poor mother, could do nothing. With all her heart, Mrs Secker longed to have the holidays over; and how very hard that was!

It was inevitable that Augustine should be caught. He was trustful and affectionate, and had never been familiar in young ladies' society. Here was a caressing, impulsive young creature, pretty in his sight, a stranger, unprotected, and most unfortunately circumstanced, hanging on his words and looks, telling him, with her great varying dark eyes, that she worshipped him. She could have no interested motive, said he to himself. She knew that he was poor, and that his family were down in the world. In her own selfish, unrefined way, Jeanne did love him; loved him, though in her folly she had resolved to marry for riches, and believed that nothing could be easier in England; loved him, though she intended to rid herself of him if he interfered with her advancement. She had never imagined any feeling so delicious as the certainty that his heart was entirely hers; she could think of nothing so intolerable as his bestowing a thought on another woman. When they parted on the day before his return to Loganstone, a tremendous rush of feeling overpowered every consideration. In a few passionate, hurried words, he implored her to have pity on him, and be true to him for ever; and weeping, clinging to him, she told him she lived but in his love. He had never dreamed that for him life could have anything so enchanting. To his prematurely chastened experience, it had seemed as, at the best, to be met with fortitude. He was in a new, vivid, unguessed-at world, while he listened to her fond tones, looked at her glowing face, felt her tears and caresses. How should he tread again his beaten track? Was all the happiness allotted him condensed into that crisis? Thus he questioned, and checked a shiver, even then.

That night Jeanne walked very long in the colonnade. A July full moon shone serenely on the beautiful bay; glow-worms sparkled in the grass. But a few yards from her, the calm deep sea whispered to the rocks below; flowers made the still air fragrant; but the girl's was not a poetic nature, and the delicious influences did not teach her. Brooding over turbid thoughts, she walked to and fro till fatigue compelled her to stop. Leaning against the sill of the schoolroom window, she looked up, and out of herself. Her mind rambled somewhat in this way: 'How Augustine would enjoy this! How different we are! I wonder why. We are both young, both unfortunate; but we are no more alike than this calm is to a tempest.' She started, for steps were stirring in the house. It was very unusual after midnight. That Mr Monsey was up great part of the night, was understood; but the room he called his study, and to which he betook himself in the evening, was in a distant part of the house, and she had never met him at night. The door opened, and he came out, intoxicated evidently, and malicious.

'Ah, Mademoiselle, sorry to have disturbed you. Pleasant to be out this fine night. But where's Young Pill-box? Hope I've not frightened him away. Sort of thing is charming; used to be long ago, I know; but not quite proper, is it?'

'I am afraid it is later than I thought it was, Mr Monsey. I will wish you good-night.'

'Oh, pray, don't. Can I find him for you? Not proper, as I said, but pleasant, very. I never spoil sport. I'm not strait-laced; only thing I'm particular about—hate popery. Had a priest here a few weeks ago: won't stand that sort of thing. Sharp girl, very—said he was a miner; but

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post-boy told landlady—stupid fellow.' Angry and terrified, she passed him, and went to her room.

Three months later, haggard and weary, Augustine presented himself late one evening before his startled mother. His first words were: 'Is my father in?' and his next: 'Thank God, that he is not! for I am come home in disgrace—ruined, perhaps.'

The sweet eyes fixed on him expressed the fullest trust and sympathy, and it was no shrinking from increased temporal trouble, but deep affection, that made her voice tremble as she said: 'Never mind, my own child; I 'm sure it 's not your fault. Don't hurry to tell me, if it distresses you.'

'But I must tell you before my father comes, if possible. Perhaps you have guessed that I am engaged to Jeanne Royer. I could not tell you sooner, because I knew you did not think well of her, and I cannot bear even a look that blames her, poor darling! Her lot is indeed hard, and excitement about her has worn me terribly. Her letters have been full of complainings, and a week ago one of them drove me nearly mad. She hinted that impertinence from that old ruffian Monsey was added to her troubles; that she ought not to remain in his house, yet knew not what to do.' He paused, drew a long breath, and set his teeth firmly together. 'Of course, I have been utterly unfit for my work. I directed medicine wrong twice on Tuesday. Mr Hoskins made the best of it, and implored me to be careful. Yesterday, I sent an ounce of laudanum to old Mrs Penruddock, instead of a black dose; and if she had not known the smell, of course she would have taken it, and died. Nothing could be kinder than the Hoskinses. She cried; and he said he would rather have lost his little finger, but that there was no help for it; that not only was his practice in danger, but the patients' lives were; that whatever came of it afterwards, for the present I must leave him. So here I am, as if you have not enough to bear without this.'

She had stood behind him, that if her countenance expressed anguish, he might not see it; and she had passed her fingers soothingly through his bright curls, and sometimes laid her cheek on his head while he was speaking. When he had done, she drew him close to her bosom, and they wept together; but she felt that her indignation against Jeanne exceeded her pity for her child. She wished for a moment that she could hate her without sinning, but all she said was: 'Let us thank God, dear, that there is nothing worse, and try to bear it meekly, and hope for the best. Go to bed before your father comes. I will bring you tea. You are really ill, and I will tell him so, and all'——

'But he will storm at you—say it 's all your fault, perhaps.'

'Never mind: I do not really care. I used to be afraid of him; I 'm not now; and he is so uncertain, that he may take quite a different view.'

And so it proved. He expressed nothing but sympathy for Augustine, and evaporated whatever indignation he felt in the subjoined note to Mr Monsey:

DEAR SIR—When I allowed myself to become a frequent guest at your table, I did not suspect that degradation of my family was involved in the acceptance of your hospitalities, and that the blandishments of a French governess were designed to ruin my son's prospects. He is dismissed from the honourable though humble post which his father's misfortunes made of moment to him, and he is come to add to the burden that presses on his mother's heart. While I congratulate you and your tool on the success of your manœuvres, I beg to have it distinctly understood that my door is closed against you and every member of your household. A poor incumbent may possess the feelings of a gentleman, though he is not the younger son of a James's baronet.—I remain, dear sir, yours truly, MARCUS SECKER.

When Mr Monsey had read the note, he went to find his wife, and sent for Jeanne. 'You had better get rid of her, perhaps,' he said. 'I do not care much about this, whatever it may mean; though I think the girls ought to have a steady person. But she 's a concealed papist—and I have an objection to that sort of thing.'

'I do not care whether she goes or stays, but I must have some one; and the children are used to her, and fond of her, and I don't know where to get any one else.'

'Where did you get her?'

'Suzanne found her out.'

'The deuce she did! I did not know that.'

'I don't suppose you cared. Suzanne heard of her from her sister, who is Madame de Montansier's maid. This girl was a protégée of Madame de Montansier's. She has done very well.'

'I never liked her.'

'No; you don't think her pretty. I do.'

When Jeanne entered, pale and hard, Mrs Monsey began: 'Mr Monsey has had a very extraordinary letter from Mr Secker, from which it appears that his son is in some trouble, and that it is your fault. Mr Monsey wishes to know if you have anything to say which we ought to know.'—Jeanne seemed unable to speak; and Mrs Monsey continued: 'Of course a person in your position is required to be steady; and though Mr Secker is half mad, there must be some ground for so very strange a letter as he has written.'

'You 'd better make a clean breast of it, Mademoiselle,' said Mr Monsey with a touch of the manner which had been so offensive one night in the colonnade. 'Mr Secker desires that you will not enter his house again.'

She stood at bay; her hands crossed and tightly clasped, resting on the table; her eyes darkening, her frame quivering. Mr and Mrs Monsey looked at her curiously. At last she spoke, very hoarsely: 'It seems to me, Madame, that I have nothing to say unless I know the charge against me.'

'You may read the note,' said Mr Monsey, giving it to her.

How she had longed for it! not venturing to hope for it.—Was that all? Why, it was a triumph! There was a man in the world who had sacrificed everything for her! What signified anything else? Vanity, intensely gratified, sent the blood to her face, raised her head, and strengthened her voice. 'I am not ashamed of loving and being loved,' she said firmly.

'But your "loving and being loved," as you call it,' uttered Mrs Monsey pettishly, 'ought to have been better managed, so as not to bring impertinent letters on us. Besides, I have a great regard for Mr Secker, and I do not choose to have him annoyed by any one in my house.'

'I can only say, Madame, that I do not know what Mr Secker means, but that I am affianced to his son.'

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Mr Monsey left the room whistling.

'You are very foolish,' went on Mrs Monsey. 'If even the young man does not change his mind—and of course he will—he has not a chance of marrying for years, and I am not surprised that his father is angry. You must understand that I do not choose my daughters to be made aware of this exceedingly silly affair. The longer young ladies are kept ignorant of such things, the better.'

Jeanne longed to laugh mockingly, and her lip curled as she replied: 'Madame may rely on my respecting their simplicity.—May I go now, Madame?'

'Yes. I don't think I've anything more to say at present.'

Mr Monsey wrote:

MY DEAR SIR—I am at a loss to infer more from your note than that my amiable young friend Augustine is in some difficulty. Well, 'boys will be boys,' and we were boys ourselves once. I hope there will be nothing to prevent his coming with you to dine with us to-morrow.—Yours, very truly, ARTHUR MONSEY.

Mr Secker was furious, and replied:

DEAR SIR—My son and I will not dine with you to-morrow. Gentlemanlike tact is one thing; low vulgar cunning another.—Yours truly, MARCUS SECKER.

Mr Monsey thought if he could prolong the correspondence, it would be worth publishing, but Mr Secker vouchsafed no answer to his second note, which follows:

MY DEAR SIR—I agree with you fully, and am really sorry you won't come. I have a capital turbot.—Yours, very truly, ARTHUR MONSEY.

Jeanne had to return to the schoolroom, and teach for an hour, then to take her pupils to walk. She could do nothing till after the early dinner, when they went to their mother for a while, and she was free. Then she wrote:

MY VERY MUCH BELOVED—You are in trouble, and you have not told it to me. I find it from a cruel note of your father's to Mr Monsey; he gave it to me to read, and asked what it meant. It says that I have ruined you—I, who would die to save you; that I must not go to the house—I, who am languishing to see you. What has happened? Where shall we meet? Write to me, I conjure you, by the post. I go to the office with this—I fear to trust any one. Oh, why are we so unhappy? We, so young? And you are good—so good—too good for your poor loving JEANNE.

How, indeed, was she to see him? And why had he not written to her for several days? She *must* see him—must know thoroughly the extent of her power over him. She had meant him to be jealous; but not to drive him to desperation. What had he done? She wished she had not implied the lie about Mr Monsey. Of course, she knew—no woman ever gauged her effect better—that Mr Monsey thought no more about her than she thought about him. But how could she explain it all away? Augustine was very innocent and unsuspicious. Perhaps he would believe her if she said that she had taken alarm too easily—that French notions respecting the propriety to be observed towards young girls were so rigid that she was very probably mistaken. But how could she contrive to see him? He would never enter Mr Monsey's house, believing him to be a rascal; and after her experience of his sneering jocularity, she dared not ask Augustine to meet her at night, as, French proprieties notwithstanding, she otherwise certainly would have done.

MY BEECH CLUMP.

Soft sunshine floods a peaceful world,
And flames above the wold;
The forest-sprays gleam half-uncurled,
Tipped each with lambent gold.

But most the grand old beeches take
A fuller, warmer glow,
Whereat old memories awake,
Sweet fancies bud and blow.

How oft, in many a bygone May,
For men long dead, their sheen
Brightened the dusky woodland way
With curving breadths of green!

And shook, 'twixt many a summer sun,
In graceful checkered shades—
The ringdove's haunt, the squirrel's run,
When Autumn strewed the glades.

Their knotted roots type earnest will,
That holds its purpose fast;
Their monstrous arms may bend, but still
Regain their place at last.

Each bough for me—each dancing spray—
With happy dreams is bright;
I love their murmurs through the day,
Their rustling through the night.

A boy, I clomb each mighty head,
And 'neath their shadow slept,
Tints from their golden Autumn shed,
O'er youth's fond visions crept.

Ye cherished trees! may many a swain
Beneath you tell his grief,
And in your magic find his pain
From Nature wins relief.

No axe shall cut, no knife shall lop
Or bole or spreading arm;
Spare, winds, each venerable top!
Here, tempests, breathe no harm!

Endeared to home and homely life,
Ye share my hope, my fear;
Wave gently, when I quit earth's strife,
Above your poet's bier!

And murmur mournful dirges low,
And shiver in the breeze;
And as new Summers come and go,
New generations please;

And influence ev'ry thoughtful mind,
And move each kindly breast
In Nature and her joys to find
Contentment, patience, rest!

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A PEEP AT POMPEII.

LOOKING at a village on the slope of Vesuvius, apparently as entire as if of recent erection, I was surprised to be told '*that* is Pompeii.' Though aware how completely the greater part of the disinterred city had been exposed to the light of day, it somehow had not occurred to me that, seen from Naples, a distance of eleven miles, it would be thus distinctly apparent. The distance from which it was seen prevented us perceiving that the houses had no roofs, these having all been broken down by the enormous mass of ashes from Vesuvius, and by the heavings of the earthquake.

Pompeii is accessible by railway or by carriage from Naples. In order not to be hampered as to hours of arriving and departure, we hired a conveyance for the day, with the intention of lunching at *Hôtel Diomède*, which is kept by a polite Frenchman, who informed us that he had only Italian enough to enable him to take money, which he seems to do with moderation, as he only charged a couple of francs for a bottle of excellent Lacryma Christi, made from a vine peculiar to the neighbourhood of Vesuvius.

Arriving at the Herculaneum gate of Pompeii, we were admitted by a turnstile, paying a franc for admission, and being consigned to the care of a *custode*, who is prohibited from taking any fee from visitors, but generally contrives to get something out of them by the sale of photographs. He is very sharp in looking after them, so that they shall not pocket some of the smaller objects met with in the walk through the city.

The custode knowing no language but his own, conversation is very limited, unless the traveller happens to be familiar with Italian. To obviate this inconvenience, it is customary to hire in Naples a *commissionario*, who speaks English with great intrepidity, and sometimes gives astounding information with a gravity truly ludicrous.

Having entered by the Herculaneum gate, we are literally in a city of the dead; we are in 'The Street of Tombs;' the highway on each side being lined with white marble tombs, perfectly clean and fresh, with the inscriptions and sepulchral designs quite legible and distinct. As I am not writing an antiquarian treatise, I shall only give a single translation of an inscription touching by its beautiful simplicity: 'Farewell, most happy soul of Caia Oppia. We shall follow thee in such order as nature shall appoint. Farewell, sweetest mother.'

According to our modern ideas, a highway lined by tombs would form a rather lugubrious approach to a town. But go to Rome, and drive for half-a-dozen miles along the Appian Way, surrounded on both sides by monuments, and it will at once be acknowledged that the old Romans did wisely in not permitting sepulture within their cities, unless under exceptional circumstances. As to the melancholy presumed to be excited by constantly passing the mansions of the dead, the Romans do not appear to have suffered from it. We must remember the spirit of paganism, which is embodied in the dying words of Mirabeau: 'Nothing now remains but to die among flowers and perfumes;' and we must see its actual effects before we can understand feelings so different from ours. The sensual, by introducing at their feasts memorials of mortality, endeavoured to find in the idea of death a stimulus to jollity. A skeleton introduced among the guests gave point to the exhortation, '*Vivamus, dum licet esse bene*' (Let us enjoy life while we may).

The more contemplative and refined, having no security for the happiness of the dead in another and a better world, cherished the more tenderly their mortal remains, and surrounded them with all that could please the eye or soothe the imagination of the living. The mourners whose loved ones filled the tomb delighted to adorn their resting-places, and to make them look fresh and gay with flowers, among which were conspicuous the lily and the rose.

> Full canisters of fragrant lilies bring,
> Mixed with the purple roses of the spring;
> Let me with funeral flowers his body strew;
> This gift which parents to their children owe,
> This unavailing gift at least I may bestow.
>
> DRYDEN'S *Virgil.*

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Looking at the small dimensions of the tombs at Pompeii, we get over the difficulty of how they could be family burial-places, when we remember that only the ashes of the dead were deposited within the tomb, the bodies having been burned in an *ustrinum*. It would appear that monuments were sometimes injured by the incremation being conducted near them; hence the not uncommon inscription forbidding the application of funeral piles against them.

But leaving the Street of Tombs, let us enter Pompeii. The road at this point is wide, and paved with lava retaining the deep ruts made by the carriages. In other places, however, the streets are so narrow that for a vehicle to be turned in them must have been impracticable. They have, however, on both sides, a raised footpath for passengers, whose comfort is still further provided for by the frequent erection of stepping-stones, to enable them to pass dry-shod from one side to the other, when the road happened to be flooded by a sudden fall of rain.

Near the gate is an inn, in the portico of which were discovered various coins and personal ornaments, and in the court-yard the remains of carriages and harness, and the skeleton of an ass. The houses are generally one-storied, but many have had two or three floors. The external walls are plain, with few openings to the street, as the private apartments all look into an interior court, and are lighted from it. The flat roofs have all fallen in; but the walls being generally entire, and the rubbish having been completely removed, the appearance of the streets has not greatly suffered. The removal of rubbish from a small street was going on during our visit, but as it was lazily removed in hand-baskets, we could not help longing for a gang of English navvies with spades and wheelbarrows, to let the Italians see what excavating really is.

The honesty of the labourers seems very dubious, as a custode was constantly on the watch lest they should secrete for their own use any valuables which they may discover. Though nothing was found while we were present, yet in the house the excavation of which we witnessed, three human skeletons were discovered, with their gold and silver ornaments, a very handsome gold ring set with an amethyst intaglio of Abundance, and various other objects of value. As perhaps a third part of the city is still to be investigated, it is very likely that further discoveries of interest will be made from time to time, and enable us still better to understand the domestic usages of the Romans. A walk through Pompeii is far more instructive than all that the visitor may have previously read; and instead of wasting time lecturing on classical antiquities, a teacher in one of our higher schools would spend his time far more profitably were he to conduct his more advanced pupils to Rome and Naples. A two months' tour, as arranged by Mr Cook, will, it seems, not cost more than twenty pounds. As an inducement, we may add that the direct route from Florence to Rome by Foligno, is through delightful mountain scenery in the Apennines, and that an opportunity will thus be afforded of visiting the Thrasymene Lake and Cannæ.

But we have wandered from Pompeii, to which let us return. In good houses, there are a porter's lodge, a vestibule, a hall of public audience; and beyond, there is the inner court, round which are arranged the family apartments. This court is surrounded by porticoes supported by columns, in the intervals between which are sleeping recesses, and the triclinium, or place for reclining on at meals. In winter, this was under the portico, and protected from the open air; but in summer it was placed beside the marble fountain, pond, or parterre for flowers, occupying the centre of the court. The really private rooms were few, but tastefully painted, and adorned with articles of *virtu*. Warm and cold baths, rooms for servants, a little chapel for the household gods, and cellars below for storing wine and oil, completed the establishment of a Pompeian gentleman.

The floors of common houses even are paved with coarse mosaic in white and black marble; and *Salve*, in black letters on a white ground, often salutes you, on crossing the threshold. Or, a dog *couchant*, with the less hospitable motto, *Cave canem*, warns none but good men and true to enter here. Possibly, it may have been a benevolent hint to beware of a live dog, stationed there as a protection to a domicile so accessible to every passenger. The houses of the rich are paved with finer mosaics, representing hunting-scenes, fruits, flowers, birds, and beasts in their natural colours. The walls are divided into panels, with rich borders, painted with a great variety of objects, often of great merit in the execution, but too frequently very indelicate in the subjects. Pictures, copies which we brought home as specimens of this style of panelling, represent a naked charioteer driving a chariot drawn by geese, and a scantily draped woman taking naked Cupids from a wicker basket, for the inspection of two ladies, beside whom stands a Cupid. As the latter picture was found in the Temple of Venus, we may conclude that the woman and those whom she is visiting are not of immaculate reputation.

The streets are regular, and where several meet, there is a public fountain. Their names are legible; and the blank spaces on the walls are filled with gaudy pictures of the presiding deities, with electioneering notices, with amatory and indecent verses, with rudely scratched caricatures. Sometimes the scribblings on the interior walls and pillars of a dwelling refer to domestic matters, such as, how much lard was bought, how many tunics sent to the wash, or when a child or a donkey was born.

The shops are mere open sheds below a dwelling-house, with a stone counter in front, and a few shelves inside. The names and trades of their owners are legible, and the signs of their craft are conspicuous, and sometimes very startling.

One of the best houses is a suburban villa, which belonged to a wealthy citizen, Diomedes, whose family seems to have perished; for eighteen skeletons were found in the wine-cellar, huddled together close to an aperture in the wall. They had sought this underground place of refuge, but the minute dust and the sulphureous vapour suffocated them. The wine-jars, like big Eau-de-Cologne bottles, but of unglazed earthenware, are still ranged against the wall, but instead of fine old Falernian, are filled to the brim with volcanic dust. In the garden, which runs down towards the sea, two bodies were found, being probably those of two persons who in despair left their friends in the cellar, and endeavoured to find their

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way to the beach. But it was too late. Through an atmosphere blacker than the deepest midnight darkness, and impregnated with suffocating vapours, there could be no advance; and so these two unfortunates miserably perished, being unable to find the door of a small garden, as familiar to them as their bedrooms. In the hand of one was a bunch of keys, and near them were found silver vases and money, dropped at last as worthless, in the struggle for dear life. In the horrible darkness, the blind alone could have turned to advantage their habit of moving about without the aid of sight. In Bulwer's *Last Days of Pompeii*, this circumstance is skilfully seized upon, and gives rise to the thrilling incident of the blind slave-girl's escape through a garden.

The most horribly interesting place in Pompeii is a room containing plaster-casts, made according to the ingenious process devised by Signor Fiorelli. The showers of pumice-stone by which Pompeii was overwhelmed, were followed by streams of tenacious mud, which flowed over the interstices not filled by the pumice-stone. Objects thus encased were as if in a plaster mould; and when they happened to be human bodies, their decay left a cavity in which their forms were perfectly preserved. Filling up these cavities with liquid plaster, Signor Fiorelli succeeded in obtaining admirable casts of human beings who had perished during the destruction of Pompeii. We thus can have a stereoscope of their death-agony. We have a painfully interesting stereoscope of a cast thus obtained. Two women, mother and child, very probably, are lying feet to feet. The limbs of the elder are extended, her left arm hangs loosely, and on her finger is a coarse iron ring. She seems to have died without a struggle. But the poor girl at her feet, with her legs drawn up convulsively, her hands clenched in agony, her face close to the ground, must have had a terrific death.

We are struck by the limited dimensions of the private dwellings at Pompeii, the best of which seem to us models of fine houses, rather than handsome and comfortable abodes. But we understand the tastes of the people better on reaching the forums, baths, temples, theatres, and the amphitheatre, which, for a third-rate provincial town, are in a style of luxury and magnificence truly surprising. It is clear that the Pompeians, favoured with a delicious climate, lived abroad all day, and only supped and slept at home. The public buildings, round the civil and military forums, with their beautiful and airy porticoes, filled with choice works of art, afforded ample space for exercise under cover; and a visit to the baths, the gymnasium, and the amphitheatre, enabled the luxurious Pompeian gentleman to pass the long summer day agreeably enough. The amphitheatre, outside the town, is an immense place; the circular rows of seats rising upwards from the level of the arena, and pierced with numerous places of exit for the spectators: the spaces for the gladiators, the dens for the wild beasts, are so entire, that it is not difficult to imagine the scenes there often enacted. One might almost expect it to resound to-morrow with the roar of wild beasts, the savage shouts of the multitude, the critical remarks of patrician amateurs, and the consultations of Pompeian matrons, debating whether the attitude of the wounded gladiator deserved that they should raise their thumbs to save his life.

It is to be regretted that the relics of Pompeii could not be left where found, as seeing them there would have much enhanced their interest; but their removal to the Museum at Naples has the advantage of enabling us to see collected together a great deal of the objects which ministered to the daily life of the defunct inhabitants of Pompeii, Herculaneum, and Stabiæ.

In some things they were primitive enough, but in others as artificial as ourselves; judging from the *matériel* of a lady's toilet, which comprehended rouge, false hair, teeth, and eyebrows, as well as all that vanity could desire in the shape of perfumes, necklaces, earrings, bracelets, and brooches. But it must have been provoking to the fair one not to be able to see the general effect of her form and ornaments reflected in a large pier-glass. The mirrors are only small plates of polished metal, capable of shewing more than an ugly woman might like to see, but less than a beautiful one desires. Under a glass case is a sad mingling of vanity and mortality: the skull and the impression of a youthful female bosom are mixed with a purse, necklace, and bracelets, taken from the body of a Pompeian lady.

Here are all sorts of kitchen utensils, some of them containing the last meal cooked on the day of the fatal catastrophe. There are loaves converted into brown masses, but retaining their shape and the baker's name; eggs, fruit, grains, honeycomb, &c. Inkstands for ever dried up, styles and tablets never to be resumed, lie in mournful literary ease in company with a large collection of charred manuscripts. Some of these have been unrolled, but no work of much merit has rewarded the toil of the classic antiquary.

If we would form a true idea of the moral condition of the Pompeians we must visit the reserved cabinet of the Museum, whose contents cannot be described further than to state that painting and sculpture have been lavishly employed in embodying the obscenest ideas and depicting the most abominable habits. If our minds be filled with commiseration for the fate of Pompeii, we cannot resist the conclusion that much of what was buried deserved destruction; and that the graceful embellishments of its social life were allied with a moral depravity so profound as to make us thankful that we live in happier days.

BETSY'S BEAU.

'It is a thing that I never did allow, and that I never will allow,' said my wife, making up for her small person and unimposing aspect, by speaking very loudly, and as if she had had large experience in servants—lessons duly instilled by a lady, a near relative, who kindly supervises our domestic affairs, and pays us long visits. 'If it had been a relative, or I had been asked, I might not have objected; but I must beg that nothing of the kind ever occur again,' said my wife in continuation of her lecture.

'But, please, 'm, he didn't have nothink to eat,' said our one handmaiden deprecatingly, but with somewhat of an injured tone.

'I was not alluding to that, Elizabeth,' said Mrs Scribe severely, 'but to the principle. I do not go so far as to say I will not allow followers; but if

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anything similar to last night's affair takes place, I shall consider that you have forfeited your situation.—Now, clear away the breakfast-things.'

'"Anything similar to last night's affair,"' I said, repeating my wife's words, as soon as Elizabeth had indignantly swept the table, and then herself out of the room. 'I suppose "anything similar" means another life-guard or a grenadier?'

'Now, don't be absurd, dear,' was the reply. 'Of course, we cannot allow such goings on.'

'We?' said I.

'Well, there then, *I* cannot allow such goings on; and I'm sure you do not wish me to go down into my own kitchen of a night, to be startled by great scarlet men.'

'You never evinced any fear of the great scarlet lady, my dear,' I ventured to observe, and making what I thought a very pungent allusion to sundry leanings towards vestments, candles, incense, and flowers, as displayed at a neighbouring church.

'How witty!' was the caustic rejoinder; when I took refuge in the morning paper, and afterwards beat a retreat city-ward.

By way of peace-offering, I came back that evening bearing 'the neatest thing' I could purchase in the shape of umbrellas; but it was not warmly received.

'Elizabeth has given warning this afternoon,' said my wife.

'Tit for tat,' I replied; 'for I'm sure you gave her warnings enough this morning.'

'And now I think the best thing to be done is to let her go; for the silly thing is quite infatuated with the great tall booby I found in the kitchen last night, and has done nothing but sob, and cry, and go on, ever since.'

'I trust that there are no briny pearls in this soup?' I said.

'Of course not,' was the reply. 'I made it myself.'

'How weak are women,' I remarked after a pause; 'and yet how hard upon each other's failings. "None but the brave deserve the fair," says the proverb; and the fair think, in consequence, that they have the only right to the brave.'

'The brave! Such stuff! Why, I believe, George, if you had your way, you would encourage the girl in her mad fit. A soldier, indeed, without a penny to help himself, let alone to keep a wife!'

'But the manly beauty—the uniform!' I suggested.

'Manly nonsense!'

'And besides, it does not seem fair that the whole of the military force should be monopolised by the nursemaids, leaving only Policeman X for the cooks, and'——

'There!' exclaimed my wife; 'look at that! Did you ever see such audacity?'

Turning immediately, I could not refrain from a smile, for plainly shewn upon the window-blind by the street lamp was the shadow of a huge life-guardsman, his well-padded chest, fierce moustache, and elegantly balanced foraging-cap being displayed to great advantage.

'That's the same man!' exclaimed my wife; 'and now, if you watch, you will see him pass the window and go down the area.'

'The soles are getting cold, my love,' I said; 'and I should infinitely prefer a portion, to turning myself into a vedette to watch the movements of the enemy. Now, if your respected mamma had happened to be here!'

'Now, don't be ungenerous. I'm sure mamma never suggested anything that was not for your good, George.'

'Perhaps not, my love,' I said; 'but it is not always agreeable to take physic, however beneficial it may prove.—Thanks! Now I'll trouble you for the anchovy. No potatoes, thank you.—Shall I ring for the other things? Slow-moving Betsy will not have them up before we have done with the fish.'

'If you please,' was the very polite reply, and turning my head, I found that the shadow-picture upon the blind had disappeared.

'Of course it has,' said my wife, who had divined my thoughts. 'And he is now down in the kitchen, feasting upon the tit-bits supplied to him by that disgraceful creature.'

'Let 's ring and startle them, then,' said I; and leaving my chair, I gave a lusty peal at the bell.

In the course of a minute or two up came Elizabeth, very smart, and very ruddy of cheek—due, no doubt, to the cooking—and began to change the dishes.

'Did I not hear some one down-stairs, Elizabeth?' said my diplomatic wife.

'Down-stairs, mum? No, mum; not since the milk came.'

'Oh, that was at four o'clock,' said my wife; 'I mean just now.'

'No, mum, not as I've heerd: the bell hasn't been touched for a good hour.'

'Oh!' said my wife, and then all was silent, while the soup and fish were removed, and the partridges Smyth sent us were placed upon the table; when the maid disappeared.

'Pity she admires, or rather has her destiny ruled by, Mars, for she is a capital cook,' I said, going on with the carving. 'Daresay she reads Zadkiel.'

'Of course,' said my wife; 'and *Bow Bells*, and the *London Journal*, and *Family Herald*, and all sorts of stuff.'

'And the *Moonstone*, and *Birds of Prey*, I suppose, too,' I observed; 'but perhaps she does not favour Mudie.'

'If you wish to send me up to my bedroom in tears, George, pray say so. I'm sure I don't know what I have done that'—sob—'that'—sob—pocket-handkerchief, and one tear right in the bread-sauce.

But the next moment, plainly heard, there was the buzz, buzz of a manly voice, a giggle, a squeak, and the scraping of a chair—all plainly heard to proceed from the kitchen—coming up, as it were, through the floor; for the houses in New Park Crescent are very slightly built, so slightly, indeed, that we have never started a piano of our own, in consequence of the abundance of musical sounds proceeding from Nos. 4 and 6, right and left of us.

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'A deceitful creature!' exclaimed my wife, no longer tearful; 'and did she not declare to my face, ten minutes ago, that there was no one down-stairs?—Ring the bell, George.'

'Not till I've finished my dinner in peace, my love,' I said firmly, 'even if there were the whole of the Turkish Contingent down-stairs. After dinner, I'm at your service; but if I am to engage Shaw the life-guardsman, I must have another glass or two of sherry first.—Who the deuce can that be?' I exclaimed, for a cab stopped at the gate, and there was a loud ring at the front bell.

Then came the soft patter of poor Elizabeth's feet, the opening of the front door, a short sharp altercation, as if a cabman were dissatisfied with his fare, and then my wife started from her chair exclaiming: 'Why, it's mamma!'

'The devil'——

'George!' exclaimed my wife; and the next moment the door opened: there was embracing; and I had to leave the choicest, brownest tit-bit of partridge on my plate, to be kissed and called 'my dear boy!'

'No;' she would not have the soup up—mamma would not. She was so sorry, but the train was late, or she would have been with us in time to sit down to dinner.—There was a sole left, was there? Then she would have that; it could not be so very cold.

'Bring the fish back, Elizabeth,' said my wife; and it was evident that for the present Mars was completely out of her memory.

A few minutes elapsed, during which 'dear mamma' had a glass of sherry, and then Elizabeth came back holding in her hand the head of a sole; the one, I was ready to swear, I had left on my plate, for I knew it by its gouged-out eye.

'Oh, 'm, if you please, 'm!' exclaimed Elizabeth.

'Well, Elizabeth?' said my wife.

'That there cat, 'm, while I was up answering the door. There was nothing left but this here head, mum, as I was just in time to see it jump off the table on to the floor.'

'You careless creature!' cried my wife, 'to leave it like that. There, bring a hot plate.—Have a little partridge, mamma, dear?'

Directly after, I saw some one's face change, and a very suspicious look was directed at the hand-maid, but that young lady evidently saw nothing; and the meal passed off in a most satisfactory way—that is to say, as far as appearances went—for I knew that I did not have anything like my share of the birds.

At last I was left alone to have my one glass or two of claret, and the ladies ascended, as I supposed, to the drawing-room; while, under the idea that the new arrival would render her secure from interruption, the fair Elizabeth descended to the nether regions.

'Now, I wonder whether that gentleman is below stairs?' I thought; and then, somehow, my ideas were shunted off on to another line, and went off at express rate, till I was roused by hearing the front door open.

'Who in the world is that going out?' I thought, and then I listened for the closing, but in vain; while directly after a strange ghostly shadow passed the window, which shade I made out to be that of my respected mother-in-law, with a mantle over her head.

'Why, she's going down into the kitchen,' I muttered; and leaving my seat, I opened the door just in time to catch my wife in the passage.

'Oh, I see!' I exclaimed softly; 'going to attack the enemy front and rear. Elaborate tactics, I must say!'

'You need not trouble yourself, sir, unless you please, was the reply. 'I daresay mamma and I can discomfit the enemy, as you term him, without your help.'

'But are you sure there is any one below?' I said.

'O dear no, sir! only that there is a cat there with a strong love for fried soles!'

'There, come along!' I said, for there was no help for it; and if there is anything I dislike, it is meddling with the servants and their belongings.

But we had not half descended the kitchen stairs, before we heard loud voices in altercation.

'That I'm sure there ain't, mum, if it's the last words I had to utter, mum, there ain't; and if missus was here'——

'Your mistress is here, Elizabeth!' said my wife, now entering the kitchen, with the writer following, feeling very small, and taking in the *coup d'œil* of Mrs Scribe's mamma standing at the area door, and Betsy keeping guard over that leading into the back kitchen.

'Take the candle and look in the coal-cellar, George,' said my mother-in-law. 'I'm certain I heard some man's voice down-stairs.'

'It must have been next door, sir,' said Betsy, appealing to me.

'Walls are thin!' I suggested, feeling disposed to draw off the forces, and to give the unfortunate enemy, if one there were, an opportunity to retreat.

''Strue as goodness, mum, there's no one here,' said Betsy.

'Oh, you bad abandoned hussy!' exclaimed Mrs Scribe's mamma, shaking her head at the maiden.—'Why don't you look in the coal-cellar, George?'

I felt disposed to swear at the coal-cellar; but Mrs Scribe just then whispering 'Must *I* go?' I went, to make the pleasant discovery that there was not above a sack left of the last two tons; but Mars was not there, neither was he in the dust-bin; and coming back out of the area, I found our dear mamma peering in the kitchen cupboard, and apparently about next to open the drawers of the dresser.

All this time, poor Betsy, with the palest of pale faces, was keeping guard over the back-kitchen door, which my wife now approached.

'Which surely, mum, you're not going to demean yourself by going in that dirty place, mum?' said the girl.

'Dirty, indeed, I've no doubt,' said Mrs Scribe's mamma.

'There; why not take the girl's word?' said I, wishing, with my customary pusillanimity, to make a compromise. 'Is there any one—a soldier in that back kitchen, Elizabeth?'

But instead of answering, the girl buried her face in her apron, and began to sob bitterly, when, leading her aside, the ladies opened the door, and motioned to me to go first.

What could I do but obey? So, taking up the candle I had the moment before set down, I stepped boldly in, feeling sure that the murder must now be out. But no; the one large

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cupboard stood wide open, and there was no one behind the door; the place was perfectly empty.

'Look under the table, George!' exclaimed Mrs Scribe's mamma.

'Don't talk nonsense!' I exclaimed. 'Why, a cat could not hide itself under that table.—Now, I hope you are satisfied;' and banging down the candlestick, I strode back to our little dining-room, soon after hearing the ladies go up-stairs.

Poor Betsy looked very pale and troubled when she came to announce tea; but I was not surprised, and spoke kindly to the girl, believing that this time she had been unjustly accused; and then went and partook of my comfortless cup.

The tea was removed, and an hour passed, and then Mrs Scribe's mamma, fatigued with her journey from Hastings, retired to her bedroom—what in most houses would have been the back drawing-room—while I descended to my little den behind the dining-room, to try to finish an article commenced that morning, Mrs Scribe following shortly, to sit by my fire and 'tatt,' that being her custom when I am disposed to work after tea.

We were both in very severe moods, she upon her low *bergère* stool, I at my table; and for a time nothing was heard but the clicking of Mrs S.'s tatting shuttle, and the scratching of my pen.

But there was no article-finishing that night with so many clouds in the horizon; for, raising my eyes, I could see a couple of tears stealing down on either side of the prettiest little nose in the world; my pen dropped; the tatting fell all of a horrible tangle; and then some one was on her knees at my feet, and I was just going to press my lips on the white forehead within their reach, when there was a noise!

Yes; there was a noise—a strange, hair-stirring groan, apparently at our shoulders; and then the sound of footsteps on the stairs, in the passage, and then a loud flop, as of some one falling on the oil-cloth, followed by hysterical sobs and cries.

We leaped up and opened the door, to find poor Betsy apparently in a fit—now sobbing, now crying, now shrieking, and pouring forth 'Ohs!' innumerable, but quite incapable of answering questions.

Then came the ringing of Mrs Scribe's mamma's bell, and, as it was of course not answered, the opening of her door, and her voice descending to know what all the groaning meant that she could hear.

And now, not only from Betsy, but as from the wall, came groan after groan—loud, heart-wrung, half-stifled groans, similar to that which had first startled us, and which I had laid to the credit of Betsy.

'Oh,' exclaimed dear mamma, 'it is some poor creature dying next door, and the cries have frightened this poor girl.—Run, George, and see if you can be of any avail.'

Then came more groans, and several distinct knocks at the wall.

'There, there; pray, go, dear,' said my wife; 'some one must be in great peril.'

Directly after there was a loud peal at the front-door bell, and on going, I found my neighbour Jones evidently come for help.

'What is the matter?'

'What is the matter?'

Both in a breath.

'Some one must be dying at your house,' said Jones.

'No, no; at your house,' I said.

'But we can hear the groans in our library.'

'So can we in ours!' I exclaimed. 'Come here.' And leading the way into the back room, there we could hear the stifled groans again.

'It 's in your house,' I said.

'No, no; it 's in the chimney,' exclaimed Mr Jones. 'Good Heavens! there 'll be some one smothered!'

'Yes, yes, yes; chimney, chimney,' shrieked Elizabeth; and then she went off again into strong, genuine hysterics.

'Is any one there?' I cried, going close to the wall.

'Oh-h-h!' came back a dismal groan in reply; and now a light burst upon my brain.

'Here, Jones—this way,' I cried; and snatching up the little lamp, I was going down-stairs, when the shrieking of the ladies in protest at being left in the dark arrested me.

'Want a light?' said a gruff voice; and, starting, I looked round to encounter a policeman, who, attracted by Betsy's screams, had come in by the open door.

'Here—this way, my man,' I cried. 'There is some one stuck in the chimney.'

'In the what?' he exclaimed incredulously.

'Oh-h-h!' came from the wall again.

'It 's t'other side; that 's what it is,' said the policeman.

'It isn't, I tell you,' cried Jones. 'There, man; listen.'

'Oh-h-h!' came now, and a strange rustling noise as of some one struggling.

'I 'm blest if there ain't!' exclaimed the constable.

'Here—this way; I know,' I said; and, leading the way, we soon stood in the back kitchen, where, by the help of the policeman's bull's-eye, I could just make out a pair of boot-soles up the chimney, and something glistening, which I made out to be spurs.

We shouted up the chimney; but no answer came, and there was only an occasional kicking of the boots—feeble kicking, as if their occupier was in a sore strait.

'Let 's get up-stairs again,' said the policeman. 'He 's stuck tight, that 's what he is;' and, obedient to the voice of law, we followed to the back room, where, after tapping at the wall two or three times, and eliciting a faint groan that sounded something like 'Help!' the constable started off—rather leisurely, I thought—but soon returned with a crowbar and hammer-armed bricklayer, and another policeman.

There was no stopping to tear up our Brussels carpet, for, attacking the wall, bricks, mortar, plaster, and torn paper soon formed a dusty heap; and after guiding himself by listening once or twice, in an incredibly short space of time there was a hole made through into the chimney communicating with the back kitchen, and through that hole came a faint sigh.

'Come; hold up, old chap, whoever you are,' said one of the policemen; and then to me: 'Got a drop of brandy, sir?'

I soon fetched the spirit, and then, in the sight of the horrified women, the hole was sufficiently enlarged to lay bare a ghastly, soot-blackened face,

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with protruding eyeballs and grinning teeth; but as the air seemed to reach the man's lungs more purely, there was a change took place, aided by some brandy administered in a spoon by one of the policemen.

It was all plain enough now, and I was not much surprised, when, the hole being sufficiently enlarged, a tall, stout life-guardsman was dragged out, but only to fall upon the rubbish-heap, completely exhausted.

'Found on the premises for felonious purposes,' said one policeman. 'Course you'll press the charge, sir?'

But I did not answer, being too much taken up with the poor fellow before me, whom it was evident a few more minutes would have stifled.

'Couldn't you get down again?' I asked him, as soon as he could speak.

'No; not an inch, sir—nor yet up—jammed in,' he gasped; 'and 'eat from next chimney, too, seemed to stop my breath.'

'How did you get there, eh?' queried one policeman.

'There; don't bother him,' I said. 'I know; and he's half dead now.—Here; have some more brandy.'

'Thanky, sir,' he gasped feebly, and swallowed a little, but only with great difficulty; and it was pitiful to see the complete prostration of the great fellow; his gay scarlet jacket reduced to a blackened, torn dilapidation; and his trim whiskers and moustache all limp and mortar-filled.

'Why didn't you knock or call for help sooner?' I said, as I knelt down by him.

'I couldn't, master,' he whispered. 'I hadn't the heart, for the poor lass's sake; and I wouldn't have groaned when I did, if I could have kept 'em back.'

I always was weak; but if the true man did not stand out there, I thought, I'm no judge: suffice it, those few earnest words had quite won me to his side, and I had mapped out my course.

'You'll press the charge?' said one of the policemen again.

'No,' I said firmly. 'The poor fellow had no felonious intent, and he has been punished enough without what will follow for breaking barrack-law.'

'Absurd!' exclaimed Mrs Scribe's mamma shrilly. 'I desire, George, that you have him taken off to prison directly, or we shall all be murdered in our beds.'

'The sooner you are in yours, madam, I think, the better,' I said politely; 'for your costume'——

She staid to hear no more, for her dressing-gown and night-cap, hitherto forgotten in the excitement, disappeared like magic, followed by a banging door. I satisfied, then, the grinning policemen and the bricklayer; and, moved by egregious folly, as Mrs Scribe's mamma afterwards told me, I allowed the wretched man to pass the night in an easy-chair, seeing him off myself almost as soon as it was light.

Betsy left us at the end of a week, and I must own to always supporting Mrs Scribe in her determination to have no followers from the neighbouring barracks. Whether our maid married the man of her choice, I know not; but this I do know, that a great piece of my little library Brussels was totally spoiled; and if we wanted a reminder when loud talking or sounds from the next house had ceased to startle us in the late hours, when sitting together—if, I say, we wanted a reminder, there it was in faded paper over the new wall which marked the hole from which we were favoured with the advent of Betsy's Beau.

P.S.—Probably owing to the shock to her nerves, Mrs Scribe's mamma returned to Hastings the next day, and did not visit us again for six months.

COTTAGES.

THAT a large proportion of the agricultural labourers of Great Britain are at present unprovided with cottages in which they and their families may enjoy a moderate degree of comfort, and in which the decencies of life are possible, cannot be doubted. In very many instances, also, their dwellings are situated so far from their daily work as to cause much needless inconvenience both to themselves and their wives and children in going to and returning from field-labour. During the last twenty or thirty years, vigorous efforts have been made by many landowners to remedy the state of things upon their respective estates. Praiseworthy attempts to stimulate the supply of good cottages have also been made during the same period by the principal agricultural societies, and by other associations both in the country and in London; but the great obstacle to the success of these efforts has hitherto been the question of expense. In exceptional cases cottages satisfying all the demands of health, decency, and comfort have been built for about L.100. This, however, has only been accomplished in places where there was an ample supply of local materials, and in most instances the cost has been L.120, L.130, and even L.140. The price of bricks, lime, timber, and building materials of course influences materially the cost of erection. During the four years 1863–4–5–6, the Enclosure Commissioners expended the sum of L.73,044, 3s. 8d. in building five hundred and nine agricultural cottages—the average cost of each of which was therefore L.143. It will readily be perceived that the amount of rent which an ordinary agricultural labourer can afford to pay will only yield a small percentage upon outlays like these. It is estimated that the proportion of rent which a cottager can manage to pay is one-seventh of his weekly income; consequently, with an income of nine shillings a week he might succeed in paying a rent of one shilling and sixpence per week; with fourteen shillings a week, two shillings; and so on. It is, however, generally conceded, that the highest rent which the ordinary agricultural labourer can afford to pay is from two shillings and sixpence to two shillings and ninepence per week—the mean being two shillings a week. As six pounds per cent. is regarded as a fair return on cottage building, seven pounds ten shillings a year would be the proper rent to secure such a return upon an outlay in building a cottage of L.125; but two shillings a week gives only five pounds four shillings a year. It is evident, therefore, that although many generous landlords have erected admirable cottages at a large cost, and

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have let them to their labourers at prices which barely return two-and-a-half per cent. upon the cost of erection, yet we cannot expect such examples to be very widely followed. It is of course true that a return for money expended in the erection of cottages is often received by the landlord, not, perhaps, in the direct shape of a money payment for rent, but in other indirect, though sufficiently obvious ways. This fact, however, is by no means invariably perceived by all landlords, and hence it is absolutely essential to any rapid progress in the supply of good cottages, that a direct and satisfactory return upon the cost of their erection should be procurable.

According to the plans published by the societies for improving labourers' cottages, and according, also, to Dr Hunter's Report to the Medical Officer of the Privy-council on the State of the Dwellings of the Rural Poor (which Report was laid before parliament in the year 1865), the chief requirements for health, decency, and comfort in an agricultural labourer's cottage are: 1. That the living-room should not be less than 12 feet × 12 feet × 9 feet, or contain not less than 1296 cubic feet. 2. That no bedroom should contain less than 650 cubic feet. 3. That there should be a scullery with a fire-place in it, in order to prevent the necessity of having a fire in the living-room in warm weather. 4. That the dry-earth closet should be beyond the scullery, with covered midden attached on the outside. 5. That there should be a porch with a light on one side, a seat under the light, with pegs for wet coats &c. on the other side; the door should be divided, the dwarf door below fitting with the larger half above. 6. That means of ventilation should be provided in every room. 7. That at least one bedroom should have a fire-place, and when there are three bedrooms, that two should have fire-places. 8. That the windows should be of sufficient size to be light and cheerful, and should be capable of admitting air at their highest points. 9. That there should be an oven, and that the cooking-range should be of a construction to economise fuel, and to render available the waste heat for the purpose of warming the different rooms. 10. That the drainage should be effectually provided for. 11. That the water should be collected from the roof, and conveyed into a cistern attached to each cottage. 12. That the floors should be of wood. 13. That the elevation should be pleasing to the eye.

There would now seem to be hope that the great work of providing cottages in which all the above requirements are fulfilled, and which, nevertheless, can be built at so moderate a price as to pay—even in the direct shape of rental—a fair percentage upon the cost of their erection, will soon be accomplished. It appears that Mr Edwin Chadwick, C.B., whilst engaged in the discharge of his duties as a juror at the Paris Exhibition of 1867, formed so favourable an opinion of a method of constructing cottages invented by Mr Nicoll of No. 42 Regent Circus, and exhibited at the Paris Exhibition, as to bring it under the notice of the commissioners engaged in the inquiry which is now being made into the employment of women and children in agriculture. These gentlemen at once made the most accurate inquiries in their power upon the subject of Mr Nicoll's invention, from gentlemen practically conversant with the requirements of cottage-building, and with most encouraging results.

Mr Nicoll's cottages are erected of slabs of concrete, and the mode of construction of these slabs may be described briefly as follows: A slab is formed of a size varying with the purposes for which it is to be used in the building, but commonly nine feet by three feet, and three inches thick. The slab is composed of several layers, which together form the thickness of three inches. The centre consists of a fabric of straw sewn together by a large sewing-machine, and compressed at the same time by rollers to one inch in thickness. It is steeped in a silicate, to render it incombustible, and then set in a frame of one-inch angle-iron, strengthened by cross-bars of iron, which go through it at intervals of eight or twelve inches, and which are welded to the iron frame. A coating of small gravel held together by Syssell asphalt is laid on each surface of the straw, a quarter of an inch thick, small spaces being left clear at intervals (but afterwards covered up), to admit of nut-screws being inserted to screw the slabs together when put into their place in the building. When so fixed in the building—the lower edge having been first firmly imbedded in a foundation of concrete—an external coat is applied of concrete, made with the best Portland cement, in the proportion of one of cement to six of broken stone, or any other hard material; and then an internal coating of the same is added half an inch thick. There is thus formed a fabric three inches thick, which has as great strength as nine-inch bonded brick-work. Although only three inches thick, the interior layer of straw so obstructs the conduction of heat, that such a wall has been found by experience—as it might of course be expected in theory to be—both warmer in winter and cooler in summer than nine-inch brick-work. The very hard and durable nature of the best Portland cement-concrete, if properly mixed, causes such a wall to resist successfully frost and damp. It is also quite impervious to vermin. The upright angle-irons at the corners, and those across the line of the floor and roof, are made of somewhat larger dimensions for a cottage with an upper floor, than when all the rooms are on the ground floor. As, however, in either case the iron frames of the slabs are all screwed to each other and to the uprights, a structure of immense strength is produced. The slabs forming the roof need only to have an external coating of concrete half an inch thick; the internal coating of concrete is dispensed with, the layer of fine gravel, or powdered stone and asphalt, being sufficient; and as it is capable of receiving a wash of any colour, it becomes a ceiling.

In order to make the cost of construction of his cottages as low as possible, Mr Nicoll has adopted several contrivances, by which he materially reduces the amount of joiner's and glazier's work. By an application also of the forms of flue perfected by Mr Douglas Galton, C.B., and General Morin, he secures a very satisfactory mode of economising fuel, at the same time providing increased warmth and ventilation, together with a hot-air closet for drying clothes. The value of a dry-air closet of this kind, which enables a labourer to dry his working-clothes thoroughly, and so to ward off rheumatism and its attendant evils, is very great. It is gratifying to learn that upon Mr Nicoll's plan, which we have just described, a cottage with a living-room and three bedrooms of ample size, and fulfilling all the requirements of health, decency, and comfort, can be built for L.85. Such a cottage

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being of great strength, and proof against both fire and damp, no appreciable sum need be calculated upon as necessary for repairs. A rent, therefore, of one shilling and sixpence a week, or L.3, 18s. a year, would pay within a fraction of five per cent. per annum—which, upon the assumption that the building is found to be as durable as alleged, may fairly be considered a full return for the capital of L.85 invested in its erection.

Cottages having but one bedroom, and others having two bedrooms only, are often wanted upon an estate, for the use of the aged, or for couples having no children, in certain proportions to cottages having three bedrooms—as pointed out by Dr Hunter in his Report to the Medical Officer of the Privy-council, to which we have already referred. Such cottages can be erected upon Mr Nicoll's plan—the cost of the first being L.50, and of the second L.65; upon which the rent of one shilling, and one shilling and threepence a week respectively, would pay an interest of five per cent.

A great preference is often expressed by the wives of agricultural labourers for cottages having all the rooms upon the ground floor; they say that they are better able to look after the children when they are in rooms adjoining the living-room. Some influential landowners are therefore returning to the plan of having all the rooms in cottages upon the ground floor. The designs for improved cottages published by the various cottage improvement societies are, however, generally on the plan of an upper story—the advantages of that plan being the saving in the cost of the roof and the smaller quantity of land used. Where the value of the land is, however, not an object of paramount importance, it would seem that Mr Nicoll's mode of construction affords the means of providing, at an exceedingly moderate cost, and in a satisfactory way, full-sized cottages having all the rooms upon the ground floor, in the manner preferred by so many of the women who are destined to live in them. Mr Nicoll's building material being impermeable to damp, prevents there being any objection —excepting in unusually wet situations—to the bedrooms being upon the ground floor. If, however, any landlord who may be willing to try the experiment of having a few cottages built upon Mr Nicoll's plan, should prefer the arrangement of having the bedrooms upon the upper floor, such cottages can be built of Mr Nicoll's slabs, on plans similar to those published by the cottage improvement societies, but at a cost somewhat above that at which they can be built when all the rooms are upon the ground floor. Specimens of Mr Nicoll's cottages can be seen at Twickenham, and near the Fulwell Station, about two miles from Twickenham. The one most recently erected at Twickenham contains the flues upon Mr Galton and General Morin's principle. A small policeman's lodge at the entrance into the grounds of the South Kensington Museum in Princes-gate has also been erected of Mr Nicoll's patent slabs, but with an exterior of brick and terra-cotta. Although the slabs of which this lodge is composed are only three inches thick, its great strength was shewn by an accident which happened to it soon after it was erected about two years ago. Just after it was finished, a wagon was coming in with a load of iron joists; in taking a turn, the wagon drove the iron centre clasp of the folding-door of the gate against the wall of the cottage with great force. One of the superintendents, who witnessed the accident, said that if the lodge had been built of nine-inch brick, the blow would have brought it all down; as it was, it only indented the slab. The portion displaced was forced back again by the workmen, and the concrete surface was restored, so that the injury was repaired in a few minutes, and at a merely nominal cost. The angle-iron, the cross iron bars of the frame, and the cement, together form a construction of such solidity that one-inch angle-iron is quite sufficient for all ordinary purposes, especially as when the frames are screwed together, the inch angle-iron becomes double. The frames are also held together by the uprights at every angle, and by the cross-ties at the foot of the roof. The whole plan of the construction is, in fact, similar to that of an iron ship—the theory of the construction being perfectly the same. It may be added that although the accident which happened to the policeman's lodge above mentioned may be cited as a good proof of the structural strength of the slabs, yet the lodge itself is composed, so far as the material of its external and internal surface is concerned, of a mixture of sand and cement, much inferior to the gravel and cement now used by Mr Nicoll.

Before we leave the subject of Mr Nicoll's method of construction, we must remark that the prices mentioned above as those at which cottages upon his plan can be erected, are calculated upon the assumption that the cottages are to be erected within fifty miles of London. An addition to the estimated cost of erection proportionate to the distance of the cottages from London will have to be made for the expense of conveying the slabs by railway. This expense, however, would not be considerable, as the whole weight of the slabs does not exceed a few tons. We may add that the prices mentioned above include everything necessary to render the cottages fit for immediate occupation.

The Central Cottage Improvement Society has very recently published a plan for a cottage with living-room and three bedrooms, all upon the ground floor. They state that the estimated cost of erection (excluding the formation of the platform on which it is suggested that the cottage might be built), with the use of brick and timber in the ordinary way, is about L.110. When concrete or cheaper materials can be used, the cost, of course, would be less than that sum. The same society has also recently signed a contract for a pair of four-roomed cottages to be built as an experiment of small concrete blocks for the sum of L.200.

The Prince Consort, it may be recollected, amongst his other good works, endeavoured to help on the supply of good cottages for labourers, 'substantial and convenient, and at a price not beyond their means.' With this end in view, he caused to be erected several specimen cottages opposite the Exhibition building of 1851. Unfortunately, however, these cottages did not fulfil the expectations which were formed of them.

In perusing the evidence upon the subject of cottage accommodation, collected by the assistant-commissioners in the inquiry now being made into the employment of women and children in agriculture, it is satisfactory to find that there is a general opinion growing up both among landlords and farmers that every cottage inhabited by a labouring man and his family should have three bedrooms—one for himself and his wife, another for the male

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children, and a third for the female children. At present, however, though much has been done of late years to mitigate the evil, there is scarcely a parish in England in which there are not to be found cottages which are utterly unfit for the occupation of human beings, and in which the decencies of life are, to their occupants, utterly impossible. A case is cited in the Report of Mr Norman, one of the assistant-commissioners in the inquiry just referred to, in which a cottage measuring only sixteen feet by eighteen feet was inhabited by a grandfather aged eighty-four years, father, mother, and eleven children—in all fourteen souls! In the village of South Rauceby, Lincolnshire, there are twenty-seven cottages containing only one bedroom, and to each of which cottages the average number of inhabitants is upwards of four. One cottage, out of this collection of twenty-seven one-bedroomed cottages, contained no fewer than ten inhabitants; another contained nine; a third contained eight; two contained seven each; and three contained six each! We might quote evidence of a similar kind from every county in England very literally *ad nauseam*. Not only is it that the bedroom accommodation of cottages like these is so shamefully limited, but their sanitary arrangements—if sanitary arrangements they can be called—are simply deplorable. Everywhere the cry of the English parochial clergy is that churches and schools are well nigh useless, unless better house accommodation can be provided for their parishioners. The influence of the lessons taught at church and school is neutralised by the evil effect of home associations. The natural and inevitable result of the horrible overcrowding which still prevails so largely in many parts of England, is that the first seeds of immorality are sown under the family roof. Upon the other hand, the evidence of both clergy and landowners is overwhelming—that if a labourer be transferred from a miserable cottage to one in which comfort and decency are possible, the change for the better produced in him is almost startling. The drunkard ceases to frequent the public-house, into which he had often been driven by the squalor of his own dwelling, and begins to pass his evenings by his own fireside; the wife is transferred from a dirty slattern into a decent housewife; the manners and dress of the children are greatly improved. Nor can it be doubted that an employer of labour who may build good cottages for his labourers near to their work, reaps therefrom the great advantage of having good, steady, stay-at-home workmen. 'Once put a man into a good house,' it was said over and over again to Mr Stanhope, one of the assistant-commissioners in the inquiry above referred to, 'and his wife won't let him leave it!' It is therefore clear that, although an employer who may supply his labourers with good cottages may not receive from them, in the direct shape of rent, a full percentage upon his outlay in erecting the cottages, yet he does derive therefrom, although indirectly, great advantages. It is, however, earnestly to be hoped that, by means of Mr Nicoll's invention, or some other, it may soon be possible to erect cottages sufficiently cheap to enable them, when let at moderate rents, to yield a full percentage upon the cost of their erection. Signs, we rejoice to think, are not wanting to shew that the old epoch of cottage neglect in England is passing away. We are even warranted in believing that the day is fast coming when every agricultural labourer in England shall have a house over his head in which the comforts and the decencies of life are attainable, and which may without mockery be called his Home.

LIFE AND DEATH AT ST BREACA'S.

IN EIGHT CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER VI.

'I SHALL go to St Breaca's to look after that poor fellow this morning,' said Mr Hoskins to his wife, ten days after Augustine's return home. 'The fright has sobered him by this time, and I don't mean to "whistle him down the wind."'

'That's right, John; and find out what upset him; he'll have told his mother, I'll be bound. Old Betty has heard that he is mad after that French girl at the Gray House. If his father was like any one else, he would soon settle the business, but he only spoils what he meddles with; and soft-spoken as he is, I believe Mrs Secker daren't say her soul's her own. I hope you'll bring the lad back; the house is not the same without him.'

'No. I miss him, I can tell you, and I doubt if I could replace him if I would. I shall try to see his mother alone.'

Mr Hoskins's fast-trotting mare, *Jenny Quick*, carried him briskly to St Breaca's. Mr Secker was reading prayers—Friday; Augustine had gone with him. All served the good doctor's purpose; and as Mrs Secker was simplicity itself, he was quickly in possession of all the information he wanted.

'Just as I feared,' he said; 'but keep up your spirits. I think I see my way, but I won't reckon my chickens yet. Tell Augustine that my wife wants him to come to-morrow, and stay till Monday. She has forgotten the proportions of a vile compound of senna, quassia, and ginger which he mixes, and she persuades some poor bodies to swallow. You can let him know that I am not savage. Poor fellow! there never was a better lad. What a blessed thing it would be if your sex would let ours alone!—You don't like that. Never mind. No one could ever suspect you of weaving snares for a poor fool. Kind regards to Mr Secker. He doesn't need to be told that he's welcome to a glass of the old brown sherry as often as he'll come for it.—I can't stay to see him, thank you.—The big boys are at school, I suppose? Those are fine bouncing fellows; you ought to have a premium for them.'

'Poor dear fellow,' said Mrs Hoskins, when her husband had told her all he had gleaned; 'no wonder he didn't know what he was about. What a pity! I wonder if Mr Monsey did really annoy her, or if she only said so to make Augustine jealous? Whichever way it was, a proper-minded girl would not have told him anything of the kind; but I suppose foreigners can't behave decently. Is not Mrs Secker very angry?'

'I should think so. The quiet little woman was like a sheep stamping at a big dog, by way of protecting her lamb. She does not approve of the girl.'

'Well, what do you mean to do?'

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'In the first place, I won't let Secker go back. She can't come after him here. I must watch that he does no mischief. I shall tell him that, of course, she cannot stay at the Gray House, and that he must tell her to give notice at once.'

'But where is she to go?'

'Why, oddly enough, those dear old maids at Myldmouth complained to me only yesterday that people were gone so mad after French (Jemima interjected that she really believed they thought no other language was spoken in heaven) that their school was going down for want of a resident Parisian. They dreaded the expense of bringing one from Paris, or even London, and could hear of none in the neighbourhood. I shall represent Ma'amselle as put providentially in their way. I'm sure they'll bite.' Mrs Hoskins shook her silvered head, and looked doubtful. 'Now, that I call straining at gnats, Sabina,' said her husband. 'I'd by no means send the girl into a private family, for there she might make more misery; but I defy her to get at the other sex while she is under Miss Wiseman's whalebone rule.'

'But she may injure the girls.'

'I don't think so, upon my word. I really believe that a poacher makes a good keeper.'

'Well, I hope it may answer.'

'At all events, we'll try.'

Mrs Hoskins threw her arms round Augustine's neck when he returned, and Mr Hoskins's eyes were moist when he gave him his hand. The poor fellow himself was choked with emotion. They comforted him, and he fell into their views readily; and before he went to bed the first night, he wrote to propose the plan to Jeanne, and his letter ended thus: 'I cannot eat or sleep; application to my business is simply impossible, till you are safe with kind good women. Under the most favourable circumstances, it must be long before I can give my Jeanne her own home, but I want to be fit to begin to work for that object. Myldmouth is thirty miles hence. We will write often, and hope to meet sometimes. Can you guess how often your eyes float before me? how often I hear your light footstep—the rustle of your pretty dress? All, all, so wonderfully, so indescribably dear. How cruel it is that anything approaching to a decent likeness is beyond the reach of poor people like you and me! But if I had yours, I should waste half my time in pondering over it, and finding it unworthy of you. I am impatient for your answer. I kiss your dear little hands, especially that mystical finger, and am your fondly devoted

AUGUSTINE SECKER.

Jeanne replied:

MY VERY MUCH LOVED—I have kissed your letter over and over again, laid my cheek on it, tied it up in my curls, with my tears wetted it. Of course I want to leave this odious place. I have all arranged. I have seen Mrs Monsey, and said to her that I could no longer stay. She said I was in the right, and she would speak well of me. Your friends will write to her to inquire about me—that is the proper thing. Oh! I do want to go; but when shall I see you? How hard it is to love as we love, and be separated! Is not this life very strange and miserable? How good you are to forgive me all the harm I have done you! Your mother will never. But you will not change. All the books say how inconstant is man; but no, you are not. You will never break the heart of your Jeanne, who adores you.

CHAPTER VII.

The Misses Wiseman engaged Jeanne to go to them after the Christmas holidays. The coach in which she must travel passed Mr Hoskins's door daily. He and his wife agreed to invite her to stay two days, and to start from their house. They hoped the engagement would come to nothing; but decided that, so long as it existed, its business ought to be conducted openly and respectably. Prejudiced though they were, Jeanne's tact brought them to the admission that her lover's infatuation was not without excuse. He was very happy. Her coming, a guest, where he lived, seemed an earnest of a future home together. She was going where all was unexceptionable and every one good. She had made a favourable impression, and he might hope to welcome her back again. He whistled as he stood at the garden-gate, watching for the mail. He had never thought the white frost, the holly-berries, the robins, the early sunshine, so joyous. The guard's horn, the crack of the whip, the steam even from the horses, all was cheery; and the coach was empty, and would be for the next stage. It had been settled that he should go so far, and walk back. It was almost like starting on one's bridal tour. That Jeanne was subdued, gave him, for once, no pain. It was so very sweet to comfort her as man is meant to comfort woman, and to be sure that she was sorry to part from him. The drive seemed strangely short. The last loving words were exchanged, the last kiss was given, and Augustine was on his way home. He walked fast, as a young man with full heart and busy mind does walk, and he did not observe the changing weather till heavy rain began to fall. He was very warm, and it chilled him. He had no umbrella, and was wet through, when he had yet four miles to go. When he came in, Mr Hoskins shook his head; Mrs Hoskins sent him into a hot bed, and gave him stimulants; but next day, and many days after, he was feverish, and racked with pain. 'He has no stamina, and his mother's family are consumptive, and this coming after all his worry, is serious. If it goes to his lungs, we shall not save him,' said Mr Hoskins.

If there was one person more odious than another to the Misses Wiseman of Hayfield House, Myldmouth, it was a flirt. The moment they saw Jeanne, their hearts contracted, and they would have rid themselves of her at once, unexceptionable as seemed her testimonials, if it could have been done honourably. 'We must keep her for a quarter before we give her notice,' said Miss Margaret to her eldest sister, when they returned from church after Mademoiselle Royer's first appearance there with them. 'The way she threw those great eyes of hers all round, especially on that young curate, was such a distraction to me, that I could think of nothing else. I have no more idea of the text than if I had not heard it; and I have to find fault by-and-by with the children who cannot give a good account of the sermon!'

'We need not keep her so long as that,' returned her sister, 'unless she conduct herself well, and that, I think, is very improbable. What a trial it will be to go out to walk with her! She cannot stand, hold her head, use her handkerchief, do

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anything like any one else. She is an embodiment of vain self-consciousness. Nothing can be worse than her example for the elder girls, especially as they think her very pretty, and have taken a great fancy to her. I cannot help suspecting that Mr Hoskins recommended her from compassion, or to oblige a friend, or from some other motive which will not bear investigation. Very unfair, if he did.'

'I will set Mrs Sharpe to try to find out something about her,' said Margaret; and that lady, visiting a great deal, was not long in ascertaining the connection between the French girl and Mr Hoskins's handsome assistant, with its concomitant disagreeables. Thenceforward, the sisters could hardly repress a wish that she would commit herself; but there was no denying that she was clever, industrious, and peculiarly obliging.

Mr Secker had not accepted current events; that, indeed, could not have been expected from him. Through the suspension of amity with the family at the Gray House, he lost many pleasant hours; and though he was addicted to expressions of contemptuous pity for men or women who had 'no resources in themselves,' time hung heavily on his hands. Taste for study he had not; his temperament was incapable of concentration. His parochial work was light between Sundays, for the sick—and he did not resent it—preferred the Wesleyan minister, who did not read prayers out of a book. Even when he was good tempered, the inevitable discomforts of his poor home irritated his delicate nerves and affronted his tastes; and it was all so much worse in winter. In summer evenings, he would have taken long rapid walks, while his imagination ran wild in framing conversations never to be held, and letters never to be required. He was very sore about Augustine's sudden summons back by Mr Hoskins. 'Had I been a man of fortune,' said he, 'or even the incumbent of a small living, he would not have presumed to treat my son so.' When he became aware that Jeanne Royer had been the Hoskinses' guest, he declared that he and his family were victims of a conspiracy to crush them to the dust. That step did indeed seem unkind even to gentle Mrs Secker, and she could not refrain from saying: 'I never would have believed it; I thought they would do all they could to keep her out of his way.' It is very difficult to do good, and we have to mourn sometimes over the success of our plans. Mr and Mrs Hoskins had alienated the Seckers, displeased the Misses Wiseman, placed Jeanne Royer in a position which was thoroughly irksome to her, and the youth whom they had striven to serve was dying! The cold caught on that walk home had settled on his lungs, and his most attached friends had provided the inducement to take the walk, had even proposed it to him!

Who, that is not very young, does not know the deceitfulness of consumption? Its pauses, its fluctuations, its hopefulness. The weather is to be milder or steadier; something unusual or unsuspected in the case or the constitution will be developed: this victim will certainly not die. Some one else was as ill—worse even—years ago; had at first identical symptoms; and look at him now! Think of all the fine healthy men he has outlived!

Thus had Augustine Secker's loving watchers talked when May came; and then he was too weak to leave his bed. He had gone home early in April. Mrs Hoskins would have nursed him; but he wanted his mother, and his mother wanted him. The women understood one another by that time, and compromised. Mr Hoskins was to see him often; and from his house was to come every comfort.

'The one thing I dread daily and hourly,' had the poor fellow said, 'is my father's tongue. It would not be intolerable if he would let that poor girl alone; but to be bound by filial duty to hear silently all that he says and insinuates about her, is maddening. Setting affection aside, she is a woman, and young, and unprotected. He should reflect that Sophia may be situated some day as she is.'

'He never does reflect,' returned the mother incautiously: 'he would not hurt your feelings if he did, for he is miserable about your illness.'

'And yet he retards my recovery! I wonder it does not occur to him that it is hard—very hard—for us never to see one another: you understand that, though you don't like poor Jeanne.'

'I can, my darling; and I will never say a word against her, or do anything that you would dislike.'

Many similar conversations had these two; and long silences, when often she yearned to know if he were aware of his real state, or if she or anybody ought to tell him. If his father had been like her ideal of a Christian minister, how gently he would have broken the awful news! how soothingly they would have read, and wept, and prayed together!

Mr Hoskins was of opinion that Augustine's professional knowledge prevented his being in the dark; that he talked cheerfully, partly to keep up his mother's spirits, partly because self-delusion was contingent on the disease. A bright morning came, when he wished his mother would air his summer clothes, he should want them soon. She did air them; and the following night was far advanced when he said abruptly: 'My head is becoming very odd; read the seventeenth of St John.'

She did read it.

'Call my father.—Kiss me.'

He was gasping, when Mr Secker fell on his knees by the bedside sobbing: 'My boy, my first-born, has it come to this?'

'He wants to kiss you—quick,' urged the mother.

He placed his cheek close to the trembling lips, and heard their last utterance: 'All forgiven—don't be unkind—poor little Jeanne!'

When Jeanne received, in a kind note from Mrs Hoskins, the intelligence of Augustine's death, she, according to Miss Wiseman, 'threw herself into violent hysterics.' How, that lady argued, could a girl, who, though engaged, and aware of her lover's illness, spared no pains to make the best of her appearance, and did all she could to attract other men, have any real sorrow for his death, though it lay at her door? But Jeanne was prostrate. She *had* loved him as deeply as she could love any one, better than she should ever love again, and she knew how fondly he had loved her, how entirely he had believed in her. She was sure that he had died without regretting that he had known her; but might he not, disembodied, be aware of all her duplicity? Would his spirit, reproachful, though tender, be near her in the loneliness of the night?

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Would not an intolerable horror surround her in the darkness? Death had never confronted her before; it had been an indistinct something that happened to other people—no affair of hers. But here was a man, very little older than herself—full of vigour, handsome—*dead!* and if he had never known her, he might still be living. Again, she had been taught her religion early and carefully. She had never lost the conviction that she had committed a deadly sin in denying it. If she had been true to it, she might have converted this man; he would have listened to anything she said. But she had led him to believe that she despised popery, and worshipped with him, and he had died without the sacraments!

But the Misses Wiseman could guess none of this, and thought she was acting, and had 'no patience with her.' On the following morning came a letter from Lotty Monsey, saying that if she liked to go and pay a visit at the Gray House, mamma would be happy to see her, and she could come as soon as she liked, and need not write; that they, the girls, should be delighted to have her; they had no new governess, and Suzanne was generally cross, and they were very dull. Jeanne kissed the writing over and over. Anything was preferable to the Hayfield House rigid routine. It would be a relief to get away from the place where she had first realised Augustine's death. She felt as if he had died in her room. Miss Wiseman made no difficulty about her going; and when she asked how long she could be spared, said that it need not be decided then—that she would write to her. So she started by the mail.

When she reached St Breaca's next morning, the church-bell was tolling. She guessed for what purpose; and when she entered the Gray House, there were more hysterics; and Mrs Monsey said that people who were violent in their grief soon got over it. Her daughters were very compassionate; and Suzanne shewed an amount of kindness to the poor girl which she had never shewn for her before, and put her to bed, and staid with her till sleep came.

Next day she was well enough to send for materials, and begin making mournings. She was a born milliner, and it suited her taste as well as her pocket to make her own clothes. No one whom she could afford to employ would have adapted them so skilfully to her. She put a widow's cap into a coquettish bonnet; and having, according to Mrs Hoskins's advice, written to ask Mrs Secker to let her call on her, she set out with that purpose on the day fortnight of Augustine's burial. The last time she had walked to the house had been with his father, and his evident admiration had been acceptable to her vanity. 'The foolish old man has never forgiven me for preferring his son,' said she to herself. But shame and sorrow oppressed her as she went on, and her knees were weak and her heart was sick when she reached the door. It helped her, and indeed every one, that Mr Secker was at home, and that, acting as he conceived 'a perfect gentleman and man of the world' should act in such circumstances, he talked on indifferent and trifling subjects. They, on the brink of tears, could not. Miss Secker and Sophia had kissed her, and she had whispered to each: 'Pity me, and try to forgive me;' but she could say nothing of the kind to him. By-and-by, in a thick voice, she asked if she might look among Augustine's papers for her letters to him. Mrs Secker started, and replied that none of his things had been touched yet; meaning to convey that she could not yet bear to do anything with them; but Jeanne did not understand, and suggested timidly that perhaps Miss Secker would go with her into his room, and stay with her while she found them. So they went. As soon as they were there, the awful sense of death present, which Jeanne hoped she had shaken off, rushed over her, and with it came tenderness and compunction. She threw herself on the bed, and cried aloud. Mr Secker had expected 'a scene'—rather wished for it, in fact; the softness evoked by his dying son's last words had passed for the time, and his inferior nature predominated. In a minute he was at the bedside, with cruel indifference in his eyes and voice.

'Dear Miss Royer,' he said, 'I have a wife and children whom I cannot allow to be excited in this manner. They have suffered very much lately, as you are aware. You must let me take you into the other room. You may rely upon my sending your letters to you.'

She submitted, cowed, and said she would go. He made no opposition; but Sophia's soft young heart was touched, and she was about to offer to walk with her, when a stern glance from her father, and a warning one from her mother, checked her. 'Poor little thing,' she said afterwards; 'I could not bear her going alone; she looked so young, so childish, except her eyes, in that cap; and she must have been very miserable.' Yes, she was; quite as miserable as culpable. As she chose back streets, that she might weep unheeded behind her thick veil, she breathed air defiled by stale tobacco and refuse of fish: squalid children quarrelled for disgusting trifles, and women scolded as they scold only in low marine districts. Further on—it was low water—the black timbers of the pier, and the mud in the shipwrights' yards, suggested to her disturbed imagination horrors going on secretly in lately filled graves. The dogs at the Gray House barked savagely till she was admitted, and slunk away snarling afterwards. Mr and Mrs Monsey were wrangling in the drawing-room; their daughters keeping out of the way in their bedrooms.

CHAPTER VIII.

'Tell me if you think this will do, Margaret,' said Miss Wiseman to her sister a fortnight later, giving her a note to read:

DEAR MISS ROYER—My sister and I are of opinion that it will be more satisfactory both to you and ourselves that you do not return hither. We do not feel that it is necessary to write more explicitly, and we enclose the amount of salary which would be due to you if you remained with us three months from the present date. We shall be obliged to you for a receipt, and glad to find that the luggage you left reaches you safely: we forward it to-day, carriage paid. Should you think it expedient to refer to us, we will state that you are fully competent to teach your own language, and by no means deficient in industry.—I remain, yours truly, LUCRETIA WISEMAN.

Another blow! Not that she regretted that formal establishment, but it threw her completely on the

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Monseys, and she had perceived that they did not wish her to stay long. Mrs Monsey had spoken more than once of her return to Hayfield House as a fact to be speedily accomplished. She knew that the whole family watched her while she read the note, received at breakfast. She must tell them its purport, because her boxes would arrive. Laying it before Mrs Monsey, she said: 'More trouble for me.'

'Very provoking, indeed,' was her observation, as she passed it to her husband.

He read it slowly. 'Deuced awkward, upon my word, Mademoiselle. It was only yesterday that Mrs Monsey and I were lamenting that circumstances would prevent our offering you a bed for more than a week longer. I should recommend your advertising. Or what do you think of returning to Paris? Your English experiment has not been successful; and no doubt you have friends there who could take care of you for a time.'

It was no surprise, but bitterly painful. A shadow darkened her pale face, and she said: 'Thank you, Mr Monsey, I will take a long walk, and consider what I had better do.' She left the room.

'I shall be glad when she is safely off the premises,' remarked Mr Monsey. 'It was confounded folly to bring her here. I can't imagine what possessed you to do it. The girl is ill, and desperate. A pretty business it would be if she had a fever in the house, or took it into her head to destroy herself.'

'I wish you wouldn't say such horrid things, Arthur; you make me quite nervous. I asked her here to please the girls; they were wild to have her, and it made a little change for them.'

Jeanne kept tears back till she reached her room, then let them flow passionately for a while. She bathed her face, took a strong dose of lavender, wrote a receipt for Miss Wiseman, and two letters. Next she took a packet from her desk, put it in her pocket, and dressed to go out. Lotty looked in, and asked if she should go with her.

'No, dear; thank you; I should be a wretched companion to-day, and I could not make any plans if I had you to talk to.'

'Well, don't be longer away than you can help,' said the good-natured girl, kissing her. 'If we are to lose you so soon, we must make the most of you.'

Out of that desolate house, and away; first to Augustine's grave. It had been her intention to place a headstone there as soon as she could afford it. The act would soothe her, and be some reparation to his family. Had he lain where no one could see her, she would have thrown herself on the ground, reproached herself, and implored his pardon and pity aloud; but the churchyard was overlooked on one side, and hundreds of eyes might watch her. She did not stay long; she wanted solitude; wanted to be where there was no indication of human existence. It was easy to indulge the feeling. Just round a promontory nothing could be seen but the little bay and its beautiful wild coast. The tide was high, the day calm. She scrambled down into a cove where she and Augustine had often sat and talked. She remembered that the last time they were there together she had thought as she looked down into the clear placid depth, and watched the graceful sea-plants waving gently, as if they sought to prolong to the utmost their enjoyment of the delicious water, that it was no wonder weary wretches sprang into such places to end their woes. She had even said so to him, and he had shaken his head, and replied: 'A bad thought, my sweet: depend upon it, suicide is the most atrocious of crimes—don't try to throw any poetry over it.'

And she had really wondered, and returned: 'Now, I can't see that: I can see that it is horrible to take another's life, but one's own'——

'Is not one's own, my Jeanne, and taking it is the sin which puts repentance out of the sinner's power. See how that aggravates its wickedness.'

Why did she think of this at that moment? she asked herself. Was it an impulse of grace beckoning her to the only safe course left? Return to Paris, candid avowal of her faults, meek submission to their consequences, commencement of a life in which gratification of vanity and worldly aggrandisement should not be principles of action. 'It is not in me,' her mind went on; 'I cannot do it. I was born for pleasure, born to be admired, loved, worshipped; I am fit for nothing else, and all this is denied me—there is no patient drudge in me.' She took out the packet she had brought—Augustine's letters to her, hers to him. She kissed his, read some of her own, tore them all as small as possible, and scattered them to the sea. She was cold; she got up and walked to and fro the little beach as fast as the shingle would let her. Then she thought she would like to look at St Breaca's, and began to climb a high rock whence part of the town could be seen. She was near the summit when her foot slipped, and she fell backwards. She shrieked with all her strength, and stretched out eager agonised hands. In vain! Her skull was fractured in her descent, and the sea received her a battered corpse.

Men in a distant fishing-vessel heard her last cry, wondered what it was, then supposed they had fancied it; but remembered it with terrible surmises when, three or four weeks later, the county paper mentioned the finding of a woman's body some miles down the coast. It defied recognition, and was buried by the parish, after a verdict of 'Found Drowned.'

Jeanne had left a letter on her dressing-table, directed to Mr Monsey, but placed under the looking-glass, in order that it might not be found too soon. She said:

DEAR MR MONSEY—I will not intrude longer on your hospitality. I enclose you a letter which will explain my intentions. When you have read it, will you have it posted? I cannot write it twice, and I want you to understand that you need not fear my troubling you any more. I will only ask you to order all that I have left in your house to be given to Suzanne.—I remain yours truly,

JEANNE ROYER.

The letter was directed—Madame Royer, Poste Restante, Paris. It ran as follows:

When you receive this, I shall be dead, and there will be no clue to me. I am ill, wretched, mad perhaps. Those women have forbidden me to return to them. I cannot stay in this house. Where shall I go? There is no place in the world for me. The good do not trust me; the bad do not want me. It is not easy to forgive you for being my mother; but I try to do so, for I believe that you have loved me. Farewell. JEANNE.

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Mr Monsey was not much surprised — not shocked, but very uncomfortable during the succeeding fortnight, lest the unhappy girl's remains should be brought to his house.

Madame Royer had a fever, which reduced her to the gates of death; and after her recovery, devoted herself humbly to works of mercy.

Mrs Secker and the Hoskinses grieved for Jeanne, as the thoughtful and feeling ought to grieve for one so pitifully wrecked.

It has been stated that even the most terrible husbands have soft moments. Mrs Secker took advantage of such an interval—with what object is not evident—to represent to hers that had he been influenced by her, and avoided the Monseys, Augustine might be living and prosperous, and Jeanne Royer, differently circumstanced, might have turned out well. 'But, my dear child,' said she to Sophia, 'it is really of no use whatever to talk to your father: he cannot, or will not see anything as any one else does. All I could get out of him was: "Very logical indeed, Mrs Secker. Upon my word, I congratulate you; your conclusions are so perfectly satisfactory to yourself. Now, for me, I confess humbly that whenever I meddle with cause and effect I get completely adrift."'

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

The middle of the long vacation is commonly a quiet time for science as well as for law, affording opportunity for retrospect and stock-taking. But as the days shorten, philosophers, naturalists, and the searchers after nature's secrets come back from their holidays, and betake themselves to work. In this they reverse the order stated by the poet, who declares winter to be the 'time for sleeping,' for they all shew, and markedly, that winter is the time for working. So much work is in prospect, that a new weekly journal is to be started to record and make known all that is doing in science.

In concluding a lecture delivered at the Royal Institution, *On the Cryptogamic Forests of the Coal Period*, Mr Carruthers remarked that the ferns and other genera which he had described might be considered the types of the plants to which we are indebted for our stores of mineral fuel. They grew in extensive level plains, their fleshy roots penetrating the soft mud which formed the surface-soil. The moist atmosphere (not at all likely to have been charged with more carbonic acid gas than that of our own day, says Mr Carruthers) would encourage the growth of cellular parasites and epiphytes, which are found now in a fossil condition. The great mud plains were bordered by forests of coniferous trees, which grew, however, mostly on the higher ground. But the plants that grew with the Conifers in these upland regions are as yet quite unknown. In the plants that are known, the biologist finds an especial interest, because they agree in all essentials with some of the humble members of our present Flora, but shewing a development in size and in organisation far beyond that of their modern representatives.

It appears by a communication made recently to the Royal Dublin Society that wherever in Ireland planting and drainage have been properly attended to, the change in the climate and condition of a locality is remarkable. Noxious plants peculiar to a wet soil disappear, and are succeeded by plants which affect a dry soil; and on these there follows a marked improvement in the health of sheep and cattle. In the latter half of last century, more than fifty-five million trees were planted: if similar plantings had been continued, we may believe that climate and industry would have been alike beneficially affected. Mr Andrews, a member of the Royal Irish Academy, states that there are nearly four million acres of unreclaimed land in Ireland, and that what the country wants is 'that steady useful employment of the agricultural labourers, which will do away with all the talk about emigration being the safety-valve of Ireland.' And he adds: 'It is a question now whether the country does possess a sufficient quantity of labour to develop its resources.'

A suggestion has been made by one of the agricultural societies in France that the roots of couch-grass would make good fodder for horses. It is not the first time that this grass, which in some parts of England is called 'twitch,' has been thus spoken of. The roots are sweet, and it is known that horses fed thereon acquire a smooth and lustrous skin. Some economists argue that the waste lands of France, where nothing else will grow, could be utilised by being planted or sown with couch-grass, and that if the plant were once brought into general cultivation, many other useful applications of it would be discovered. We mention this subject on the chance that some English agriculturist will determine whether a really useful application of what most farmers regard as a troublesome weed is possible or not. A few years ago, no one imagined that the spines (foliage) of pine-trees could be converted into wool; but pine-tree wool is now an article of commerce in much request for medical purposes.

Another rural fact worth notice is, that in some parts of France the plague of insects has so much increased that active endeavours are made to protect and propagate small birds. All the prefects have given notice that parents will be held responsible for their children's mischief in the destruction of birds' nests; and in many places earthen pots and old sabots have been fixed up to serve as artificial nests, and were soon tenanted. We are told that the emperor has given orders for the placing of a number of artificial nests in the Bois de Boulogne and the gardens of Tuileries, and superintended a portion of the work in person. After this imperial manifestation, we may hope that the cruel and stupid slaughter of small birds, which has been carried to much greater lengths in France than in this country, will now be checked or completely put down.

The growing question of increased water-supply to large towns, stirs another question of almost equal importance—namely, economy in the use of water. The latter has been discussed at a meeting of the Royal Dublin Society by Mr G. Sanders, who states that the waste of water in Dublin is 'enormous,' just as the gas-supply used

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to be wasted in the same city when consumers paid by burner only, and not by measure. Meters were introduced, and an immediate saving of 40 per cent. in gas was the result. With this example before him, Mr Sanders recommends that meters should be used for the water-supply, and he exhibited Payton's Patent Meter as admirably suited to its purpose. Although with twelve feet head of water, it will measure five hundred gallons of water an hour, it is so small that it can be made as a time-piece, and stand on a mantel shelf, or in a counting-house under constant inspection. The mechanism is beautifully simple: two cycloidal valves working one within the other in a way which may be exemplified by two turnstiles which overlap each other, and yet allow a stream of people to pass through. So the water flows through the meter, and is accurately measured the while. From these particulars, it would appear that Payton's meter is a very efficient instrument, which may be adopted with advantage wherever water is to be measured or economised.

Amsterdam has long wished to have a direct navigable communication with the North Sea, instead of that by the Zuyder Zee and Texel; and now a ship-canal which is to cost twenty-seven million guilders is in course of construction. A line drawn from Amsterdam, through the inland sea known as the Y, and through Wyker Meer, will indicate its course. The length will be about fifteen miles, with a port at the outfall, which will be on a part of the coast where a harbour of refuge is much needed. Hence, in a few years, Holland will have added one more to the great engineering works which have made that little kingdom famous.

Natal is a young colony, but it grows pine-apples, bananas, oranges, Indian corn, wheat, cotton, coffee, tea, and other useful products. The sugar-cane was an experiment there twenty years ago: now, six thousand tons of sugar are annually exported; and arrow-root figures in the exports to the value of six thousand pounds a year. Cattle and sheep are so abundant, and multiply so rapidly, that preserved beef and mutton may be expected to appear before long in the list of Natalian commodities; while to facilitate trade, a breakwater is being built at the entrance of the landlocked harbour of Durban, to prevent the accumulation of sand, which now interferes with the passage of vessels. It says something for the enterprise of the colonists that this breakwater is constructed after the manner of the great breakwater at Portland, by driving in piles, carrying out a railway over the sea, and the dropping in hundreds of tons of stone from the trucks.

It may now be taken for granted that fresh meat can be sent from Australia to this country, and delivered here in palatable condition. The fact has been demonstrated with mutton and beef, and the Australians are so elated with their success, that they are earnest to discover further improvements in their process of cooking and preserving the meat. With so many hungry mouths on this side the globe, it seems deplorable that in one single tallow-making establishment near Ballarat, nearly two million pounds of mutton were wasted in the boiling down. If the new endeavours prove successful, this waste will be avoided in future; and not only meat, but preserved kidneys and concentrated essence of meat will be shipped to England in surprising quantities.

THE PAUPER'S DEAD CHILD.

Hush! Speak very softly; fasten the door;
With a light tread step on the creaking floor.
There's a ragged handkerchief on the face;
Lift it up gently, as if it were lace.
Yes; only last night little Elsie died;
Just opened her eyes, then shivered, and sighed.
Though I rubbed her hands, wrapped her in my cloak,
She grew cold and colder as morning broke.

Now the pariah coffin lies on the chair;
Though I shut my eyes, still I see it there.
It's unpainted—rude; but then, you see,
She 's used to the coarse things of poverty.
She had grown so thin; dim, sunk were her eyes,
As she looked at me so wistful and wise:
'I'm not hungry now: there 'll be more for you;
Bread lasts much longer for one than for two.'

Rich God! she 'll be rich with thee. Well I mind
How she raised her head last night. 'I shall find
And see God soon,' she smiling said, 'by streams
Sparkling and clear, as I've seen them in dreams.
My Lord—he 's the same as Jesus, you know—
Will lead me, and I shall be rested so;
And I'm sure he 'll let me run to the gate
When I think you 're coming—so don't be late.'

She said something else; but the din and roar
In the great streets without came more and more
Through the broken panes of the window there,
And I couldn't tell what her other words were.
Since it's well with her, I ought to be glad;
By her riches, rich; yet poor, empty, sad,
I am sitting here; while the children creep
Softly up to the door to catch a peep.

I've no flow'rs, except this daisy I found;
It was hidden beneath a rubbish mound.
Like Elsie, though crushed, down-trodden by man,
It came from God, and rest with her it can.
Is it time to go? The rain has come on;
Wet will be the earth that she'll lie upon.
Yet, whene'er I kissed her, she always smiled;
So *this* must be only what *was* my child.

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THE ADVENTURE OF THE *MARY ANN*.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

THE *Mary Ann* was a whaling-vessel, well known in the Tasmanian trade. She had always been accounted a lucky ship. When others had returned without oil, or, as the phrase is, 'clean,' she had been able to pay her men good wages, or rather to give her men considerable sums of money as their share in the enterprise, for the principle of co-operation, which is now receiving yearly new applications in England, has long been in use among whalers. Men go out on the agreement that they shall receive a particular specified share of the total proceeds. Sometimes they draw nothing at all at the end of their voyage; sometimes each sailor receives as much as a couple of hundred pounds. But the general effect of the system is that the sailors engaged in the trade are rather above the average; that each man looks after his fellows, and does his best to aid the common cause. When they have reached the whaling-ground, there are no idle hands. While one man is specially appointed to keep a look-out, he is assisted by the eyes of every one on deck; and when at last the welcome 'There she blows!' is heard, men rush to the boats as readily as school-boys rush out of school.

The *Mary Ann* had usually been, as I said, a lucky ship, and men would go out in her for a smaller share of the proceeds of the voyage than they would in other vessels. Her crew was usually, therefore, a picked one, and her captain, old Truesalt, as good a whaler as could be met with. And yet the *Mary Ann* was an old, lumbering, clumsy vessel, which ploughed her way through a heavy sea in as awkward a style as any Dutchman ever built. She *was* of Dutch build. In a gale of wind she had as much notion of riding on the waves as Washington Irving's Tinbroek would have had of dancing a polka. She rolled from side to side until her yards nearly touched the sea, and in her onward course went *through* the opposing waves instead of over them. When she was young, she had been a Dutch East Indiaman. A curious chapter might be written on the vicissitudes of ships. The *Victory* is to be laid up like an old Greenwich pensioner. The ship in which Captain Cook, now a hundred years ago, made one of his voyages round the world, was employed only a few years ago as a collier between Newcastle and London. One of the dirtiest whalers which I ever saw, and this only some six or seven years ago, was the *Prince Regent*, a vessel which had been the yacht of George IV.; and it would be easy to make out quite a long list of vessels now doing the rougher kind of sea-work, which in their younger days have seen noble service.

The *Mary Ann* had been out for a ten months' cruise on the whaling-ground which lies all round the great Southern Ocean. This time she had been unfortunate, and her crew were returning in disgust for a new supply of provisions and a few weeks' run on shore. They had reached Storm Bay, and expected within a few hours to anchor off Hobart-town. The wind had fallen, and the men were standing lazily about, looking out for any sign of its rising again. At last one of the sailors called attention to the fact that a boat was putting off from the land. In a few minutes, three men could be made out, and before very long the pilot was on board. It requires some experience of the sensation to understand how men who have been cut off from all human intercourse for many months welcome a new face. The pilot in this case was a very good fellow, talkative and good-natured, and ready to answer, to the best of his ability, all the questions which were showered upon him. But the one absorbing piece of news on which he always fell back, when he could get a moment's leisure from answering questions, was that Black Dick had escaped again, and had gathered round him a gang of the worst bush-rangers which the island had yet seen. Black Dick had robbed the mail. Black Dick had tied a dozen different men to trees; had stopped the coach going to Launceston, and, with the help of his companions, had relieved the passengers of everything which possessed sufficient value in his

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eyes to be worth taking; had threatened that he would attack a man against whom he had a grudge in the very centre of Hobart-town; had been seen to go down the principal street in open day. With one man to help him, he had gone to a ball up the country, and had made his appearance in the midst of the festivity with a rifle at his shoulder; had then called for silence, a proceeding quite unnecessary; and had, after graciously promising not to harm anybody if they did not stir, sent the hat round, making a collection of involuntary offerings of money, watches, bracelets, brooches, watch-guards, and even rings. Lastly, the man had gathered together a number of ruffians, almost as bad as himself, and was known to have committed some terrible murders. Parties of police had been out after him for weeks, but they seemed to give him but little trouble. The convict servants scattered throughout the colony were known to give him assistance, and it was not at all unlikely that settlers in remote districts were ready to purchase their own security at the price of conniving at his presence. The government had offered a reward for him dead or alive. It was believed that he would make the attempt from the northern side of the island to escape over to the mainland; extra men had therefore been stationed at every likely spot on the north coast, and every ship leaving the colony was subjected to a stricter search. All these particulars the old pilot related while waiting on the poop of the *Mary Ann* for the approach of the sea-breeze, which, usually setting in about three o'clock in the afternoon, would, in the course of three or four hours, carry them easily to their anchorage.

Meantime, from the opposite side of the bay, a long whale-boat had put to sea, and was rapidly moving in the direction of the ship. The pilot was the first to notice her, and to wonder what she could be. She could not belong to any whaler, because none was in sight. She was not a Hobart-town boat, because she was coming from the opposite direction. Neither could she belong to Port Arthur, because from the convict settlement no boat belonging to the government would be allowed to make its way round, and there were no private boats. The pilot could only think of the boat belonging to the isthmus which separates Tasman's Peninsula from the mainland. At this isthmus, which is a low sandy neck from sea to sea, and only some three hundred yards wide, there were stations near to each other, with guards stationed day and night to prevent the escape of convicts from the peninsula. To help them, there were and are dogs kept at the public expense, and chained, so that it was impossible for a fugitive to make his escape without passing within reach of them. Should the runaway endeavour to swim round, he well knew that the bays were alive with sharks. There was a boat kept on the mainland side of the peninsula, but what could the police force stationed there want so far away? If the boat had been kept on the peninsula side of the isthmus, the pilot would have thought that it contained an escaped party of convicts. This view of the matter once suggested, made every one on the alert. Ships had been seized before, and the crews either murdered outright, or turned adrift to make their way back as they best could in a boat, or, as happened in the case of the *Lady Hobart*, had been compelled to work the ship under the guidance of the captors. The mate, however, soon made the matter clear. His telescope shewed that none of them wore either the bright yellow or the gray clothing in which runaways from Port Arthur would be clothed.

In a few minutes it became evident that the boat was making her way to the ship. As she drew near, she was carefully scanned, in order that some trace of her character might be discovered.

'They are not convicts by their dress,' said one.

'Two of them, at least, have blue shirts on like policemen,' said a Hobart-town lad.

'Can they be a shipwrecked crew?' asked another.

But before he could be answered, the captain noticed that there were only four men pulling, although eleven were in the boat.

Presently, they saw a white rag hoisted on the top of an oar, and the man who had suggested that they might be a shipwrecked crew gave himself credit for his sagacity.

'If they are shipwrecked men, they pull like landsmen.'

'But ships' crews don't all pull like whalers,' suggested the pilot.

'And ships' crews that don't belong to whalers don't carry whaling-boats such as that,' answered the captain.

Altogether, there were circumstances about the incident which would have created wonder, if not anxiety, at any time; but now, while the ship was lying becalmed, they naturally became an exciting topic.

Soon the boat could be made out clearly, and a fair notion obtained of the men in her. None of them were clothed in the least like convicts. *That*, at anyrate, was clear. Two had blue over-shirts; the rest had nothing particular in their dress to indicate who or what they were. They might be sailors, or they might be ordinary colonial labourers. As the boat drew near, it was seen that they only possessed four oars. Altogether there were eleven men in her. As soon as they got within speaking-distance, the captain shouted to ask them who they were, and what they wanted. His suspicions had been aroused, and he was just the man to make a hard fight rather than have his ship taken. But he felt half ashamed of himself as he shouted, because apparently there was only a boat of unarmed men approaching.

'We are the shipwrecked crew of the *Philadelphia*, American whaler,' shouted the man steering in the whale-boat.

'That boat never belonged to an American whaler,' said the captain to the pilot.

'She is the police-boat; I know her by the red line,' interrupted the pilot eagerly.

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'Mr Smith,' the captain called quietly to the first mate, 'get your anchor on the bulwarks ready to drop over into that boat if there should be any need for it.'

Mr Smith thought the precaution a rather foolish one, but obeyed, as a matter of course.

'Now, boatswain, bring up your lances and harpoons.'

When the latter order had been obeyed, it was evident that it would have been an extremely dangerous thing to make an attack on the *Mary Ann*. The lance, as sharp as a razor, in the hands of a skilful whaler, would be a terrible weapon. But the captain had seen by the faces of the crew that they thought his precautions altogether unnecessary; and as he looked towards the boat, he felt inclined to agree with them. Almost the only circumstance of suspicion was the fact that they were in the police whale-boat.

By this time the boat was within easy speaking-distance of the ship, and the men could be readily seen from the deck.

'How do you come by that boat?' asked the pilot.

'The police have lent it to us to go to Hobart-town in. Our own was too much damaged to float any longer.'

'But this is not the way to Hobart-town.'

'No. We saw you, and thought you would give us a lift when the sea-breeze came up,' answered the man at the steering-oar.

The statement might possibly be true, and indeed the whole aspect of affairs looked so ordinary, that no one seemed to think of making any opposition to the approach of the boat. A rope-ladder was thrown over to them, and without more ado they made fast their boat, and followed each other closely on board.

And then there began a short tragedy, which lasted only three minutes. The boat's crew were runaway convicts, who had surprised the police, taken their boat, stolen their clothes, and had planned this attack upon the whaler, with the object of getting away from the island. Each man, at a signal given by a short active man, who acted as their leader, produced a pistol, and pointing it at the head of the whaler nearest him, intimated, in the plainest possible way, that death would be the doom of any one who should venture to resist. Nevertheless, the captain and two or three others, including the cabin-boy, did resist. A shot was fired at each. The captain was slightly wounded, and the boy overpowered. Two men who resisted were mortally wounded, and then the *Mary Ann* was in the possession of eleven of England's picked scoundrels. Her crew, with the exception of three men, were bound; the old pilot and captain were locked in a cabin, at the door of which a man stood sentry; and the ship's head was turned seaward. The convicts then held a short consultation, and the result was that they ordered four of the crew and the pilot to be brought on deck, to be lowered into the whale-boat by which they had themselves come to the ship, and turned adrift. When this was done, the captain and the remainder of his crew, now reduced to six, were brought together, and informed by Black Dick—for the leader of the ruffians was the notorious bushranger—that they were going to California, that resistance on the part of anybody would be punished by instant death, but that if these sailors would work willingly, they should be well treated. The same night the ship ran out of Storm Bay, and by daylight was out of sight of land. The poor sailors, who were expecting a run on land after their monotonous voyage, had a three months' journey before them, with the certainty of no pay at the end, and the probability of hard treatment in the meantime.

A week had passed by. The captain's wound almost completely disabled him. He was treated with the utmost harshness by Black Dick, and would in all probability have been knocked on the head, or thrown overboard, but for the fact that nobody else knew so thoroughly how to work the ship. The mate, a clever Yorkshireman, with very little to say, but that little always to the purpose, acquiesced apparently in what could not be helped. Black Dick even seemed to have taken a liking to him. The Hobart-town lad, who had a good word from every sailor on board, was, however, mortally hated by the convict leader, who resented every time he met him the lad's brave resistance to him on the day of capture. The lad could steer well, was particularly useful aloft, and was altogether much too valuable in helping the lazy rascals who had been deputed to do the work of the men turned adrift, to be murdered outright. Still he was terribly ill-used. He was called up at all times of the day and night to do the most difficult and dangerous work. If a sail wanted reefing, poor Charley had to go whether the summons were in his watch or not. While everybody else had a certain number of hours' sleep, he was pretty certain to be disturbed in his, and might think himself fortunate if he got half the allotted time. The convicts themselves followed their captain's example, and this the more readily, because they saw that the latter rather liked to see them ill-use the lad.

A fortnight more passed, and the ship had made good progress into the Pacific. She was reaching the latitude of the Fijis. Nothing of importance had occurred on board. Black Dick had chosen to torture poor Charley. One day he had him hoisted with a rope under his arms up to the cross-trees, and kept there until he fainted. At another time, he was sent aloft on a cold night, and kept there, just as he had turned out of his berth, until morning, when he was so cold that it was only with the aid of the mate, who got well cursed for his pains, that the lad reached the deck. Nobody else would have dared to give him a helping hand; but, as I have said, the mate had made himself rather a favourite with Black Dick. He had done what he could for poor Charley, had given him many an encouraging word, had warded off many a blow, but, as he brought the lad down the companion, it seemed that he too was deserting him; for he whispered into his ear, not words of consolation, but a command and a threat: 'You must not say anything about our relationship, or I shall let them do what they like with you.'

Charley was a distant connection of the mate's wife. What did the mate mean by thus wishing that all connection between them should be unknown?

And the captain all this time, what of him? He was at first gloomy and sulky: the pain from the wound, the loss of his ship, and the ill-treatment he received, seemed to leave him time for nothing else than grumbling. He was compelled

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to assist the mate in taking the ship's latitude and longitude, and Black Dick was cunning enough to watch very jealously that there was no connivance between them which might run them into dangerous waters. And then, as the days drew on, the captain recovered to some extent his health and spirits. Night after night he saw the convicts take alternate rounds of carousing, until he sometimes believed and almost hoped that they would set the *Mary Ann* on fire. And then there would return the great hope of freedom; the desire to shake off these scoundrels, and, if possible, bring them to justice. He wished that they might meet with a man-of-war, English, French, or American, he did not care which. If they should board him, he would denounce the men, even though he should be shot that very moment. He hated them for the way they treated poor Charley. He wished that they would all get drunk together, and give him a chance of making off in a boat. But they were much too careful for that—would not even allow him to be too long with any of his old crew; and the mate, whom he saw necessarily a good deal every day, seemed to have quite gone over to the enemy. He was a rare hand at whale-fishing, but no match at plotting against Black Dick. He had made one or two suggestions to the mate, to seize the ship, to have a boat lowered under some easily feigned pretence, and to get away in the night. But the cold-hearted mate had only shaken his head, and said that it could not be done.

'Wait,' he had said; 'things may turn out right. Take it easy till they do.'

And meantime the mate himself, who seemed the friend of the bushranger, and was believed to be so by all on board except by the ship's carpenter, who had known him from his babyhood, was simply playing his own part. A day or two had convinced him that it was altogether useless to attempt anything like active opposition. It was doubtful whether all the six men who remained of the ship's crew could be trusted—even if they could, they were quite powerless against the suspicious and well-armed convicts. He knew quite well, from his Van Diemen's Land experience, that these bushrangers would not hesitate at the murder of them all, if they had anything to gain thereby. Nay, he believed that they would put such a design into execution immediately, but for the necessity they were under of having men to manage the ship. He saw, therefore, that the best course to pursue was to make himself necessary to them. Thus it was that within a week he had convinced Black Dick that they could do nothing without him, and that it was necessary to retain the captain, in order to do some of the calculation required for the navigation.

At last Black Dick told him his plans. They were to go to California, to sell the ship, and make off with the money. The Yorkshireman coolly turned round to the bushranger, looked him steadily in the face, and asked him how much he was to be paid for his trouble.

The bushranger was surprised, and, after a moment's pause, burst into a short laugh. 'That's what I call cool;' but he was pleased at the coolness nevertheless. When he named a sum, the mate stood out for a higher, until at length a bargain was struck.

The bargain having come to the ears of the captain, the latter resolved to denounce the mate as an accomplice whenever he should have the chance. The poor captain was much too simple and straightforward a sailor to make out what was going on in the brain of his mate.

California being the destination, the mate thought it best, after thinking the matter over, to persuade Black Dick that the likeliest way of evading suspicion was to go in with oil. But the *Mary Ann* was clean. The bushranger pointed out to the mate, when he suggested that they should try to catch a fish or two, that they had been returning to Hobart-town without oil, and naturally asked why they could not go in the same condition into San Francisco, the capital of California. The mate pointed out that the ship belonged to Hobart-town, that it was natural they should go there, in order to see their friends, and give an account to the owners of the ship; but that in California, the circumstance of a southern ship going so far out of her course would be suspicious. However, the mate did not press his point; he was not very certain that any good end could be gained by it. His moderation and want of eagerness made the bushranger think the more favourably of the plan, and at length determine that the advice should be taken.

When the captain learned that the ship was to be put a little out of her course in order that they might come upon whaling-ground, his spirits improved wonderfully. The old fisher's instinct awakened in him at once.

Everything was got ready for the purposes of the chase. The men were told that their best chance of getting safely into San Francisco was to take with them a cargo which should give them the appearance of having been about a lawful pursuit. I don't know what was in the mate's head at the time he made the suggestion which had been adopted, or whether he had formed any definite plan. I am inclined to think he had not. Possibly he thought that the great point to be aimed at was the gaining of time. He knew that the colonial government would be quite certain to send a man-of-war after them, and that the pursuer would most likely think California was the proposed destination of the runaways. On the other hand, to meet with whales they would have to go somewhat out of the ordinary course to California, because, though landsmen are generally unaware of the fact, ships usually keep within very narrow tracks, and very seldom strike out a new course for themselves.

As a set-off to the disadvantage of leaving the ordinary track, the mate considered it probable that on the whaling-ground they might meet with other vessels, by the help of which he might get a chance of sending a message to an English man-of-war.

The captain was in high glee at the prospect of sport. The mate took everything very easily, as everybody thought, and meantime was puzzling his brains as to what course he should adopt to make other people aware of the true state of affairs on board the *Mary Ann*.

In a few days, the joyful cry was heard announcing that a fish was in sight. A boat was lowered; the captain was placed in it, with an equal number of ex-convicts and ordinary sailors as his crew. The convicts, however, carried pistols; for they were by no means inclined to trust the rest. I need not describe the chase.

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Melville has done it so well, that it is almost presumption in any one else to attempt it. They were successful. The convicts soon became enamoured of its excitement, its fine sport, and the risk. It was as exciting as bushranging, and quite as dangerous. Then, too, they had from one day's work obtained three hundred pounds' worth of oil. A few such days' work, and they would have something to sell when they reached California. The latter was the argument which told most on some of the men; but Black Dick shook his head. He wanted to be in port before it was at all likely that any news of their capture of the vessel had preceded them.

A day or two more of such sport as they had had, and they could go into California with a good pretence.

The next day, as an observation shewing their position had been entered, while the captain was marking their latitude and longitude on the chart, according to the daily custom on board ship, the mate took advantage of the momentary absence of the bushranger—who, although he put more trust in the mate than in anybody else, yet never allowed the observations to be taken, or the entries in the log or on the chart to be entered, out of his presence—to make him notice how near they would be to a certain island, which was then one of the naval stations of Her Majesty in the South Pacific.

The poor lad Charley continued to be ill-treated. Every kind of petty oppression which the ill-will of bad men could suggest was heaped upon him. His life was a long misery. He had insufficient food and insufficient rest; he was rope's-ended without the smallest compunction; he was exposed to all weathers, and was at every ruffian's beck and call.

Next day, another whale was sighted. The boat was lowered, a similar crew placed in her, and the pursuit began. The fish (as the whale—in defiance of naturalists—is called by sailors) led them a long chase; so long that they lost sight of the ship altogether, and but for the fact that the *Mary Ann* followed in the direction which they had taken, they would have had great difficulty in finding their way back.

The late return, however, suggested a plan to the mate which he thought might be put into execution. If the captain, when steering the whaler, could again manage to get out of sight of the ship, he might contrive not to be seen again, and to make his way to that island, where, as we have seen, he was pretty sure to find an English man-of-war.

There were many difficulties in the way. The captain was not the man who could readily take a hint; he must be directly communicated with. Accordingly, as the ship's calculations were being made next day, when the mate was asked by the captain to check his working, the former wrote upon the slate: 'Lose yourself, and make off for the island.' The captain had the sense, after reading the message, to turn the slate, and take the opportunity of afterwards rubbing out the writing without arousing the suspicion of the convict captain, who had been seated at the opposite side of the cabin table while this had been going on.

When the ship's position was marked on the chart, the mate laid his rule quite naturally on the course which would lead from the spot the ship then occupied to the island. 'West-by-north exactly,' was the involuntary remark of the captain.

That same day the boat was manned again. The crew was composed of three convicts—who, according to custom and for fear of an attack, were armed—and five of the crew of the *Mary Ann*. Charley was put in, in order to take the place of the harpoon-thrower at the oar, when the whale had been reached.

From the moment they left the ship, the mate determined that he would do his utmost to get the *Mary Ann* under the notice of the man-of-war on the station. He went below, leaving the bushranger in charge, in order that he might have the sleep to which, in the ordinary routine of the ship's work, he was entitled. Before getting into his berth he gave one more look seaward, and though he could not by this time see the boat, he saw something else which he thought would favour his purpose. The boat had started to go in a westerly direction, that, of course, being the direction in which the whale had been seen; the mate, however, saw now, what perhaps no one else observed—certainly none of the convicts—that the school of whales had turned south, and must have long since caused the men in the boat, which could not be seen from the ship's deck, to alter her course. Ordinarily, the ship, instead of being allowed to follow gently to the west, so as to aid the boat, would have altered her course, and gone where occasional clouds of spray shewed that the whales had gone. The mate, however, did not want the ship's course altered, and so went to sleep with a contented mind. Two hours later he came on deck, asked Black Dick—who had constituted himself captain in the meantime—whether anything had been seen of the boat; learned that no one had observed her, but that she was supposed to be but a little way ahead; and then expressed his fear that, from a slight change which had occurred in the wind, the whales might have led the boat in another direction. The bushranger was a little alarmed at the suggestion, because he could not afford to lose the boat's crew, inasmuch as it was almost necessary to have some of the five seamen who were in her to manage the vessel. The day drew to a close, and no signs of the boat were to be seen. A man was sent to the mast-head to keep a look-out, but he could see nothing of her. The mate advised that they should lie to for the night, and keep lights burning at the mast-head. He felt that this could safely be done for his purpose, as he believed the boat to be considerably distant from them. One suggestion was so reasonable that it covered the other. Accordingly, the ship lay to. The crew felt pretty sure that the boat would be with them by morning. Morning came, and there was no sign of her. Black Dick grew anxious; so, too, did the mate. A consultation was held, and it was agreed that the best thing to do was to cruise about during the day, and keep a look-out for the missing boat. The mate took good care that they should make long tacks northward, and very short ones southward. The landsmen were quite unable to see anything suspicious in what was being done; and the sailors were quite content, as they generally are, to trust undoubtingly the management of the ship to their superior officer. Apparently, the ship was making a series of irregular circles round a given point; really, she was making a series of ellipses round a

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point, which was moving at each ellipse more to the north. Ellipse after ellipse was made, and as the hours passed away, looks more and more anxious were cast round the horizon: still the boat was not to be seen.

THE REGALIA.

The Regalia, or crown jewels, valued at three million pounds, form one of the most interesting features of the Tower. In former times, they were generally kept in the Treasury of the Temple, or in that of Westminster Abbey, and first in the Tower in the reign of Henry III. They were frequently pledged as security for loans from rich merchants in the city. The office of Keeper of the Regalia became, in the reigns of the Tudors, a post of great emolument and dignity, and 'the Master of the Jewel-house' took rank as the first Knight Bachelor of England. In 1649, a complete inventory was made out of the Regalia, a copy of which may be seen in Taylor's *Glory of Regality*, 1820. Subsequently, it is stated that the crowns, according to order of parliament, were 'totallie broken and defaced.' The state crown of Charles I. contained seven pounds seven ounces of gold, and in one of the *fleurs de lis* was 'a picture of the Virgin Mary.' At the Restoration, new insignia were made, costing L.21,978, 9s. 11d., paid to the king's goldsmith, Sir Henry Vyner, in 1662. On May 9, 1671, Colonel Blood made his daring attempt to carry off the crown, globe, and sceptre. Thomas Blood was an Irishman, whose father had gained property as an iron-master in the reign of Charles I. He seems to have been famous for daring plots, for, in 1663, he formed one for surprising Dublin Castle, and made two attempts on the life of the Duke of Ormond. An aged man, named Talbot Edwards, kept the Regalia, and Blood managed so to ingratiate himself with him, that he proposed a match between his nephew and Edwards's daughter; and stated that he would bring him and two friends on the 9th of May to be introduced to the daughter, and see the Regalia. The four came accordingly, went into the jewel-room, and gagged the old man, who cried out and struggled, so that they stabbed him, and beat him on the head with a wooden mallet. Blood placed the crown under his cloak, and two of the others seized the globe and sceptre, but the latter was left behind as too long, for the fourth man gave an alarm, and the ruffians fled. It appears that a son of Mr Edwards just then arrived from Flanders with his brother-in-law, Captain Beckman. The villains got past them; but old Edwards calling out, his son and Beckman pursued them to the drawbridge, where Blood fired at the warder, and got through the iron gate to St Katherine's. They had nearly got to the place where horses were waiting for them, when Beckman, who was a fast runner, overtook them, and seized Blood, who remarked: 'It was a gallant attempt, however unsuccessful, for it was for a crown!' A pearl and large diamond fell out on the pavement, as well as other stones, but these were nearly all recovered.

Blood and Parrot were ordered to be brought to Whitehall, and examined in the presence of Charles II. Here he behaved with the greatest impudence, and avowed the part he had taken in the attempt on the life of the Duke of Ormond, and also stated that he had on another occasion hid himself in the reeds at Battersea with others to shoot the king as he passed in his barge, but that 'his heart was checked by an awe of majesty, which caused him not only to spare the king's life, but to induce his associates to abandon any further attempts at his assassination.' He said 'he had a large number of friends bound together by the most solemn oaths to revenge each other's death, on whoever should bring them to justice.' The king actually pardoned him, and Blood became a sort of hanger-on at Whitehall, received a pension, and land in Ireland. He is said to have lived in an old mansion forming the corner of Peter and Tupton Streets, and to have been a Quaker. Evelyn speaks of meeting him in good society, but remarks his 'villainous, unmerciful look; a false countenance, but very well spoken, and dangerously insinuating.' He died in 1680.

Poor Edwards never entirely recovered from the injuries received in his brave defence of the Regalia, and died in 1674, and was buried under the floor of the Tower Chapel, with a small tablet over his grave. This was found in a heap of rubbish, and is now fixed against the south wall. The only rewards Edwards and his son received were grants on the exchequer of two hundred pounds to the old man, and one hundred pounds to his son. These, through the difficulty in obtaining payment, they were obliged to sell for half their value.

At the time of Blood's attempt, the Regalia were kept in a strong vaulted chamber of the Martin Tower, hence called the Jewel Tower. They were shewn behind strong bars, but a woman, in 1815, managed to force her hands through, and tore the royal crown to pieces. The present Jewel-house was built in 1842, in the late Tudor style, south of the Martin Tower.

The first kind of crown worn by kings was the diadem, which was no other than a fillet of silk, or like material. It was considered the proper ensign of a king, and therefore was not generally worn among the Romans till the time of Aurelian. Constantine the Great first used a diadem of pearls and rich stones, and soon after a hoop was added over the head, which made it more like the modern close crown. The first crown, properly so called, is that which appears upon a coin of Ædred, son of Edward the Elder (about 946); it has the fillet and cap, with rays and pearls on the points, like our earls' coronets; but his two successors had plain diadems. Edward the Confessor has on some of his coins the close or arched crown, and sometimes one like a high pointed helmet. Upon his great seal he has a kind of cap with a crown to it. When the chest containing the body of Edward the Confessor was opened during the reign of James II., the skull was encircled by a band or diadem of gold one inch in breadth. At this period, the crown was kept steady on the head by an *annula*, or clasp, fastened under the chin, of which the two ends hang down on coins like lappets.

William the Conqueror, in the manuscript by William, Abbot of Jumiegès, in the library at Rouen, is represented with a combination of cap and crown. The Saxon Chronicle describes William as wearing the regal *helmet* 'thrice every year when he was in England. At Easter, he wore it at Winchester; on Pentecost, at Westminster; and in mid-winter, at

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Gloucester.' Upon his great seal it appears as a circle and three rays raised very high, their points terminating in crosses, having a pearl or pellet at each point of the cross, and two fleurs de lis between the rays. William Rufus has a radiated or eastern crown, with pearls on the points. Henry I. has the open crown fleury with three fleurs de lis. Curiously enough, Selden tells us that in some volumes written as early as the time of King Edgar, that monarch is pictured with a rude fleur-de-lis crown. Some think Stephen used the arched crown, but this is doubtful. John was first crowned Duke of Normandy at Rouen, and Matthew Paris says with a golden circle or coronet, adorned all round with roses curiously wrought. On his effigy at Worcester he is represented with a crown composed of leaves close together. This was, however, erected in the reign of Henry III. The last-named monarch, upon his first great seal, has the open crown and plain diadem; his effigy at Westminster has fleurs de lis. Edward III. has the coronet and cap on his first great seal, with the three leaves or flowers and lesser fleurs de lis between; but his second great seal has the open crown with three fleurs de lis. Edward II. had given the crown jewels, with the crown of his father, to his favourite Gaveston, and he carried it at his coronation—an honour that, by ancient custom, belonged to the princes of the blood only. In the Westminster portrait of Richard II., 'the unhappy beautiful prince' has a crown with two tiers of gracefully painted foliage growing naturally out of the jewelled circlet on the brow. According to Rymer, the previous king, Edward III., frequently pawned his crown, on one occasion to the Archbishop of Treves, for 25,000 florins. Henry V., in the third year of his reign, did the same. It was an imperial or arched crown, with the orb and cross at the top, and composed of crosses pattée and fleurs de lis. The crown of Edward IV. is the first instance of an arched crown upon the great seal. Henry VIII. has the arched crown with crosses and fleurs de lis, as his father; and Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth, all had like crowns. On the first seal of Charles I. he has the triple arch. Charles II.'s crown we shall describe further on. S. M. Leake, Esq., Garter, mentions that there was, besides the royal or imperial crown, an ancient one, called St Edward's crown, being that of Edward the Confessor. When King John was crowned, they used a plain circle or chaplet of gold, for his was lost in crossing the Well stream from Lynn into Lincolnshire, and he was not crowned with St Edward's crown, because the royal regalia were at Westminster. The first mention of St Edward's crown is at the coronation of King Edward II., before mentioned. Henry VI. was crowned first with that of St Edward, and then with the imperial crown. Anne Boleyn was crowned with St Edward's crown, and Edward VI. was crowned with three, and so was Queen Mary.

According to the *Liber Regalis*, the regalia were granted to the church of Westminster, to be 'locus institutionis et coronationis regiæ et repositorium regalium insignium in perpetuum.' From this time (that of the Confessor) all our kings have been crowned at Westminster Abbey, except Henry III., and Edward V., who was never crowned. The regalia were kept in an arched room in the cloisters, in an iron chest. Henry Martyn, in 1642, broke open the chest, and sold St Edward's crown and sceptre. After the Restoration, another crown and sceptre were made, and called St Edward's.

Having thus introduced our subject, we have to describe the regalia now to be seen in the Tower.

St Edward's crown was made *temp.* Charles II., to replace that said to have been worn by Edward the Confessor.* The sovereign is crowned at the altar with this crown, and this is the one Blood attempted to steal. The arches, flowers, and fillets are covered with jewels, and the purple cap is faced with ermine. The crown of James I. had eight crosses and eight fleurs de lis, without any roses; but Charles II. reduced both crosses and fleurs de lis to four—the same numbers as the arches. The four pearl-studded arches rise from the crosses, and carry at their intersection the mound and cross.

The state crown of Her Majesty was made for her coronation. It differs from that just described rather in enrichment than in arrangement. There is, however, a decided difference in the contour of the arches, which rise almost perpendicularly from within the crosses pattée, and instead of being depressed, are elevated at their intersection. Professor Tennant, F.G.S., in a paper read before the London and Middlesex Archæological Society, states that this crown was made by Messrs Rundell and Bridge, in the year 1838, with jewels taken from old crowns. Its gross weight is 39 ounces 5 dwts. troy. 'The lower part of the band, above the ermine border, consists of a row of one hundred and twenty-nine pearls, and the upper part of the band of a row of one hundred and twelve pearls, between which, in front of the crown, is a large sapphire (partly drilled), purchased for the crown by His Majesty King George IV.† At the back are a sapphire of smaller size and six other sapphires, between which are eight emeralds. Above and below the seven sapphires are fourteen diamonds, and around the eight emeralds, one hundred and twenty-eight diamonds. Between the emeralds and the sapphires are sixteen trefoil ornaments, containing one hundred and sixty diamonds. Above the band are eight sapphires, surmounted by eight diamonds, between which are eight festoons, consisting of one hundred and forty-eight diamonds.' In the centre of a diamond Maltese cross is the famous ruby said to have been given to Edward Prince of Wales, son of Edward III., called the Black Prince, by Don Pedro, King of Castile, after

* This crown was probably made after the fashion of the old one. Stephen Martin Leake, Garter, remarks, that as the fashion of the present crown of St Edward differs not in form from the imperial crown of state, therefore that ancient crown before the Rebellion could not by the fashion of it be older than Edward IV. Edward II. was crowned with the Confessor's own crown, but of its fashion we have no memorial, unless it is like that on his great seal. It must have disappeared long before the time of Edward IV., because the crown made to supply the place of it bore no resemblance to the ancient one, which it certainly would have done had the particular form been remembered.

† Mr King says there is a tradition that this sapphire came out of the famous ring of Edward the Confessor, so long treasured up on his shrine, and the heritage of which gave his successors the miraculous power of blessing the *cramp-rings*. If so, the stone must have been re-cut for Charles II. In the list of Henry III.'s gems, collected for the shrine, is entered a sapphire of 52 dwts. = 313 carats. Henry collected more than eighty camei for this shrine—one 'in a gold setting, with a chain to it,' is valued at two hundred pounds—an immense sum in those days.

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the battle of Najera, near Vitoria, in 1367. It was worn by Henry V. in his helmet at the battle of Agincourt in 1415. According to the eastern custom, it is pierced quite through, the upper part of the piercing being filled with a small ruby. The fleurs de lis between the crosses contain rose diamonds, each flower having a ruby in the centre. The four arches are composed of oak leaves and acorns, with leaves of rose, table, and brilliant diamonds; the arches, &c. containing nearly eight hundred diamonds. Four large pear-shaped pearls are suspended from the upper part of the arches.

The jewels in the crown are thus summed up by Professor Tennant: '1 large ruby, irregularly polished, 1 large broad-spread sapphire, 16 sapphires, 11 emeralds, 4 rubies, 1363 brilliant diamonds, 1273 rose diamonds, 147 table diamonds, 4 drop-shaped pearls, 273 pearls.' Barbot estimates the total value of the stones at 3,000,000 francs, or L.120,000. Correct woodcuts of the crown will be found in Britton's *Dictionary of Architecture* and Sharp's *Peerage*.

The Prince of Wales's Crown is of pure gold, plain, without jewels, is placed upon a velvet cushion in the House of Lords, before his seat, when Her Majesty opens or prorogues parliament.

The Queen-consort's Crown is of gold, set with diamonds, pearls, and other jewels, and was made for the queen of William III. The queen-consort is always crowned by the Archbishop of York.

The Queen's Diadem, or Circlet of Gold, made for the coronation of Maria d'Este, consort of James II., at a cost of L.110,000.

Before describing the sceptres, we will take the Koh-i-noor diamond, exhibited with the Regalia, set as a bracelet. As Professor Maskeleyne observes, its history 'is one long romance; but it is well authenticated at every step, as history seems never to have lost sight of this stone of fate from the days when Ala-ud-deen took it from the rajahs of Malwah, five centuries and a half ago, to the day when it became a crown jewel of England.' Baber says it came into the Delhi treasury from the conquest of Malwah by Ala-ud-deen in 1304. It was seen by Tavernier among the jewels of Aurungzebe, but had been reduced by the unskilfulness of Hortensio Borgis from 793 carats to 186 carats—the weight it possessed at the Exhibition of 1851. Nadir Shah obtained possession of this celebrated diamond by an artful trick. He gave back the prostrate empire of India to his Tartar 'kinsman,' and exchanged turbans with him, according to oriental custom, in token of amity; but unfortunately for his vassal, the *Mountain of Light* was in his cap, and so was gained by his suzerain. At last it came into the hands of Runjeet Singh; and after the capture of Lahore, at the time of the Sikh mutiny, it was presented by Lord Dalhousie, in the name of the East India Company, to the Queen in 1850. In 1862, at a cost of L.8000, it was recut as a brilliant, and reduced from 186 to 106$\frac{1}{16}$ carats. In place of the most ancient gem in the history of the world, we get a modern brilliant, a mere lady's bauble, of but second water, for it has a grayish tinge, and besides this, inferior in weight to several. It was re-cut in about thirty-eight days, as a small steam-engine had been erected for the purpose; but the Pitt Diamond, by the old hand process, occupied two years. The Brahmin sages have an hereditary superstition touching the malign powers of this stone, and the Russian war and the sepoy mutiny will not dispossess them of it.

St Edward's Staff (weight nine pounds) is of beaten gold, four feet seven inches in length, surmounted by an orb (said to contain a fragment of the true cross) and cross, and shod with a steel spike. St Edward's staff is mentioned as used at the coronation of Edward VI., and at that of Mary. At the latter, the paten of St Edward's chalice was used; it is likewise mentioned under Henry VI. and VIII., being a holy relic of great antiquity. In the account of the coronation of Queen Elinor, wife of Henry III. (about 1236), it is called a jewel of the king's treasury of great antiquity.

At the coronation of Charles II., this was borne by the Earl of Sandwich.

The Royal Sceptre, or Sceptre with the Cross*, is of gold, set with rubies, emeralds, and diamonds; the rose, shamrock, and thistle have taken the place of the fleurs de lis.

The Rod of Equity, or Sceptre with the Dove, is of gold, three feet seven inches long, surmounted with an orb, cross, and dove, ornamented with diamonds. The Duke of Albemarle bore it at the coronation of Charles II.; and the archbishop, when delivering it to the king, charged him to 'learn to make much of the godly, and to terrify the wicked; shew the way to those that go astray, offer thy hand to those that fall, repress the proud, lift up the *lowly*.'

Besides the above, we have an ancient sceptre found in the wainscot of the old Jewel-house in 1814, and supposed to have belonged to Mary, queen of William III.; also one of gold, ornamented with large diamonds, and made for the coronation of the last-named queen; and a third of ivory, mounted in gold, with gold cross and dove of white onyx, made for Maria d'Este, though often called Queen Anne Boleyn's.

The Orb is of gold, six inches in diameter, with bands set with diamonds and pearls; the gold cross is supported by a very large amethyst. Another orb, called the Queen's, is very like this, but smaller. The globe and cross, as a symbol of dominion, is very common on the imperial coins. Bromley says that Constantine fixed them in the right hand of the Apollo of Phidias. In our own country, its use is ascribed to King Alfred, but it certainly has been used from the time of the Confessor.

The Curtana, or Pointless Sword of Mercy, also called the Sword of King Edward the Confessor. It is mentioned by both these names in Matthew Paris, under the year 1236, when detailing the marriage ceremonial of Henry III. In ancient times, it was the privilege of the Earls of Chester to bear this sword before the king. The Earl of Oxford carried it at the coronation of Charles II.

The Sword of Justice, temporal and ecclesiastical, borne before the sovereigns at coronations. Of this in the 'Inventory of the Regalia of King

* The sceptre was originally a mere walking staff. Achilles swears by his staff or sceptre (*Iliad*, i. 246), 1193 B.C. Cyrus, according to Xenophon, was always attended by three hundred sceptre-bearers, 401 B.C. It was first assumed by the elder Tarquin (621 B.C.), among the Romans. The sceptre of the Merovingian kings of France, in 448, was a golden rod of the same height as the monarch himself. The chanter's baton of St Denis, now in the Louvre, was carried by Napoleon I., and the French kings before him, at their coronation, as 'the golden sceptre of Charlemagne,' from a seated figure of that monarch on the top: it is dated 1384.

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James the secrete Jewel-house within the Tower of London,' printed in *Kalendars and Inventories of the Exchequer*, it is written: 'Item, one greate Two-handed Sworde, garnyshed with sylver and guylte, presented to King Henry VIII. by the Pope.' The two-handed sword was in great favour in the sixteenth century, but is rarely seen after the close of the century, being superseded by the rapier. The *Spadone*, as it was called, could be only wielded by men of great strength and agility.

The Armillæ, or Coronation Bracelets, are of gold, chased with the rose, fleur de lis, and harp, and edged with pearls.

The Royal Spurs are of curiously wrought gold, and are used at coronations. At that of Charles II., according to Baker's *Chronicles of the Kings of England*, folio, 1674, pages 760—768, before quoted, we read that the dean took the spurs from off the altar, and delivered them to the Lord Great Chamberlain, who touched the king's heels therewith, and forthwith sent them back to the altar.

We now come to a very interesting (though not intrinsically valuable) portion of the Regalia—namely, the *ampulla*,* or eagle of pure gold, used at coronations for the holy oil, which is poured from the beak into the *gold anointing spoon*, which we shall notice presently. This ampulla is said to have been brought from Sens Abbey in France by Thomas à Becket. It will be remembered that, in 1164, after the quarrel of Becket and Henry II., the former fled to Sens, where he met the pope. He resided afterwards at the Abbey of Pontigny, but at the former place some of his vestments are preserved. At the coronation of Charles II., the king was anointed by the archbishop (the Dean of Westminster holding the ampulla, and pouring oil into the spoon), first in the palms of both his hands, in manner of a cross. The king was anointed on his breast, between his shoulders, on both his shoulders, the two bowings of his arms, and on the crown of his head. The anointing was dried up with fine linen, and the loops of his shirt closed up by the Dean of Westminster.

The Spoon (figured in Shaw's *Dresses and Decorations of the Middle Ages*) has been probably used in the coronation of our monarchs since the twelfth century. It is of pure gold, with four pearls in the broadest part of the handle, and the bowl has an elegant arabesque pattern engraved on it. The handle was originally decorated with enamel; but this has been destroyed, leaving an uneven surface.

The Gold Salt-cellar of State is set with jewels chased with grotesque figures in the form of a round castle, said, but erroneously, to be a model of the White Tower. The tops of the five turrets are for the salt. It was presented to the crown by the city of Exeter, and was last used at the coronation banquet of George IV. Then we have an elaborately chased *Baptismal Font*, formerly used at the christening of the royal family; and a large silver *Wine Fountain*, presented by the corporation of Plymouth to Charles II.; a service of sacramental plate, golden salt-cellars, coronation tankards, gold spoons, and a fine banqueting dish.

* According to Pugin, a vial containing sacred balm that was used in anointing the kings of France at their coronation was found at Rheims, in the custody of the grand-prior of the monastery of St Remi, and known as the *Sainte Ampoule*. It was composed of antique glass, about one and a half inches high, seven-eighths of an inch in circumference at the neck. In 1760, the vessel appeared about two-thirds full of a reddish balm. When a king of France was to be crowned, a small portion was extracted on the point of a golden pin, and mixed with the holy chrism. This vial was enclosed in a reliquary in the form of a dove attached to a silver chain, and so suspended round the neck of the prior when carried in procession. Soon after the execution of Louis XVI., this interesting relic was destroyed by a republican named Ruhl.—*Glossary of Ecc. Ornament.*

A DOOMED PEOPLE.

FAR away in the Pacific lies a land under a mysterious curse. Once fair to look upon, and fertile enough to support its thousands in comfort, sterility now marks it for its own, and denies the ever-dwindling population aught but the scantiest sustenance.

The island of Rapanui was discovered by Davis; discovered, and that was all. Thirty-six years afterwards, the Dutch admiral, Roggewein, endeavouring to make Davis's Land, found, as he thought, an unknown island, and unaware that it was the very land he sought, named it Easter Island, because he sighted it upon Easter-day. While he was looking for an advantageous harbour, his reconnoitring ship was boarded by one of the natives—a tall, strong, robust fellow, whose naked body was a very network of painted patterns, and whose prepossessing countenance was spoiled by a pair of ears hanging nearly down to his shoulders. This strange visitor astonished his new acquaintances by throwing the wine they proffered into his eyes instead of putting it to its proper use, but was so much at his ease among them that they found it a difficult matter to get rid of him. When the fleet anchored in the bay, thousands of natives crowded the shore, some lighting fires before their idols, at whose feet they had been seen prostrating themselves at sunrise, while others ran to and fro like so many wild creatures.

Some hundred and fifty Dutchmen landed. Finding the curious crowd pressing rather closely around them, these brave Hollanders, although they could not descry a single armed man in the throng, cleared the way with a discharge of musketry; after which the islanders 'became more civilised.' Loud wailings and distressful cries told that the volley had carried death with it; but even the murder of their brethren failed to rouse the uncivilised natives to retaliate. They hastened to lay peace-offerings in the shape of nuts, sugar-canes, fowls, and roots before their slaughterers, and carrying palm-branches and red and white flags, in token of amity, acted as pioneers for them. Afterwards, in exchange for some beads, looking-glasses, and painted cloth, they supplied the fleet with five hundred live fowls, plenty of white and red roots, plantains and potatoes, respecting the last of which the chronicler of Roggewein's voyage remarks that they taste 'almost like bread, and the Indians use them instead thereof.'

The same authority describes the people as being very tall, strong, well made, and remarkably swift of foot; resembling one another more in these qualities than in the colour of their skins, which varied from white to red, and from brown to black. The women were decorated with a very bright red paint, some of them wearing red and white garments of a soft silky material, and small straw hats; but, as a rule, the ladies were not burdened

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with more clothing than modesty. Men and women alike were notable for long hanging ears, from which depended ear-rings with pendants as large as a man's fist. So far as time gave them the opportunity of judging, the Dutch found the islanders of a very unwarlike disposition, and supposed they relied for protection upon their stone idols—long-eared giants—ranged in great numbers along the coast. Several of the natives were observed to be particularly attentive to these grim monsters, and were therefore set down for priests with the greater confidence from the fact of their having shaven crowns, and wearing head-dresses of black and white feathers exactly like the plumage of the stork. The homes of the people were huts from forty to sixty feet long, by six or eight in breadth, formed of poles cemented together with mud, and roofed with palm-leaves. Although a pig seemed to be a familiar animal to the islanders generally, neither pigs nor any other four-footed creatures were seen by the Hollanders during their short stay; but the island was so well wooded and cultivated that they left it unexplored with regret, believing that if they could have looked for them, they might have found plenty of good things.

The men of the land of dikes are not supposed to be too imaginative, but either Roggewein's followers were exceptions to the rule, or else Easter Island must have gone to the bad at a rapid pace during the succeeding fifty years, for Captain Cook was anything but pleased with it when he visited it in 1774, although he did think he had come to a land of plenty when a couple of natives met the ship half a mile from the shore and flung a bunch of plantains on the deck—an idea soon dispelled when a landing was effected on the morrow. There was a goodly assemblage awaiting the new-comers, but Roggewein's thousands were represented but by hundreds. After some expressive pantomime on both sides, the natives produced a few potatoes, canes, and plantains, which they were ready to barter for nails, cloths, and the usual articles carried by ships visiting the Pacific islands on trading intent. The Englishmen soon discovered that the Easter Islanders were as expert at thieving and as tricky in their dealings as any people they had yet met. They could scarcely keep their hats upon their heads; and as to effectually guarding their pockets, that was impossible. The things acquired one moment by barter disappeared the next, and sometimes they bought the same things three times over without getting them after all. A very brisk trade was carried on for some time in the potato line, on a plantation close at hand, until the proprietor himself put in an appearance, and stopped further traffic on the part of his light-fingered brethren, by driving them off the land with which they were making so free.

A party despatched to survey the island was aided by a native, whose face was painted white, apparently for the occasion, and who, before starting, fastened a piece of white cloth at the head of a spear, which he carried in advance of the procession. Few signs of fertility gladdened the eyes of the explorers. One portion alone of the island appeared tolerably cultivated, the crops raised consisting of sugar-canes, yams, plantains, and sweet potatoes. Live-stock was scarce—a few small tame fowls, fewer still wild birds, and some rats, seemingly serving as supplies for the scantily provided tables of the islanders, being all that was seen; while, if there were fish in the sea, they were proof against every effort to lure them out of their element. Water, even brackish and stinking, was rarely found, and the only well of fresh water was rendered undrinkable to folks at all nice, by reason of the filthy cleanliness of the people, who never went to quench their thirst at the well without also performing their ablutions at the same time by jumping into the middle and giving themselves a thorough washing. Trees were scarcer still than springs; and for lack of wood, vegetable refuse was used to heat the earth-ovens in which the islanders cooked what meat they managed to get—their only utensils being gourds and cocoa-nut shells, the lucky possessors of the last-named considering themselves rich indeed. No wonder the famous circumnavigator was disgusted with the place, and voted it best avoided, as containing no safe anchorage, no wood for fuel, nor any fresh water worth taking on board. He estimated the population at this time at seven hundred, two-thirds being males—explaining the sexual discrepancy by supposing that many women might have been restrained from shewing themselves; an explanation that somewhat invalidates his rough census. If Roggewein's account was correct, the islanders had not only marvellously decreased in their numbers, but also dwindled very much in stature, for, instead of being a race of giants, there was not a single six-footer among them. In other respects, that is as regards their peaceable dispositions, agreeable features, and active natures, both Hollander and Englishman are agreed. The latter found the dwelling-places of these amiable savages mere miserable huts, constructed by setting poles upright in the ground, six or eight feet apart, then bending them towards each other, and tying the tops together; the domicile being made comparatively high and broad in the middle, and lowering and narrowing towards each end. Poles laid across, and covered with leaves, formed the roof; while entrance was effected by a low porch-fashioned doorway, just admitting the householder to pass through on all-fours.

The eastern coast of the island was notable for the number of its giant statues, or rather busts; some standing in groups on platforms of masonry, beautifully joined, but uncemented; others, generally the larger ones, placed singly in the earth. One was found to be twenty-seven feet high, and eight feet across the chest; but this was not the largest, for the shadow of another afforded shade for thirty men. Most noticeable among these mysterious relics of a bygone time, and probably of an extinct race, were three platforms of stone, once supporting half-a-dozen figures each: two were empty, and the third only boasted two figures. The workmanship of these was very rude, but the features were pretty well formed, except that the ears were long beyond all proportion—but then so were the ears of the men around, although they were so nicely wrapped up by means of the gristles being removed, that they appeared like small 'flatted chitterlings,' until they were unfolded, when they measured five inches and a half in length. Cook saw nothing to justify the idea that the statues represented the gods of the land; he took them to be monuments marking the burial-places of certain families or tribes. As regards his unfavourable picture of Easter Island, we must note that a fellow-voyager, who saw with other eyes, describes the country as

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highly cultivated, and interspersed with evergreen and fruit-bearing shrubs, presenting the most beautiful prospect that fancy could conceive.

The ill-fated Frenchman, La Perouse, who visited Easter Island in 1785, attributes Cook's evil report to his having arrived there after a tedious voyage, eaten up with scurvy, and in want of everything. He considered the Easter Islanders numbered at the least two thousand souls, for while he saw some twelve hundred, his coadjutor, M. De Langle, found the interior well peopled, plenty of women and children about, and house-building going on to such an extent as shewed the people themselves believed they were increasing and multiplying. Scarcely a tenth part of the land was under cultivation, while what was cultivated was fertile enough for La Perouse to be persuaded that three days' labour was sufficient to provide a native with food for twelve months, and that the islanders were quite as well off as their neighbours, except, perhaps, that they suffered more inconvenience from drought—the bequest of their tree-destroying ancestors; but then they could drink sea-water like the albatross of Cape Horn. Trees they had, however, in the shape of a few paper-mulberry trees, but these they had to shelter from the winds by building walls round them. The captain found no trace of any religious worship among the people at all. Their houses seemed to be in common, and no individual appeared to have the authority of a husband over any one woman; at anyrate, he observes, 'if women are individual property, their masters are very prodigal of their rights.' Some of them lived in subterranean dwellings, and some in houses constructed of rushes on a base of solid lava. At the southernmost extremity of the island the explorers came upon the crater of an extinct volcano, of eight hundred feet in depth. Father Recevreur descended into it, and reported that the marsh was surrounded by fine plantations of mulberries and bananas; and that there had been a considerable falling away of the land on the sea-side, causing a great breach in the crater; while the grass on the sides of the cone, the marsh at its base, and the fertility of the adjacent land, told that the volcano had been extinct for a long period. At the bottom of the crater were found some water-swallows, the only birds they saw during their perambulation. La Perouse examined the statuary minutely, and discovered that they were cut out of a friable, light, porous lava. On several of the platform stones were rude sketches of skeletons, and human bones were seen in the neighbourhood both of the statues and of sundry pyramids of stones arranged like cannon-balls in a park of artillery. Near one of the figures was found a curious effigy, made of reeds, representing a man ten feet high, with a head of the natural size, a thin body, and proportionable legs; by its side was the figure of a child with arms crossed and legs hanging down. La Perouse was very well satisfied with what he saw of Easter Island and its inhabitants, and did something towards improving the condition of the latter, by leaving them some goats, sheep, and pigs, and planting oranges, lemons, cotton, cabbages, carrots, maize, and anything he thought likely to thrive in the place.

Could La Perouse, whose own fate is a mystery, see Easter Island now, he would scarcely recognise it. The stone monsters still indeed are there, silent remembrancers of the good old times of Rapanui, but Rapanui itself is little better than a great rock. Where pleasant meadows once gladdened the sight, salt marshes mock the eyes of hungry men. Not a tree now exists. Birds, always few, have become such rarities, that a sea-bird's egg is looked upon as a godsend. If the fish have not deserted the coasts, the people cannot catch them: not a boat, raft, or canoe, do they own, for they have no timber whereof to build them. The pigs and goats have long since vanished; the fowls bid fair soon to become as extinct. The natives themselves have learned industry and honesty from the missionaries, but have small scope for the exercise of either virtue. Within the last few years, their numbers have decreased one half, still the land that once supported three thousand inhabitants refuses a subsistence to eight hundred, and where one is born, three die. War has not desolated the island, fire-water has not decimated its people. Some have been kidnapped, and after a slavery under the Peruvian guano-owners, returned only to introduce disease among their countrymen, who needed no such infliction to thin their numbers. In fact, the race is being swiftly and surely starved off the face of the earth: there is no hope for them in the future, which is dreary and desolate as the island itself. It is a sad thing to contemplate, this inevitable perishing of a patient harmless people, a people with no enemies, but lacking likewise friends able and willing to rescue them from their deplorable fate. Only one thing can save them—emigration from the cruel land they call their own.

BETTER RAILWAY CARRIAGES.

Yes; better railway carriages. We have good reason to ask for them. The fares paid in England are higher than those in any other country, with some very few exceptions; and this liberality of payment ought to be met by a larger amount of accommodation in the carriages provided—especially in the third class. Out of something over three hundred million persons who travelled by railway in the United Kingdom last year, one hundred and eighty millions travelled third class, not because they liked it, but because first and second class fares are too high. A third-class carriage brings far more money to the company in the course of a year than any other class, and ought to be a matter of more solicitude than it usually is. Some of the companies are improving, but the rate of improvement is too slow. Then, again, in regard to ease, refreshments, and sleeping, we could learn much from the continent and from America, if the railway directors would allow us. Many facts relating to royal and luxurious carriages, sleeping and luncheon carriages, and, above all, respecting comfortable vehicles for third class, are little known amongst us.

The most right-royal production in the world in this way, so far as we are aware, is the imperial train of France. It may be that each of the great French companies has a similar train of its own; but at anyrate the one which we select as an example is on the Paris and Orleans line—the highway to Biarritz. It is a veritable train, not merely one carriage in a train. First, after the engine and tender, comes a luggage-carriage—not an uninhabitable van, but a structure which, besides ordinary luggage, contains pantry arrangements for refreshments, and accommodation for

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some of the company's and imperial servants. Next is a carriage adapted as a dining-room—or at least as a refreshment room—with a centre table, arm-chairs, and hinged seats; and when, at night, the seats are drawn away from the wall, they fall back so as to form bedsteads for the attendants. Third in the list stands an open or platform carriage which may be opened or closed at the sides at pleasure, and used either as an open-air look-out or as a refreshment room. Then comes the grand carriage, the imperial saloon, with a retiring-room attached, and doors at the sides and ends. All that luxury can do is here done in the provision of couches, arm-chairs, folding-chairs, movable chairs, small tables and stands, curtains, wire-gauze blinds to exclude dust when the windows are open, a timepiece, pendent lamps, and mirrors. The fifth is a sleeping-carriage, divided off into seven distinct compartments; these comprise a sleeping-chamber or bedroom, two dressing-rooms, two rooms for the empress's ladies, one for the emperor's valet, and a retiring-room. The sleeping-chamber contains two beds, on opposite sides of a compartment nine feet wide. Next to the sanctum of the imperial papa and mamma is a carriage for the Prince Imperial, with numerous snuggeries for sleeping, dressing, and attendants. Lastly, there is a luggage-carriage, the counterpart of the one at the head of the train. All the carriages have doors at the ends, and platforms which make a convenient gangway from carriage to carriage; and there are electric bells from the imperial saloon to all the other carriages and to the engine-driver and guards.

The Czar of all the Russias should by rights have everything as grand as the Emperor of the French; but we do not hear of an imperial *train*, only of an imperial *carriage*. Such a carriage, however—no less than eighty-five feet long! The saloon for the emperor and empress, in the centre of the carriage, has all the luxuries which curtains and carpets, sofas and settees, timepieces and chandeliers, can give it; the emperor's study is a little more like a gentleman's own room, while the empress's boudoir is all that a boudoir should be; and beyond that are rooms for attendants—gentlemen next to the emperor's study, ladies next to the empress's boudoir—with all the knick-knackeries and comforts to make a journey go smoothly. As this carriage is made for comparatively short lines of railway near St Petersburg, there is no provision for sleeping or night-journeys.

Compare the above with what we know of the accommodation supplied to our own royal family in the formidable ride from Windsor to Balmoral, and the difference is sufficiently striking. No doubt her Majesty fares better than most of her subjects, in the size of the saloon set apart for her use; and there is equally little reason to doubt that the cushions are all very soft and the appointments elegant; but there is nothing parallel to the palace-like carriages at the service of the two emperors.

This, however, is not the important part of the matter; it is simply a difference in the degree of goodness in that which is very good. Let us come to the general passengers. Some of our railway companies furnish saloon-carriages, obtainable on the payment of eight first-class fares, and suitable for a family with attendants. There is a saloon, with sofa-seats so arranged that four persons can recline at full length; there is a lobby, to separate this saloon from the other parts of the carriage, and having the entrance-doors to the saloon; there is a little retiring-room, with wash-stand, a looking-glass, &c.; and there is a second-class compartment for attendants or servants. This is a kind of luxury which ordinary passengers know very little about; but it is only obtainable by hiring the entire carriage, and there are no arrangements either for bedroom or refreshment room—accommodations of which we shall now have something to say elsewhere.

Some of the railway distances in America are so immense that flesh and blood, bone and muscle, could not withstand the fatigue unless something more were supplied in the shape of comfort than we are accustomed to in England. From Euston Square to Golspie in Sutherland, near the ducal castle of Dunrobin, about seven hundred miles, is our maximum—a maximum which the United States have far exceeded, and which they now exceed four-fold since the Atlantic at New York is connected with the Pacific at San Francisco by rail. Oh, the misery of sitting bolt upright during such a journey! Our American friends know better, as we will proceed to shew by a few illustrative instances.

The sleeping-cars on many of the American railways are managed on a very peculiar plan. They belong, not to the railway companies, but to a distinct company or firm, and are the subject of well-defined agreements. The passengers pay an extra fare for the use of these carriages, and the proprietors are in some way paid out of this surplus, aided perhaps by a royalty or percentage from the railway company. The special servants employed are paid by the proprietors of the cars. Some of these cars are of such enormous size and such massive construction as to weigh thirty tons each, and extend sixty-five feet in length. They are known far and wide over the American continent by distinctive names, such as the *Viceroy*, the *Pacific*, &c., or by such a collective name as *Pullman's sleeping-cars*—referring to the name of the chief proprietor. One of these, the *Viceroy*, cost three thousand pounds in mere building, irrespective of carpets, curtains, china, glass, bedding, and electro-plated appointments. Having the surprising width of eleven feet, there is a roominess which makes us sigh for envy. At each end there is a platform and a door; the door opens into a lobby with polished walnut walls, matted floor, stained-glass windows, curtains, steward's room, lavatory, marble washstands, &c. From this lobby a glazed door gives admission to the main saloon, having a richly carpeted passage two feet wide along the centre. On each side of the passage are seats to hold two persons each; and these seats are arranged *vis-à-vis* and *dos-à-dos* alternately, not on the *char-à-banc* plan. The spaces between the *vis-à-vis* seats are large enough to admit a table each, for the convenience of reading, card-playing, or refreshments. All this is very nice; but we are bidden to remember that 'it is at night that a handsomely equipped sleeping-car should be seen. By day it appears at best a nondescript vehicle, monstrously heavy, extravagant in its appointments, and with a heap of contrivances and little dodges the uses of which are not apparent till passengers are ready to turn in.' This 'turning-in' is a very welcome process; for some of the railway journeys in America occupy two or more days consecutively,

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and others are already much more prolonged. The operation of bed-making is certainly managed in a very ingenious way. Where two seats are back to back, there is one inch space between them, and up this space is drawn a panel, reaching to the ceiling; when all these panels are drawn up, the compartments are cut off into separate berths. The seats draw out and turn up in such a way as to form two tiers of berths, one over the other; and then it is seen that the cunning artificers have packed away a goodly supply of spring-mattresses, blankets, and clean sheets beneath the seats. Sometimes only a berth, sometimes a section of two berths, is taken by a passenger, according as he is willing to pay for privacy by a higher tariff. Where a train is travelling during the whole or the greater part of a night, the extra charge for a sleeping-car varies from half a dollar to one dollar per berth, and one to two dollars per section. Knowing what most of us do know of hotel charges for one night, this fee will appear by no means unreasonable. As most people require more elbow-room when in bed than when sitting up—and decidedly more longitudino-horizontal room—a car for sixty-four day-passengers accommodates only thirty-two at night; but then the day-passengers will naturally be more numerous than those who travel all night. There is probably a certain hour in the morning when every one is expected to turn out, to enable the servants to draw back curtains, stow away bedding, push back seats, slide down panels, open windows, and rearrange tables. Are we afraid that the bed-linen would not have the nicety of that at a good hotel? We are told that none of the sheets are used twice without washing; and that the Pullman Company have a laundry at Chicago where they wash two hundred thousand pieces per month. Some of the carriages have two tiers, some only one, of berths; and this of course affords means for varying the luxury and comfort, and varying the extra charge made.

The Russians have adopted sleeping-cars on the Nicolai Railway, though much plainer in style than those of the United States. A carriage about fifty feet long by ten feet wide is divided into six compartments, having two seats for three persons each. At night, by manipulating the backs and fronts of the seats, two of them make bedsteads for four persons; because the legs of the seats are so turned up as to act as brackets to support an upper berth: the space beneath the seat being now available as a lower berth, and each berth accommodating two persons. Sliding-doors shut off the several compartments from the central passage; and a passenger can have the whole, or one half, or one quarter of a compartment, according as he is willing to pay liberally or frugally. There are lavatories, &c. at the two ends of the carriage; and in some instances there is a second story over the central compartments, accessible by staircases.

On some parts of the through-route from Susa to Brindisi, in Italy, family carriages are provided for those who choose to pay for them. There is first an ante-room for servants; then a sitting-room with four sofas; then a bedroom with a bed for two, with lavatory, &c. In the daytime, all symptoms of sleeping arrangements are removed, and the carriage is a well-to-do first and second class composite.

Some of the American day-cars resemble the sleeping-cars in this, that they belong to proprietors other than the railway companies, and that a small extra charge is made for their use. The Americans do not take kindly to our division into classes, but they realise something of the same kind in the way here indicated. On some of the lines there is a long carriage fitted up as a saloon or divan, with snug recesses, a sofa-stall in each, handsome carpets, and—spittoons. On one of the railways, a special carriage is divided off into separate compartments, each kept well warmed in winter. On the Chicago and Cleveland line, there are day-carriages known by such names as *Garden City* and *Forest City*—immense structures nearly sixty feet long. Doors at each end open into a central passage two feet wide; and this passage leads to parlours or rooms varying from eight feet by six to eleven feet by ten, well provided with sofas, easy-chairs, movable chairs, centre-tables, small side-tables, whatnot racks, rich carpets, and a recess well supplied with the newspapers of the day! One small compartment serves for a ladies' toilet, and there are retiring-rooms near the ends of the carriage. Any one compartment or room may be taken for a family, and may be cut off from the rest of the structure by sliding doors or panels. There is one of these grandiose carriages (or cars, as the Americans prefer to call them) so exceedingly rich and costly in all its features, both constructive and decorative, that the outlay is said to have amounted to twenty-eight thousand dollars: as there are about five dollars to a sovereign, here is a nice little rule-of-three sum for those who like it. This car, called the *Omaha*, carries luxury to the extent of a small organ in the middle of the chief saloon; whereby a passenger, whether or not he has rings on his finger or bells on his toes, can at least have music wherever he goes.

In Germany, some of the railway carriages are very convenient. Each carriage has one first and three second class compartments, with a lavatory, &c. somewhere near the centre. They are entered at the two ends, on the American plan, and there are neat panelled doors to separate the first class from the second.

The important question of refreshments, about which railway travellers are quite as sensitive as other people, is in almost a hopeless state in England. The scramble at the stations for very third-rate food is too familiarly known to need much comment here; and as to the bringing of simple and acceptable refreshments to the carriages at the station-platforms, on the continental plan, our railway directors offer very little encouragement to it. Some of the roomy American cars have luncheon-bars; nay, we believe there is a *Delmonico* car which advances to the completeness of an actual dinner.

There is an arrangement of *two-storied* carriages of which we know nothing in England. Some of them are in use on the Bombay and Central India Railway; constructed to hold a hundred and twenty passengers each—seventy on the lower story, and fifty on the upper. As nineteen out of every twenty railway passengers in India are third class (they would travel fourth, fifth, or any other class if cheapness could be thereby obtained), these two-storied carriages are crammed with Hindus of all castes (for the Brahmin and the Rajpoot may be poor as well as the Pariah), who squat on their hams as a compact mass of humanity; seeing that

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some of the carriages, like the third class originally used on our Greenwich line, are without seats. On the western and eastern railways of France (Paris to Brest, and Paris to Strasbourg), two-storied carriages are used on some of the branches, where slow speed would render loftiness possible without danger. Some of these carriages are composite, the lower story having first and second class compartments, and the upper third class; some are third class throughout, the upper having open sides, and the lower closed with windows and glazed panels. These carriages accommodate about eighty passengers each. They are nearly fourteen feet in height by nine broad, and would therefore be unavailable under low-crowned arches and bridges.

We might say something about the means of communication between passengers and guard, the locking of carriage-doors, and the carrying of explosive substances (such as the paraffine oil at Abergele) by railway; but as we do not want to growl too much, we will content ourselves with the above gossip concerning continental and American passenger accommodation as compared with our own.

T. P.

Almost the last words spoken by the good old lady who left me four thousand pound consols and a house in Kensington were: 'Don't let it, John—live in it: it has been my home for fifty years and more: your uncle died in it, and my poor girl. I can't bear the thought of strangers coming and ill-treating the furniture. Chambers are dear and unwholesome, and I always think they tempt young men to keep late hours; and as for lodgings, you will be skinned in them. You will not desert the old place, will you, John?' The house is not a large one, but absurdly big for a bachelor with my small income to inhabit, nevertheless. If I and my servant Betty were marionnettes, with the power of shooting off our members and resetting them at pleasure, we might lodge a head in one room, an arm in another, and so make a decent attempt at general occupation; but being ordinary mortals, we can only manage two rooms apiece. Now, to live in the midst of furnished solitude is melancholy, and I should certainly feel strongly tempted to disregard my poor dear relative's dying injunctions, were it not for the hope of speedily increasing my income and relinquishing my bachelorhood.

Betty, let me hasten to observe, is a confessed forty-five, was chosen for me by the mother of my intended, and is a salad of the virtues; industry, honesty, and respectability forming the principal ingredients. She is a widow, with one son, a sergeant, who returned to Plymouth from China last August, just as I was going abroad for a couple of months' holidays. So I thought that Betty might as well go and see her son at the same time, a proposition at which she fairly cried with pleasure. I took her address, saying that I would write her word a week before I returned (so that she might come first and get the house ready for me); engaged a charwoman to sleep on the premises during our absence, and started for Switzerland. Only, in passing through Paris, I stuck there, as I always do.

At the end of the third week I found a letter at the *Poste Restants* marked 'Immediate:' it was from Kramme, and ran thus:

'Dear Penyolin—*I have got an order for an historical work; one of those things which Mudie's subscribers who call novels trash think improving, you know. Such a title we have hit on: "War, Women, and Wine!" Now, will you take War? You will give an account of all the principal wars that have ever been waged. Sacred wars; Siege of Troy, Helen, Wooden Horse; Wars of the Roses, &c., down to Prussia versus Austria. There must be plenty of thrill and romance. You can have the use of three encyclopædias, Hume, Grant, and Napier. As the book must be out soon after Christmas, perhaps you had better come back to London, and set to work at once.*'

I sent off three letters immediately: one to the charwoman in charge of my house; one to Betty; one to Kramme, accepting his offer, and promising to return in a week; and nine days afterwards, I was sitting in my study, fenced about with gigantic encyclopædias, working at my strange hash with the vigour which a spell of idleness imparts.

Betty put her head in at the door, and said that a lady wanted to see me, and my engaged heart jumped; but remembering that Betty knew my Lucy and her mother, and would not announce either so vaguely, it subsided again. Perhaps it was a partner in *War, Women, and Wine*, come to make arrangements about the division of labour.

'Leastways,' said Betty, 'she asked for T. P.; and as thems your initials, and she come to this house, I suppose she mean you.'

'All right, Betty; shew her in,' said I, sure now that she had come on business; for I sign all my work T. P.

There entered a tall lady, with a great deal of bone about her, appareled wonderfully. She must have had bonnets and dresses enough to last her life made when she was about fifteen, for I am sure she could not get them cut like that now, unless she went to China, and gave the native tailors old ones for patterns. She carried a large bag on one arm, and a tent, ingeniously contrived to open and shut like an umbrella, in the other hand. I rose, bowed, and offered her a chair; she stared at me, as though she wanted to send me off into mesmeric slumber, and proceeded to remove her roof, for to call her top covering a bonnet would be really too absurd.

'Where's the other?' she suddenly asked.

The other? That must probably be Kramme: she had evidently had an interview with him on the subject of the work, and expected to find him with me that morning. I explained to her that Kramme was probably at home, working away at his section.

'What is the use of talking to me, when you know that I am stone deaf?' she growled.

I had not known it; I had not heard of her existence even. It was very remiss of Kramme not to tell me of this fellow-labourer, and her peculiarities. After trying in vain to communicate with her by signs, I wrote: 'In what way can I be of service to you?' on a bit of paper, and handed it to her.

'Ah,' said she, 'I cannot read it without spectacles, and I have left mine at home; but it does not matter. The lotion should be applied with a syringe, as before?'

Lotion! Syringe! Oh, her deafness. No doubt Kramme had given her some nostrum for it, and she had better go on doing what he advised; she could not get worse. So I nodded.

'The last did no good to my hearing, but the

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pills did to my health. I have taken them all. You have not got any more here, handy, have you?'

I always take dinner-pills with me when I go abroad, and the last box happened to be in my table-drawer, I having fortunately forgotten to throw it away; so I took it out, and offered it to my visitor, who pounced upon it with the avidity of a child upon sugar-plums, swallowed two pills then and there, and rose to go without saying a word upon business. Only, on leaving the room, she gave me an envelope, which I opened directly the door closed upon her, expecting to find some direction from the publisher or Kramme. But there was nothing but a five-pound note! What was this for? A sort of retaining fee? A small payment on account? A soothing theory then insinuated itself into my mind: no doubt this eccentric but extremely sensible lady had reaped much comfort, improvement, and delight from certain articles signed T. P.; had called at the office of one of the journals thus enriched for T. P.'s address, and had expressed her admiration and gratitude in this delicate but practical manner. The compliment would perhaps have been higher if she had not been so very fond of pills; but I had no time for minute analysis. I took the number of the note, and locked it up in a drawer, and went in at War again. In an hour or so I was again disturbed.

'Here's another for T. P.; a man this time, all on wires.' A flop was heard in the hall. 'There, that is the third time as he's dropped his hat since I let him in!' said Betty.

Was this rush upon my signature a practical joke? No; practical jokes never result in five-pound notes to the butt. At anyrate, I would not risk the loss of contributions so substantial, though so flimsy, by refusing to see any one who desired an interview with my initials. A middle-aged man with light prominent eyes, tow-coloured hair, smooth face, retreating chin, and spare figure, the joints of which seemed to have been stretched on the rack, came into the room at something between a trot and a shuffle, tumbled over a chair, begged its pardon, and sat on the edge of it.

'I've seen what you say in the p-p-paper, Mr T. P., and I thought you might do my nerves good; so I—I called: I am so very nervous, and the doctors can't do anything,' he said.

It so happened that I *had* written about Timidity a short time before. Here was another reader who had taken the trouble to discover my address! It was flattering, but puzzling.

'I am very glad,' said I, 'if any little hints of mine should prove of service to you, but I fear that I cannot add anything to what has appeared in print.'

'Oh,' he cried, 'I beg pardon, I am sure; I see you are very b-b-busy. I only thought—— But perhaps I had better buy your book.'

How on earth the perusal of *The Poisoner of the Pyreneas* should in any way brace his nervous system, I could not divine; but as it was published on the half-profit agreement, it was not for me to point out the improbability of such a result. So I smiled, and said that on the whole it would be better; and he shuffle-trotted away, dropping his hat and stick all about the passage, and apologising profusely. I sat down to my desk again, and wrote a memorandum for my future biographer —'He returned from Paris, and found himself famous;' and then took a mental header into the war-chariots of the ancient Britons.

'Well, what is it now, Betty?' I asked, when, a couple of hours later, she made her third appearance. 'Not another for T. P.?'

'Indeed, but it is, and a young lady. Perhaps I had better say you are busy?'

'O no; ask her to come in. What is she like?'

'I don't know; she's all wale,' replied Betty.—'Walk in, please, miss.'

The young lady came in precipitately, raising the 'wale,' and exclaiming: 'O Tim, how could you? If you knew'——

Her feet and her tongue were alike arrested when she saw me; and indeed I was slightly dumfoundered myself. For a good-looking young woman, with really a splendid figure, to rush into your study, and address you by somebody else's Christian name, is most startling. She was the first to recover from the surprise which she seemed to feel at finding me in my own room.

'Where is my husband?' she asked.

'Really, madam, I have not the remotest idea,' I replied.

'Oh, do not trifle with me!' she exclaimed. 'Do you fear lest I should betray him? O sir, there is no danger of that. I am his wife, and I love him though he has deserted me, because I know the reason; his letter told it me. He fancied that I should spurn him and cast him off when I learned his misconduct. He was ashamed to face me; he thought that the prospect of poverty would make me shrink. Ah, he little knew me! Surely he must have spoken to you of me?'

'I assure you that I cannot believe in the possibility of any husband leaving you of his own free choice,' said I gallantly. 'But there is some mistake here. May I ask his name?'

'Why, Timothy Porter, of course, sir!'

'I really do not know any one of that name, madam.'

'Oh, you are playing upon words, and trifling with me! But after the trouble I have had to trace him to this house, and the many weary miles I have travelled to reach it, I am not to be lightly turned away. I will search every corner; yes, sir, every corner.'

It was beautiful to see how the expression of her features passed from softness to extreme firmness, and I gazed on her with an admiration not unmixed with apprehensive awe. Was this injured lady exceptional or typical? Was it within the bounds of probability that my dearest Lucy would ever assume that tone after the boats were burned behind us?

'I should not wonder if he were in this very next room,' continued my fair visitor, going to the folding-door which separated my study from the unused dining-room.—'Ah, locked! That is suspicious. We shall soon see.'

She took the key from a nail close by, and let herself into the dining-room. It seemed useless to talk to her, so I sat despairingly down in my chair, awaiting the result of her investigations in bewildered silence. Her dining-room search proved a blank; and she went up-stairs. Presently afterwards, I heard the front-door bell, and Betty came again.

'Another for T. P., Betty? Send him or her away. I'll see no more!'

Before Betty could reply, a well-known voice exclaimed: 'No, Mr Penyolin; not another for T. P.; but one who has called to ask why you

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have adopted those initials, and what is the meaning of this advertisement?' And the imposing form of the mother of my intended swept into the room, holding a newspaper in its hand.

'Oh, my dear madam, I am so glad to see you!' cried I. 'I thought you were at Scarborough.'

'We were at Scarborough, but have returned sooner than I expected. But that has nothing to do with the explanation I demand. What is the meaning of this advertisement?'

I declared with truth that I had never advertised in my life, and had not the remotest notion what she meant. Her only reply was to place her newspaper in my hand. A pen-and-ink mark in the margin directed my attention to the following:

'The licensed homicides who decimate the nation under the titles of Physician, Surgeon, or General Practitioner, arrogantly call all those Professors of the Art of Healing who refuse to conform to their antiquated and inefficacious rules, Quacks. Yet, a traveller, who has lately returned from the wilds of Crim Tartary, where he has learned the marvellous curative lore of the Boshes, possesses some miraculous secrets for the cure of all diseases arising from disorganisation of the reticular interlineation of the Nerves. What is Blindness? Paralysation of the Optic Nerve. What is Deafness? Prostration of the Nerves of the Ear. This benefactor of Europe has cured thousands of the blind and deaf whose cases have been declared Hopeless by the Faculty. As for Neuralgia, Tic Douloureux, Rheumatism, St Vitus's Dance, Winking, Starting at sudden Noises, &c., he is ready to guarantee the restoration of all persons so afflicted to the healthy nervous status of the ploughman and the milkmaid. Address, T. P., 1 Blank Terrace, Kensington.—*N.B.* T. P.'s invaluable work, *The Nerves and their Victims*, is now ready. To be had of all Booksellers, price half-a-crown; or, direct from the Author, by sending thirty-six stamps to his address.'

I rubbed my eyes, and stared in wonder at my proposed mother-in-law, who stood in a judicial attitude.

'Well?' said she.

'It is an absurd hoax!' cried I. 'And now I understand why I have been pestered all day with callers demanding to see T. P.'

'Then you have not turned quack doctor? I thought such a thing impossible. Of course, however, I could intrust the happiness of my daughter to no such fraudulent impostor; and the initials being yours, as well as the address, I determined to call at once, and see what it all meant. Of course, my dear Tom, I am overjoyed to find that you are merely the victim of a silly trick—— What!'

The exclamation was caused by the entrance, at that moment, of the fair deserted. The elder lady drew herself up to her full height, and then stiffened into live marble.

'Oh, I see,' she said, and her accent was freezing; 'you thought we were safe at Scarborough. A fortunate visit of mine was this! A narrow escape my poor girl has had. Good-morning, Sir.'

'But, madam,' I began.

'Enough, sir; not a word! Permit me to withdraw. I am not used to such company!'

'But you are mistaken,' I cried. 'This is Mrs T. P.; she has not been in the house five minutes, and I never saw her before.'

Before I could get any farther in my explanation Mrs T. P. struck in. 'Oh, madam, how can you treat with such cruelty a poor distressed woman, who has been left by her husband, and'——

'Enough,' said Lucy's mother. 'Doubtless, your story is very romantic, but it has no interest for me.' And she moved haughtily to the door, where she found herself confronted by a couple of policemen in uniform, and one out.

'Sorry to distress you, ladies,' said the latter, 'but duty, you know, is duty, and must be performed. Mr Timothy Porter, you are wanted.—Holloa! This is not our man.—Slip into the hall, you two, and see that he does not get out of the house.'

'There is no one in it but ourselves and my servant Betty,' said I.

There was a fruitless search, and a partial explanation, which so far satisfied the detective that he made a sort of apology for the intrusion. 'But, sir,' he said in conclusion, 'if you are so careless as to let your house to a swindler, who joins his better-paying tricks to quack-doctoring, what can you expect?'

'I never let the house,' I replied. 'I went abroad for a holiday, sent my servant away, and put in a charwoman.'

'What is her name and address?'

I gave both; and the policemen went away, followed by Mrs T. P., who thanked Heaven that her rascal husband had escaped.

Of course, Mrs Grimes, the charwoman, had been tempted to let Timothy Porter occupy my house in my absence; and I was pestered for months with indignant letters from persons who had sent postage stamps for copies of *The Nerves and their Victims*, and had received nothing in return.

THE EVENING SEA.

Dim sheet of lucid splendour, seen afar,
What mem'ries bring'st thou of that happy past,
When on thy brink we children pebbles cast,
Or reared our sand-tow'rs for thy waves to mar!
Mysterious to us men thy beauties are;
Fair hopes, unutterable types thou hast
Of higher, nobler aims, long to outlast
Earth's mean ambitions. Now, a lonely star
Floats through the deep'ning azure, as 'twould guide
Vague human longings to a Better Land.
Sparkles the sea beneath in joyous pride,
And all my pulses spurn this mortal strand.
But night draws nigh—what life-work can I shew?
Hopeful, contented, humble home, I go.

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THE SECRETARY BIRD.

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE UN-NATURAL HISTORY OF COMMERCE.

THERE is a tall bird known to naturalists by the name of the Secretary Bird. Its classical name is the *Gypogéranus*, or vulture-crane. It is, in fact, about the size of a stork, to which it is nearly allied by nature and in its voracious propensities. In digestive power, it is hardly inferior to the ostrich. The proper food of the Secretary Bird is reptiles, especially serpents; but, when domesticated, every kind of nourishment agrees with it; and if it be permitted to suffer from hunger, it will fall upon ducks, chickens, goslings, and fish. Its gait and figure are elegant and imposing. It walks like a king's secretary. Its eye has a quick, dazzling, predaceous glance. A beautiful tuft of feathers, which it can erect at pleasure, inclines backwards from its head, exactly resembling a fine feathery goose-quill stuck behind the ear of a secretary. Hence its name. In hot climates, where reptiles abound, this bird is carefully preserved. It is felony to kill one, but the public appreciate its uses too well to destroy it wantonly.

I do not know if there be a specimen in the Zoological Gardens at the present moment, but there was lately a very fine one in solitary confinement in the Jardin des Plantes at Paris. It is, however, unnecessary to go so far to see it, for there are vast numbers in this country, though not so many in confinement as could be wished. In London, especially, there are many fine specimens of the true breed, and not a few beautiful varieties and hybrids. For instance, we have the Actuary Bird, the Agency Bird, the Director Bird, and the Manager Bird. The name of the last is a corruption from the French *manger*, 'to eat;' the 'a' having been probably inserted from the creature being observed to ejaculate 'Ah!' in token of enjoyment, in the midst of eating. To these may be added the Solicitor Bird, with which the above named are known to cross freely; and the variety is instantly recognised by its bill, which is often of portentous dimensions. Finally, there is the Great Liquidator, whose voracity is too well known to the public to need description. A fine specimen of it was recently caught in Lincoln's Inn Fields, whilst in the act of swallowing, in one gulp, myriads of pounds of prey. In fact, this variety is supposed by Professor Owing to be the veritable *Dinornis* of New Zealand, and to have been hatched in the Eccaleobion, from one of the fossil eggs brought over to this country by way of Hindustan.

All varieties of the Secretary Bird, except perhaps the one last spoken of, are very gregarious in the domesticated state, and live together in great harmony; in fact, they form *Companies*. In this way, they are enabled to gratify to their fullest extent their predaceous habits, and indulge their voracious appetites. But in birds, as in men, indulgence beyond certain limits sows the seeds of disease; constitutional maladies become developed, and at last prevail; the Secretary Bird succumbs. Then the Great Liquidator, if not prevented, steps in, and performs the half-friendly, half-cannibal office of gobbling it up. The way to prevent such a catastrophe is to supply the poor Secretary Birds with some light nutritious diet, such as poultry or *fish*. As they are unable at such a time to cater entirely for themselves, it is necessary for the fish to be drawn together in small separate pools, where they can be easily caught in quantities not too large at a time. If the crisis be thus averted, the Secretary Birds, which have something of the Phœnix in them, will revive, recover their plumage, and be as active and voracious as ever. It is, however, to be noted, that no Secretary Bird which has been so unfortunate as to lose the tuft on its head, has ever been known to recover.

It need hardly be observed that this crisis in the life of a company of Secretary Birds is also a very critical time for the fish, which, for the most part, have themselves to blame for what happens. These foolish little creatures are easily got together by the jingle and glitter of a little tin, and the very plumage, especially the tuft, of their deadly enemies, the Secretary Birds, is known to attract them.

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Sometimes, however, the Great Liquidator drives away the Secretary Birds; but it is only to make both them and the fish its own exclusive prey. It is only a choice of evils for the fish. They are sure to be caught at last, they are so exceedingly silly.

The English, like the tropical Secretary Bird, has, however, its uses, and needs to be preserved; it is, in fact, as above described, a *tropical* species. The native bird is perfectly harmless; it is the *tropical* one only that needs to be guarded against. This is not very difficult, if it be properly watched. The Auditor Bird, though vastly inferior in size, will, if properly trained after the manner of a falcon, prevent the species we have been describing from becoming dangerous. There is, however, this peculiarity to be guarded against in the Auditor. His sense of hearing is, as his name implies, very acute, and he is apt to trust to that rather than to his sight, which, as he is of the Nocturn class, ought principally to guide him in hunting in the dark. The consequence is, that he listens too often to the cry of the Secretaries, and picks up their note. When this happens, the Auditor becomes worse than useless for the purpose intended; and it is therefore advisable to change the Bird employed. The Actuary Bird also (only it must be of the solitary, not the gregarious variety) will, if reclaimed in time, save multitudes of fish. Nothing, however, is more effectual than vigilance on the part of the fish themselves; and, on the part of the public, an elementary acquaintance with Cocker.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE *MARY ANN*.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.

THE boat, on leaving the ship, had made off rapidly towards the whales; but she had had a long chase, and the captain had not attempted to shorten it. In the end, they were successful. A whale was harpooned, lanced, and killed, and then for the first time the men became clearly conscious that the ship was not in sight. They concluded, of course, that they had come a long way; but the whalers had been placed in a similar difficulty before, and were certain that the morning would shew them the *Mary Ann* in sight. They had a stock of provisions which would last them three or four days, and therefore made themselves as comfortable as they could, keeping watch in turns.

The night passed pleasantly enough. In such latitudes, sleep in the open air is the pleasantest kind of sleep, and but for the slightly cramped positions in which they had to lie, they had little cause to regret that they were not on board ship.

Morning came; but, to their astonishment and disappointment, the ship was not in sight. Still, it was probable that she would cruise about during the day, and before night would sight them. The day passed wearily; all the men keeping an anxious look-out, and none more anxious than the captain. They hoped, he feared, that the *Mary Ann* would be sighted. As the day wore on, and no signs appeared, the men, and especially the ex-bushrangers, began to be seriously uneasy. The captain was shrewd enough to do nothing to make them less uneasy. At night, he told them that he must take charge of the small cask of water and the little stock of provisions. 'Because,' said he, 'if the *Mary Ann* is not in sight to-morrow, we must make for land.'

The three convicts were suspicious at once. Suspicion is about the only quality which men of this class have in common. Forty soldiers will overawe four thousand convicts. The reason is, that there is not a convict who does not believe that if he were to propound any scheme of resistance to his fellow, the plot would be instantly revealed. The convict suspects everybody; his fellows, perhaps, worse than all others. The instant, therefore, the captain mentioned his proposal, they suspected treachery. In truth, the matter was much more serious to them than to the sailors. If by chance they fell in with an English man-of-war, although at present no one but the captain had the most remote notion that there was any possibility of such an occurrence, and it became known that they were ex-convicts, they would be put in irons, and at once sent back to Van Diemen's Land, where death would be the penalty of their offences. The rest of the boat's crew, however, agreed with the captain. High words ensued. The three convicts were armed, and the five sailors unarmed; but the captain had near him the ship's lances, and the convicts must have felt that a conflict would be a hazardous thing.

Night came, and no sign of the ship. Suspicion was now in every one's breast. There was no sleep that night for any one except poor Charley, who, worn out by the hard work he had had on the first day, and less influenced by suspicion than the rest, slept as soundly as if in his berth.

Morning came—the second morning—and no signs were yet visible. The sailors advised that they should make at once for land, but the convicts opposed. Wearily the hours passed away. Half-provisions were served out: the convicts proposed that half even of that amount only should be given to Charley, but the others stood by him.

Night approached, and with the same tale: no ship in sight. Even the convicts began to see that the best thing to do was to make for land. If there were the choice of two deaths, any would be better than starvation. Besides, they might meet with some other ship, or with their own; or even on land they might, and probably would, be perfectly safe. They agreed to take turns in watching during this night, two being always on watch, a convict and a sailor. The rest slept.

When morning came, they were all of one mind: they must now aim at land. The captain *thought* he could hit it. The best thing they could do at anyrate was to try; all agreed in that.

So the boat's head was put landwards, and the men pulled with a will. By night, however, they were nearly worn out. They had gone, according to the captain's calculation, about one-third of the distance.

The quantity of provisions distributed was reduced again. The reduction told on their labours next day: they dragged wearily at their oars: their strength was failing them for want of food.

The next day and the fifth passed, and on each succeeding one the distance got over was smaller than on the preceding. Some of the men could take very short spells at the oar; Charley, shorter than any of the rest. The captain took his turn, and managed so well that but for the fact that

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each one lived in view of the rest, they would have suspected him of having a secret supply of food.

On the night of the fifth day, the convicts made a rush at the food, and a fight took place. No one, however, was wounded severely. The sailors were unwilling to shed blood; the convicts were afraid to make open war. They knew that without the help of the captain at anyrate, they could never hope to reach land. On the morning of the sixth day, one man, a sailor, and Charley were so far useless that they could only lie in the bottom of the boat. Charley was quite senseless, almost lifeless. The convicts would probably have made open war but for the absolute necessity of not losing the captain.

Noon came. Land was sighted—land, land! Land where water could be had—land where food might be procured! Franticly they expended their failing strength in endeavours to reach it suddenly. Gradually they could distinguish the low line of green, and beneath it a strip of yellow sand, becoming more and more distinct. No houses could be made out. The men were in raptures; the captain, however, was disappointed, although he did his best not to shew his disappointment. What he had looked out most anxiously for was a ship: that he could not see. There was just one hope for him: there might be one on the opposite side of the island.

Then one of the convicts drew his pistol, and swore with a great oath that they should not go a boat's length farther until he knew what was going to be done. 'Were they going to split? He wasn't going to be sent back to Australia; he might as well fight it out there. If they won, well, they could tell their own tale: they could be a whaler's crew that had lost their ship; and if they lost, they could only be killed.'

The other convicts joined with him, and there was every probability of a terrible fight.

The danger was put an end to by a sailor. 'He did not want to split. They had all shared alike in the boat, and they might as well keep their tongues still.' They were now sufficiently strong to dictate their own terms. The other two sailors at once promised not to mention to any Europeans that they were runaways. Charley was too exhausted to be capable of understanding what was going on. Once or twice the captain had looked anxiously to see whether he still breathed. Extreme exhaustion had followed his hard work and rough usage, and he lay like one dead.

The captain only remained. At first, he would not consent to make any promise. Angry words passed; pistols were cocked; but all were against him. They talked of throwing him overboard, since his knowledge was no longer indispensable. At last, under heavy threats, he consented to be silent so long as he should be on the island they were approaching. No threats could extort any promise beyond that. Perhaps the captain consented the more readily because he saw no sign of European civilisation. He was afraid he had missed the island he was aiming at.

By sunset the men were near the shore. Native canoes pulled off in wonder at the visitors arriving in so small a ship. Soon food and water were procured, and the men stood once again on land. The visitors were made to understand that there were white men on the island, though a few miles away. The gentle Polynesians treated the hungry fellows well. Two small huts were set aside for their use. Two days passed, and then all were sufficiently recovered, with the exception of the boy, to prepare for their journey across the island. They had found a native who could speak a little English: he told them that there were only two or three small vessels at the island, and that the big ships were all at sea. This, of course, was excellent news for the convicts, but dismal enough for the captain.

We may hasten over the journey across the island. The boy Charley was not strong enough to accompany the rest. The old captain determined that he would send help to him as soon as ever he should meet with Europeans.

They reached the small English settlement. There were a few English sailors who had been left on shore in the hospital, a small body of marines, and one or two merchant-settlers with their families. They welcomed the shipwrecked crew, as they believed them to be, as Englishmen in such circumstances always do.

A small sandal-wood vessel was going to leave the island in a day or two for Honolulu. The convicts were glad of the chance of going with her, since it would be easy enough probably to find a ship from that port to California, and the Australians believed they would have a good chance of getting a passage to Van Diemen's Land. They accordingly were all ready to take the passage which was offered them.

Charley was left to the care of the Europeans. Before the little vessel weighed anchor, he was sufficiently recovered to have started on his journey across the island; but she had sailed before he reached the settlement. The captain had at first determined to remain behind, on the chance of the arrival of a man-of-war which might go in chase of the *Mary Ann*.

He concluded it would be better to go with the rest. If he could get a quick sailer at Honolulu, he might still reach California before the *Mary Ann*—would be able to give notice to the authorities, and to be prepared to apprehend the runaways when his own slow-sailing ship arrived. Then, too, if he had remained behind, the convicts would at once have suspected him, and might have persuaded the captain of the little schooner to change his plans.

The little vessel sailed, well stocked with provisions, and the shipwrecked crew especially well fitted out by the kindly hands of their countrymen.

On the same day, the sick boy Charley was brought into the settlement by the men who had been sent over for him. He had not been in the settlement one hour before every one in it knew the character of the men by whom the *Mary Ann* had been seized, the particulars of her seizure, the real story of the whaling crew, and every particular about the voyage, with the exception of his own ill-treatment.

The reader may judge how much the inhabitants of the little settlement were excited by what the boy had to tell. They had given their hospitality to scoundrels of the worst type. The more fully they learned the details of the capture, of the ill-treatment to which the captain had been subjected, and little by little of his own ill-treatment, the more eagerly they desired to bring the offenders to justice, and to punish the men who had, as they considered, violated their hospitality.

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A consultation was held at once. The inhabitants did what Englishmen always do in cases of difficulty—they called a public meeting. Thirty Europeans were got together, the lieutenant in charge, who was acting-governor, was put in the chair; and then, after the manner of their fathers, at any time during the last fifteen hundred years, probably longer, if we are to believe Tacitus, they sought wisdom in the multitude of counsellors.

The problem to be solved was, how to catch, first, the boat; secondly, the *Mary Ann*. Some suggested a search for the man-of-war, which had but recently left the station, to be made by despatching canoes to the islands where she was likeliest to have called. This design, however, had to be abandoned. It was doubtful whether the man-of-war would have called at any of the islands lying near; and, even if she had, much valuable time would be lost, during which both vessels would be making their way to their destinations. The suggestion finally hit upon was to send a small schooner which was in the harbour in pursuit. She was to carry as many men as could be spared from the settlement, so that they might be prepared for a fight with the convicts if they should come up with them. It was soon found that, from the sailors who had been left in hospital, added to more belonging to the schooner, a crew could be obtained of a dozen men. Half-a-dozen marines volunteered to go likewise. The night was spent in preparations. Provisions were taken on board in quantities sufficiently large to accommodate her large crew. A gun which had been left on shore by a man-of-war was placed on board. The little settlement was alive with preparations during the whole of the following day. In the evening, her crew went on board, taking with them, at his own desire, Charley.

As the land-breeze began to blow, she weighed anchor, and with the good wishes of all commenced the chase.

On board the *Sandal-wood*, as the little trader sent in pursuit was called, there was all the excitement of a long chase. Every eye searched the horizon carefully during each successive day, with the view of catching sight of the *Mary Ann;* and when at the end of the long week she was seen, every one felt as much delight as the hunter feels when he has sighted his prey. The gun had been prepared, so as to be of use if needed in attacking. The decks of the whaler were three or four feet at least higher out of the water than those of the *Sandal-wood*, so that boarding would be extremely dangerous. It was considered that the best way would be to manœuvre the little vessel, bring the gun to bear, and fire away until the enemy surrendered, and sent their men on board in their own boat. The lieutenant who commanded the little vessel determined that if this failed, he would then risk boarding.

And now, we must transfer ourselves to the *Mary Ann*. From the day on which the leader of the escaped convicts had concluded that the boat was lost, he began to be suspicious of the mate. The missing boat might have gone to the bottom; but then, on the other hand, she might have met with some other ship, or possibly even have reached land. If she had fallen in with another whaler or merchant-ship, or, as was possible, with a man-of-war, or if she had reached land, one of two things was pretty certain to happen—either that men-of-war would be quickly in pursuit, or that they would be on their way to intercept them on the American coast. Black Dick examined the mate very closely, and it required all that officer's ability not to shew that he knew more of the incident than he chose to tell. Six days had been lost in waiting about in vain endeavours to find the missing boat. At length, fearful of being intercepted off the Californian coast, the ship's head was turned towards that coast, and the *Mary Ann* resumed her voyage. But the winds were light, and the heavy, slow-sailing whaler—a capital ship for rough Antarctic seas—made very slow progress over the calm waters, scarcely ruffled by the light breezes, of the Pacific.

The bushrangers grew more and more impatient. For three days the ship lay becalmed. In the Atlantic there is always a long swell in the sea, even when in the air the calm is perfect; but in the Pacific, the water is absolutely and completely motionless. The calm fretted the men; they chafed under the inaction; they could bear anything but rest. They wanted to travel at the most rapid pace possible to man, and here they were kept idle, motionless. They cursed the calm in language which in the perfect stillness—the stillness which may be felt of a tropical calm—even occasionally appalled themselves. And when the wind did at last come to put an end to this wearisome and anxious suspense, it blew so lightly, and the ship travelled so slowly, that the men's anxiety was scarcely relieved. Their captain, meantime, had been thinking what was best to be done, and had secretly made up his mind that almost their only chance of outstripping the pursuers who were probably after them was to abandon the *Mary Ann* altogether, and gain possession of a vessel which could sail quicker. Hitherto, they had carefully kept out of the way of the few vessels which they had sighted. They determined now to make an attack on the first suitable to their purposes which they should see. Black Dick would add piracy to the list of his qualifications for the hempen cord.

The first vessel sighted after the calm by the *Mary Ann* was the little *Sandal-wood*. She was seen at the stern of the *Mary Ann* in early morning, and as the day advanced, became more and more distinct. This alone was proof that she was a quicker sailer than the whaler. She was gaining on them greatly. She was a small schooner, very fleet, lightly built, carrying a large spread of sail, and evidently constructed for speed in tropical seas.

The mate, who had learned the plans of the convicts, was in fear. His plan of capture by a man-of-war was at an end; his delays of the *Mary Ann* were fruitless. The captors of the whaler were going to escape by means of another unpunished piece of villainy. As he saw the schooner approaching, he recognised only too well that she was exactly suited to their purpose.

Black Dick called the five convicts around him, and the men arranged for the capture of the vessel. They would make signals to her, man a whale-boat, and, adopting the ruse which they had already found to be successful in the capture of the whaler, take possession of her.

The mate was compelled to admit that it was unlikely there would be more than four or five men on board. But he was puzzled to make out what the schooner was doing. Little details

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connected with the way in which the ship was managed put him on the alert. Clearly she was well handled. Could there be any hope of——? No; she had answered the signals in the usual way.

A slight movement in her sails shewed him that she was, for some strange purpose or other, going to tack. In truth, she was preparing to tack, in order that she might come round so as to bring her gun to bear.

Just then the whaler's boat was lowered. The mate, who was, of course, to be left on board the *Mary Ann*, looking towards the schooner, observed that there had been a change of purpose.

The lieutenant on board the *Sandal-wood* had been surprised at the lowering of the whale-boat. Possibly they were out of provisions. But in such cases signals are usually made. Charley suggested to him that they were going to attempt a capture. The lieutenant prepared to receive them. Every man was armed; the marines were sent below. All but four were ordered to hide themselves behind the bulwarks. The four or five left on deck shewed no arms, but lounged about lazily after the manner of the men whom they wished to imitate.

As the whale-boat approached, the hopes of the bushrangers ran high. This was exactly the vessel they wanted. A quiet pull to her side, a haul to her deck; at the most, a short, easy fight with unprepared men, throwing one or two overboard, and she would be theirs, and then let English men-of-war do their worst.

They were within hailing-distance.

'What ship is that?' cried the convict leader.

'The *Sandal-wood*.'

'Throw us a rope; we are coming on board.'

A rope was lowered; the boat made fast alongside. One after another the men swung themselves on board. They stood together for an instant, and Black Dick cried: 'Now for it!' and knocked one of the seamen down, while he and the rest produced pistols, and made a rush at the rest.

But at that moment there was another rush. Men armed with the queen's weapons came from under the shelter of the little boat which was placed on deck, from the shelter of the bulwarks, and from the cabin. For an instant there was a panic. The convicts had never thought of the possibility of catching a Tartar. Cutlasses gleamed before them. A short, fierce struggle, one man after another belonging to the boat's crew disabled, a desperate tussle with the convict captain, whose pistol was literally cut out of his hand, and the convicts were overpowered. They were placed in irons, and carefully guarded. We may pass over the scene which took place when the men saw Charley. The leaders of the gang were secured. All that remained to be done was to catch up with the little vessel in which the captain of the whaler and the whale-boat's crew had taken their passage to Honolulu, and then to deliver the whole of the prisoners to the first man-of-war they could find, to be sent back to Van Diemen's Land. In this the *Sandal-wood* was fortunate: in two days, she fell in with a man-of-war. Her Majesty's ship had chosen to board the vessel bound for Honolulu, and the captain had, in spite of threats from the men, boldly denounced his three fellow-passengers. He and the rest of the whale-boat's crew were accordingly transferred to the man-of-war, the captain as a free man who had been ill-used; the three convicts as prisoners. She then made a search for the whaler, and came up with her as we have seen in charge of a British officer.

The whole of the prisoners were taken off to Australia, where they paid full penalty for their misdeeds. The captain and his crew were again in sole possession of the *Mary Ann;* and the mate and Charley found themselves, on their return to Hobart-town, the heroes of the hour.

BYRON AT WORK.

No man of letters has been oftener criticised than Byron. Every incident in his life, every flaw in his character, all his vices (and more), all his affectations, have been stereotyped in print by a hundred pens. There is one point of view, and one only, I believe, from which Byron has not yet been sketched, and that is as a literary workman. It is from that point of view that I propose to add a few touches to his portrait.

It is but candid at the outset to say that this is the character that Byron abhorred of all others. To be a poet and to be nothing else was, in his opinion, to be one of the most useless, and therefore one of the most contemptible of men. 'If one's years cannot be better employed than in sweating poetry,' he said, 'a man had better be a ditcher;' to the last he thought far more in his heart of his escutcheon, and of the deeds of arms that were associated with it, than he thought of the laurels of *Childe Harold;* and to have died sword in hand storming the fortress of Lepanto, as one of the heroes of Greece, he would, without a moment's hesitation, have consigned all his rhymes to the flames. He refused at first to accept a guinea for his works; and when the bailiffs were in his house, scattering his household gods around him, and selling even his books, he presented his copyrights to any of his friends who had the courage to ask for them or would take them as a gift. Yet these despised copyrights are, after all, his best and indeed his only title-deeds to fame; and it is as a man of letters (and of gallantry) only, that posterity will trouble itself to give a second thought to the poor peer who ended a career of turbulence and vice in the camp of a horde of Greek bandits at Missolonghi. He made but one speech in the House of Lords, and that might have been made by any of the lords in waiting to be found under the table of the Prince Regent. His military picnic in Greece was a fiasco. The years that intervened between these two events, the commencement and the end of his career, were spent either in vice or in the pursuits of literature; and it was simply as a man of genius and a man of pleasure that any one ever spoke or thought of Lord Byron.

Byron as a poet and Byron as an artist were a contradiction and a paradox. The poet despised the artist; the artist sneered at the poet. Byron hardly ever spoke of his own works, when he spoke of them critically, except in the language of depreciation. His genius as a poet was the genius of

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Wordsworth; but his taste as a critic was the taste of Pope. Pen in hand, he never for a moment, except when translating his *Hints from Horace*, permitted his critical tastes to interfere with the free play of his genius. But these tastes, after all, were more deeply rooted in his nature than his genius. He never spoke of Wordsworth but with aversion, and he never spoke of Pope but with what most people now think preposterous adulation. He set Pope even above Shakspeare and Milton. 'I have always regarded him,' he says in a letter to Moore, 'as the greatest name in our poetry. The rest are barbarians.'

Yet, with all these stiff and starch notions of versification, Byron forgot all about his model, Pope, and his own indignant strictures upon 'the atrocious bad taste of the times' and all that, the moment that he took up his gray goose quill; when the fit was on, he wrote as it was natural that a man of his bold and passionate genius should write—wrote, that is, in the spirit of Scott and Coleridge and Wordsworth, and resented almost as an insult to his genius any compliments that were paid to his poems as works of art, any suggestion in the way of criticism that seemed to imply that his poems, like Pope's, owed anything of their beauty and finish to the skill or labour of the workman instead of the inspiration of the poet. He hated to be thought a literary workman; and nothing annoyed him more in the criticism of the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly Reviews* than to find his poems spoken of as works of art. He got into a passion with Jeffrey and Gifford for speaking of *Cain* and *Lara* as elaborate. 'Elaborate! What do they mean?' he asks in a note to Murray acknowledging a packet of criticisms and compliments. 'You know the volume was written as fast as I could put pen to paper, printed from the *original* manuscripts, and never revised but in the proofs.' 'Of all the works I have ever written, these,' he says in a subsequent letter to Moore, harping on this word elaborate, 'are the most carelessly composed, and their faults, whatever they may be, are those of negligence, and not of labour;' and their beauties, of course, for this is what Byron is suggesting, the result of inspiration. He is fond of comparing himself (in poesy) to the tiger. 'If I miss the first spring,' he says, 'I go growling back to my jungles. There is no second; I can't correct; I can't, and I won't.'

This was his theory, and his practice very closely corresponded with his theory. Most of his works were written in heats, dashed off, that is, at the rate of fifty or sixty stanzas at a sitting over a bottle of Hollands or Burgundy. He is never tired of boasting of this in his correspondence with Moore and Murray. 'This is the work of a week,' he says, speaking of the *Bride of Abydos;* and in his Diary he explains with more precision that 'it was written in four nights to distract his dreams. Were it not thus,' he adds, 'it had never been composed; and had I not done something at that time I must have gone mad, by eating my own heart.' The *Corsair* was written in ten days, at the rate, that is, of two hundred lines a day; Pulci he translated at the rate of two octaves a night, 'the same allowance as at Venice.' *Lara* was written 'in the summer of the sovereigns' (1814), 'amidst balls and fooleries, when undressing,' he says, 'after coming home from balls and masquerades;' and the *Vision of Dante*—'the best thing I ever wrote, if it be not unintelligible'—was written at the request of Madame Guiccioli, most of it by the side of her couch, with what that lady calls 'his usual facility and rapidity.'

It is no part of my business to reconcile the poet and the artist; perhaps, however, it may be as well to point out that though Byron wrote most of his works under the influence of what is called inspiration, and therefore with remarkable fluency and rapidity, he nursed his genius as carefully as Pope when he was making preparations for any of his works; and with the exception of the *Corsair*, of *Lara*, and of *Cain*, most of these rough sketches were afterwards revised and polished in the keenest spirit of criticism, carefully copied out, and frequently revised and re-revised in the proof. Take the *Bride of Abydos*, for example. In its original form, it was the work of a week; but as it now stands it is much longer and far more beautiful than when it left the desk of the poet in its first rough manuscript. Moore traced out two hundred fresh lines interpolated in the proof, and, 'as usual, among the passages thus added were some of the happiest and most brilliant in the whole poem.' The *Corsair*, and the *Corsair* only, I believe, stands as it was originally written. It sprang from his brain perfect, and, taking into account the surpassing beauty of the work, it is, as Moore says, perhaps wholly without a parallel in the history of genius.

What, however, looks like inspiration even in the *Corsair* may be, after all, only the result of profound thought and meditation, for popularity was the passion of Byron's life, and poetry the only means that he possessed of gratifying his passion. He was hardly ever without a poem on hand, and frequently had hints or sketches for five or six in his desk; and from the moment that he had fixed his mind upon the title and plan of a piece till the poem was published, it was never out of his thoughts. He was always making additions to it, altering and correcting. You may find traces of this everywhere in his diaries and correspondence. 'Wrote down an additional stanza for canto five of *Don Juan*, which I composed in bed this morning,' is the first entry in his Diary that strikes me on opening Moore's Life at random; and a few pages further on is a note to Murray: 'After the stanza on Grattan, add the following addenda, which I dreamed of during to-day's siesta.'

His muse was always at work. Riding in the woods of Ravenna, or on the sands of the Adriatic; standing, like Lara, by a pillar, and watching the dancers at a ball; listening to the story of the Prisoner of Chillon, from the lips of 'a corporal as drunk as Blücher, and, to my mind, as great a soldier too;' boating on the Lake of Lucerne, or strolling with Shelley through the vineyards that were once 'the bosquet de Julie,' with the Heloise before him, Byron was generally surrendering himself up in silence to the pleasant task of moulding his thoughts into shape, avoiding conversation by leaning abstractedly over the side of the boat, or loitering behind his companions; and when he sat down at the end of the day after dinner, or on his return from balls and masquerades, it was not to think, but to pour out all that was in his mind.

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To Byron this sort of dreaming was what it is, I suppose, to most men of Byron's genius, an intellectual pleasure of the highest order. Moore calls it a delicious fool's paradise. Coleridge spent half his life in the clouds; and Alfieri tells us that, before his dramatic genius had unfolded itself, he used to pass hours in this state of—what shall I call it?—intellectual somnolence, gazing upon the sea. Byron's love of solitude took the form of Alfieri's, and the pleasure that he refers to in his lines—

> To sit on rocks, to muse o'er flood and fell,
> To slowly trace the forest's shady scene,
> Where things that own not man's dominion dwell,
> And mortal foot hath ne'er or rarely been;
> To climb the trackless mountain all unseen,
> Alone o'er steeps and foaming falls to lean,

was a pleasure that he spoke of from personal experience; for it was his habit, when in Greece and Italy, to swim out to sea, to perch himself on the top of a high rock overlooking the sea, and there to pass hour after hour, 'in that sort of vague reverie which, however formless and indistinct at the moment, settled afterwards in his pages into those clear bright pictures which will endure for ever.' This love of solitude and meditation characterised him even as a boy at Harrow, where he was in the habit of withdrawing himself from his playmates, and giving himself up to what Keats, I think, calls 'the silent session of sweet thoughts,' sitting alone upon a tomb in the churchyard. It grew with the growth of his genius, and it was this tendency to meditate, combined with his love of wild and picturesque scenery, that led him first to Greece and then to Italy, and which, but for Madame Guiccioli, might have taken him in the end from even Italy and Greece to 'the land of Bolivar.'

Knowing when and how Byron's works were written, any man who knows Italy or Greece might, I believe, trace out most of the spots where Byron spent these leisure hours; for his pictures of scenery, even when only touched off by two or three dashes of the pen, are as vivid and as true to nature as photographs. *Manfred* is a chart to the Bernese Alps; and *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* is, to my thinking, quite as interesting and suggestive a guide-book to the tourist who wishes to see all that is worth seeing in Europe, apart from the people and the theatres, as Murray's *Handbook*.

Byron's sketches of scenery are unrivalled. They stand alone; and their terseness, vigour, and beauty illustrate the strength, the flexibility, and the varied hues of the English tongue more vividly than any other writings that I know in our language. What without his travels in Greece, in the Alps, and in Italy, Byron might have been as a poet, it is, of course, impossible to say, because it is impossible to tell what a mind like Byron's, thrown back upon itself, might dare, and daring accomplish. But taking his works as they stand, comparing *Sardanapalus* with *Don Juan*, and *Cain* with *Manfred*, it is hard to picture Byron as a great poet, hardly indeed as a poet at all, without his travels; for Byron only really possessed one power in anything like an eminent degree, and that was his power of description. Of constructive genius he had not a spark. All he knew of the drama was through the Greek, and all his attempts to imitate his Greek models are, to speak mildly, failures. He tried his hand at a novel, after reading German ghost-stories for a week with Mr and Mrs Shelley, and agreed with them to write something after the same style. He put together a skeleton; but he never got beyond the skeleton; and if Polidore's story is, as it is said to be, founded on Byron's sketch, Mrs Shelley might well have hesitated to risk her reputation as an authoress by publishing *Frankenstein* between the covers of Byron's novel.

The plan and even most of the ideas of Byron's works were, to use an ugly word to express a commonplace fact, plagiarisms. Byron's powers of imitation were developed in an unusual degree. His powers of invention were, in comparison, slight. When, therefore, he ceased to read, he ceased to write; and after reading, it was next to impossible for him not to write. So strong, in fact, was this passion of imitation, that I have no doubt what Byron said of two or three of his poems, 'If I had not written this, I should have gone mad,' is the literal interpretation of what he felt. His writing fits came over him like a rage, and when this rage was on, writing was not only a relief, but a necessity. When, however, this writing fit was over—when, to use his own words, 'he had emptied his mind'—he sank back into that state of lethargy and indifference which frequently led him to doubt the powers, and sometimes the existence of his own genius, once or twice to make up his mind that literature was not his vocation, and to announce to Murray that the days of his authorship were ended. His mind, after most of his efforts, was a blank; and he sought in travel, in dissipation, too often in vice, the relief that every mind must have after a great effort. But the first book he took up after 'repeopling his mind with Nature,' set him off again; and in his Diary you may generally trace every phase in the period of his intellectual gestation, from the first conception of a poem till its birth, and from its birth through that period of puberty which is represented by printer's proofs scrawled all over with corrections and additions, till the day when it was put to press and ushered into the world with all its blushing honours thick upon it. Most, if not perhaps all of Byron's poems are thus at once the reflex of his reading and of his travels. If it were necessary, I could cite a dozen illustrations of this; two or three will, however, be sufficient for my purpose. Take *Manfred*. I have referred to this poem in a previous paragraph to shew how closely Byron reproduced the recollection of his wanderings in his descriptions of scenery. It supplies us with an equally striking illustration of his habit of reproducing the recollections of his reading. *Manfred* is *Faust* in an English dress. The opening scenes of Goethe's poem and the opening scenes of Byron's are identical. Byron was quite unconscious of this resemblance, and resented the charge when it was first put forth by Goethe; but it turned out, upon second thoughts, that Monk Lewis had translated most of *Faust* to Byron *vivâ voce* at Coligny. This, however, was enough for Byron. *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* was modelled upon the *Dunciad*. The Paraphrase of the *Art of Poetry* is worked out upon a suggestion of Dr Johnson's. Sardanapalus is the shadow of the portrait of Otho in Juvenal; and Don Juan is a copy of the Page in the *Marriage of Figaro*.

Byron tells us himself how he disciplined his

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mind by draughts of Pope and Milton to write his satire; and Moore relates a suggestive conversation that passed between him and his friend at Venice. Byron was then at work upon *Don Juan*. 'On the day preceding that of my departure from Venice'—I quote Moore's own words—'my noble host, on arriving from La Mira to dinner, told me, with all the glee of a schoolboy who had been just granted a holiday, that, as this was my last evening, the Contessa had given him leave to "make a night of it," and that accordingly he would not only accompany me to the opera, but we should sup together at some café (as in the old times) afterwards. Observing a volume in his gondola with a number of paper-marks between the leaves, I inquired of him what it was.

"Only a book," he answered, "from which I am trying to *crib*, as I do wherever I can; and that's the way I get the character of an original poet."

'On taking it up, and looking into it, I exclaimed: "Ah, my old friend Agathon!"

"What!" he cried archly, "you have been beforehand with me there, have you?"'

I do not know a better illustration of Byron's mode of working than *Sardanapalus*. The history of that is complete. The grim thought of the tragedy is, as I have said, to be found in Juvenal's description of Otho. Sardanapalus is but Otho under another name. The portrait is etched by the Roman poet; Byron adds nothing but the colour; and with this key in one's hand you may trace the progress of the work step by step in Byron's Diary. Here are a few extracts:

'*January* 13, 1821, *Saturday*.—Sketched the outline and *drams. pers.* of an intended tragedy of *Sardanapalus*, which I have for some time meditated. Took the names from Diodorus Siculus (I know the history of Sardanapalus, and have known it since I was twelve years old); and read over a passage in the ninth volume octavo of Mitford's *Greece*, where he rather vindicates the memory of this last of the Assyrians.'

'*January* 14, 1821.—Turned over Seneca's tragedies. Wrote the opening lines of the intended tragedy of *Sardanapalus*. Rode out some miles into the forest. Misty and rainy. Returned—dined—wrote some more of my tragedy. Read Diodorus Siculus—turned over Seneca, and some other books. Wrote some more of the tragedy. Took a glass of grog. After having ridden hard in rainy weather, and scribbled, and scribbled again, the spirits (at least mine) need a little exhilaration, and I don't like laudanum now as I used to do. So I have mixed a glass of strong waters and single waters, which I shall now proceed to empty. Therefore and thereunto I conclude this day's diary.'

'*February* 15, 1821.—Last night finished the first act of *Sardanapalus*. To-night, or to-morrow, I ought to answer letters.'

'Ravenna, *May* 28, 1821.—Since my last of the 26th or 25th, I have dashed off my fifth act of the tragedy called *Sardanapalus*. But now comes the copying over, which may prove heavy work—heavy to the writer as to the reader.'

To talk of inspiration after confessions like these, of the necessity of a man of poetical temperament possessing a strong passion of some kind, and to call poetry the dream of the sleeping passions, is, at the first blush, a little startling to people who can only pretend to comprehend the intellectual operations of genius from the autobiographies of poets themselves.

Yet, in the main, the history of *Sardanapalus* is, I believe, the history of most of Byron's works. They were the result partly of reading, partly of original thought; partly, that is, of memory, and partly of imagination. Take the *Corsair*, the *Prisoner of Chillon*, the *Bride of Abydos*, the *Lament of Tasso*, *Don Juan*, or any of Byron's works—trace its history by the light of his Diary and correspondence, or by the recollections of his friends, and you must be a particularly inapt scholar if you cannot discover its germ thought either in an after-dinner conversation with Shelley or Moore—in the legend of an old ruin—in Goethe, Rousseau, or Schiller—in an incident of Lord Byron's own life—in a satire of Juvenal, or in the traditions of the scenes through which he had recently passed. Lord Byron's mind was like an Æolian harp; the gentlest breeze, the slightest hint, was sufficient to evoke its music; but without this breeze, without this hint, it was silent. Looking through an old romance picked up at a roadside inn, listening to the song of a Swiss maid in the mountains, reading the letters of Catharine de' Medici, visiting the cell of Tasso, and turning over the manuscript of his *Jerusalem*—any trifle of this kind was sufficient to fire Byron's imagination; and when once his faculties had been put in motion, when the chords of the Æolian harp had been touched, a host of associations at once crowded into his mind; all the recollections of his travels—Greece, with her heroes, and her temples in shattered splendour; the Ægean, with its glittering waters and its pirates; Calypso's Isles, with all their mantling traditions; Albania, with its castled crags, and the pale crescent sparkling in its glens; the Rhine, with its streams and dells,

> Fruit, foliage, crag, wood, cornfield, mountain, vine,
> And chiefless castles breathing stern farewells
> From gray but leafy walls;

the Bernese Alps, with their glaciers and their torrents; and then Byron must, as he said, empty his mind, or go mad.

Any one who will take the trouble to go through Byron with a microscope may trace out many of his thoughts, many of his expressions, many of his finest illustrations, in his diaries and correspondence, hastily and roughly jotted down, perhaps, for the eye of his sister, of Moore, or of Murray, and then probably forgotten, but recalled the moment they were needed, even though it might be years after, and worked up afresh in his poetry as vividly as if they were only the impressions of yesterday, or the impromptus of the moment.

This is what the world calls genius. To understand its working, says Ruskin, we must picture to ourselves 'all that men of genius have seen and heard in the whole course of their lives laid up accurately in their memory, as in storehouses, extending with the poets even to the slightest intonations of syllables heard in the beginning of their lives, and with painters down to the minutest folds of drapery and shapes of leaves and stones; and over all this unindexed and immeasurable mass of treasure, the imagination, brooding and wandering, but dream-gifted, so as to summon at a moment exactly such a group of ideas as shall justly fit each other.'

What Byron called his 'estro' was this intense

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exercise of all the faculties of his mind, of his imagination and memory, of his wit and fancy; and it was the concentration of all his faculties upon the accomplishment of his work, and their concentration in what I may call a state of preternatural excitement, that made him describe a man's poetry as a distinct faculty or soul—a faculty that had no more to do with the everyday individual than inspiration with the Pythoness when removed from her tripod. Consistently with this notion, Byron calls his poetry sometimes a dream of the sleeping passions, and sometimes the expression of excited passion. I should prefer to vary the terms of his description, and to call it the expression of excited thought—reproducing the dreams of the passions. The difference is but trifling; but in the altered form this is an apt description of the spirit in which Byron generally sat down to work. All his poems were written, in the first instance, by fits and starts, roughened off, to use his own expression, after reading and cogitation for half the day, written, that is, as fast as their author could put pen to paper, and generally, I may add, written at night, frequently after two o'clock in the morning.

These were Byron's favourite hours of work. All *Don Juan* and most of *Childe Harold* were roughened off by the lamp; but with the striking exception of the *Corsair* and *Lara*, none of these drafts were passed into the hands of the printer without careful and elaborate revision and correction. Most of them were copied out again stanza by stanza. This was the heaviest part of Byron's work at the desk. It was the only part that he thoroughly detested. He complains of it again and again; and speaking of *Don Juan*, he says: 'I loathe this task of copying so much, that if there was a human being who could copy my blotted manuscripts, he should have all they can ever bring for his trouble.' Several of these original drafts of Byron's poems are in the possession of Mr Murray; and they amply bear out all that Byron says of them. They are as illegible as careless and hasty writing, and still hastier corrections, could possibly make them. Byron wrote with remarkable fluency and rapidity. His thoughts, when he had once got into a writing vein, never moved sluggishly. They were generally far ahead of his pen; and dashing off his verses as he did, partly under the inspiration of genius, and partly under that of strong waters, one may easily conceive what sort of copy Byron sent to the printer. Even when writing at leisure, his hand was, as he said, as bad as his character—even as that character was painted by himself.

Yet this was a case where an amanuensis, even if he could have deciphered Byron's blurred and blotted manuscripts, could have been of no possible service; for it was not simply a fair copy of his verses that Byron wanted. When Byron sat down to copy out his rough drafts, he sat down with books of reference and a Dictionary of Rhymes at his elbow; and much as he professed to despise the file, few men of his genius have altered and corrected and furbished up their poems more than Byron did. Moore took the trouble to go through the original drafts of some of Byron's poems, and to compare them with the finished copy. His comparisons are striking and suggestive. In the original draft of *Childe Harold*, the little Page and the Yeoman were referred to in five or six lines of little or no beauty. The light and sparkling lyric which now relieves the gloom of the first canto, like a moonbeam, is an after-thought. It was, as Byron acknowledges in his preface, suggested by a song in Sir Walter Scott's *Minstrelsy*. The *Song to Inez*, too, is anything but an 'unpremeditated lay.' In the original manuscript, it was a mere bit of singsong:

O never tell again to me
Of southern climes and British ladies;
It has not been your lot to see,
Like me, the lovely girl of Cadiz.

What it is now, all the world knows. The *Bride of Abydos* originally began with the second stanza; the first, as it now stands, 'Know ye the land,' &c. was added in copying. These beautiful lines are said to have been suggested by a song of Goethe's.

At the outset of his career, Byron found considerable difficulty in arranging his thoughts; and he tried a plan then very prevalent in Germany, and still practised, I believe, by the poet-laureate, of having his manuscript set up in type, and of correcting and re-arranging it in proofs. *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* was set up in this way by a printer at Newark. This, however, was impossible when Byron was abroad; and the poet had thus to copy them out with his own hand. But even after copying out a poem in this way, and correcting it in manuscript, Byron scrawled corrections in the margin of his proof, till Murray and his printers were almost out of their senses. Take the *Giaour*, for instance. In its original form—in the form, that is, in which the manuscript left Byron's desk—the *Giaour* was only a poem of four hundred lines. It is now one thousand four hundred, and many of the most striking and beautiful passages that distinguish the poem were added in the proof. That exquisite bit of description which now forms the second paragraph in the opening lines of the *Giaour*, 'Fair clime where every season smiles,' &c., is not in the manuscript: it was added in the first proof; and when the revise with this addition came into Byron's hands, he superadded twenty or thirty more lines to carry out his vein, starting with the line:

For there, the rose o'er crag or vale,
Sultana of the nightingale, &c.

The third paragraph, comparing the desolation of Greece to the loveliness of death—

Before Decay's effacing fingers
Have swept the lines where Beauty lingers;

the impassioned verses opening with, 'My memory now is but the tomb,' and the lines, 'The cygnet proudly walks the waters,' were all proof corrections—'bits of purple' patched into the poem; and in most cases the piecing is obvious to those who know Byron's habits of composition. His verbal alterations were endless; and they were all marked by the delicate touch of the scholar and the poet.

With respect to recent aspersions upon his memory, we have, for our part, nothing to say, save that the present Laureate being dowered with the gift of prophecy, as a poet should be, has well anticipated the 'orgies' which knave and clown are now holding at Byron's tomb.

For now the poet cannot die
Nor leave his music as of old,
But round him, ere he scarce be cold,
Begins the scandal and the cry:

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Proclaim the faults he would not shew:
Break lock and seal: betray the trust:
Keep nothing sacred: 'tis but just
The many-headed beast should know.

'The carrion vulture' has, and with a vengeance, torn Byron's 'heart before the crowd.'

NED WHISTON'S SWEETHEART.

CHAPTER I.—HEARTS AND TARTS.

HAVE you never observed that certain shops seem to have been taken at a long lease by Failure, and underlet to unfortunate speculators, who struggle for a little while to establish a business, and then suddenly vanish? No. 10 Dreary Street, Bedford Square, held this unsatisfactory position in the world of trade. It had been a grocery for three months, when creditors came and removed the stores, leaving nothing behind but a mixed smell of tallow and molasses. A watchmaker had tried to establish himself there, but his strongest magnifying glass, though ever glued to his eye, failed to detect a customer, and no sound was ever heard in his shop but the tic—the tic douloureux—of his merchandise. Of course his affairs were soon wound up. Then a crinoline merchant made an indelicate exhibition of feminine under-garments, without, however, adding to the bustle of the establishment. It was now devoted to refreshment, but stomachic puffs tempted the passers-by as little as the dorsal had done; ginger-beer ruled flat, lemonade was a drug, buns were heavy, and poor Annie Johnstone found the problem of keeping the wolf from the door—the wolf which no king or parliament can extirpate—more difficult to solve daily. She sat behind her little dingy counter writing a letter, with but small chance of a customer coming in to interfere with the work of composition.

MY DEAR UNCLE WILLIAM—Papa told me I was never to apply to you, because you had helped him once, and had refused to do so again, and you were displeased because we tried to keep a shop, which indeed has been a very lame attempt, for there is no chance of the shop's keeping us. I disobey him now, because I do not know what else to do. I have not seen or heard of papa for five days, and almost fear that something may have happened to him, though he often has to hide for a little time, because of creditors; for he has not been much more successful in getting to sell coal or wine on commission, or as an agent for insurance companies, than I have been as a confectioner, and he has not brought me any money now for a long time. He hinted to me that he might go abroad, but I hardly think he would have done that without letting me know; and yet he was always so afraid of his letters being stopped, and helping people to trace him, that he may have done it. If the rent is not paid by Monday, I shall be turned out of the house, and then what *am* I to do? You see, dear Uncle William, I am *obliged* to write to you, because I have no one else to ask; and if you will not put me in the way of earning my living somehow, I must positively beg, and that would be even more discreditable than selling, or trying to sell, pastry, wouldn't it? It really is not my fault; I have tried my best, and dined on stale buns for days and days.—Your affectionate niece,

ANNIE JOHNSTONE.

She directed this letter to 'William Johnstone, Esq., Joss-house Villa, Southend,' and laid it on the counter before her just as a customer came in—a very young man, with very shiny boots and hat, brilliant gloves, and a natty umbrella, who saluted on entering in a manner not customary amongst Englishmen, who generally remain covered in a shop, however attractive the mistress of it may be.

'Good-morning, Miss Johnstone,' said he, in an embarrassed way; 'I have come for my luncheon.'

If the youth looked embarrassed, the girl looked vexed. She coloured over her forehead, and knit her brows strangely, considering how few customers she had, and how great was her need of them. Her reply, too, was as impolitic as the expression of her countenance, being an intimation that she was afraid she had nothing to offer him.

'Oh,' he replied, 'I never eat heavy luncheons; just a basin of soup and a glass of sherry.'

'I have no soup, and the sherry is out.'

'Well, now I think of it, I am tired of soup; I had sooner have a sandwich and a pint bottle of Bass.'

'I cannot give you those either,' said she.

'Oh, well,' he persisted, 'it 's of no consequence. Here is some pastry, and I am very fond of pastry; and that, with a bottle of ginger-beer'——

The girl, who had been constraining herself with difficulty, now broke out: 'You can get a good luncheon at a dozen places close by!' she exclaimed with uncalled-for vehemence; 'why do you not go to one of them?'

'I—I like this best,' he stammered. 'Your pastry, though not, perhaps, quite what you might call new, seems to agree with me better; or I mean, you know'——

'You come here out of charity!' cried the girl, bursting into tears. 'You think I am poor and want custom, and so you come here and try to eat—stuff; and I am sure you go where you can get proper food afterwards somewhere else. It is not my fault if I can't have things nice!'

'Oh, for goodness' sake!—oh, don't cry! Oh, my pretty—I mean to say, I don't know what I am saying,' cried the youth in great distress. 'Well, if you must have the truth, I do *not* come here for your stale tarts, but because I fell in love with you through the window one day; and every time I have come here I have fallen more and more in love with you; and if you will not love me back, and promise to marry me, I'll—I don't know what I won't do: there!'

Seeing that his charmer did not give any signs of being further offended, but only left off crying, and looked down in confusion, the youth took courage, dropped his gloves into his hat, and his hat on a little round table, and leaned his elbows on the counter over against Annie, who did not draw back; and thus the young people's heads were not separated by any very cruel distance.

'What nonsense,' she murmured.

'It may be nonsense to expect you will ever like me,' replied the youth; 'but it is serious earnest that I have not been able to get you out of my head all this month, try what I would; and all my friends are wondering what is the matter with me. If I have not the chance of getting you for my wife, I do not care whether I pass my examination or not. That is sense, I hope.'

'But you are so young.'

'I'll bet I am older than you!'

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'Oh, but that is nothing. And then—you are a gentleman.'

'And so are you a lady,' said the youth. 'Oh, I learned all about you from your father. I saw him leaving this house one day, and a little while afterwards I met him in a smoking-room, and we happened to get into conversation. He told me how he had lost his property in unfortunate speculations—on the turf and otherwise—and how, instead of sitting down helplessly, as so many young ladies who have been brought up in luxury would do, you tried to earn a living so pluckily. And that made me love you still more.'

'Did you tell my father you knew the shop, and had seen me?'

'Why, no; I did not like to do that.'

'Why?—Ah! I know the reason: he borrowed money of you!' cried Annie, colouring with vexation.

'Only a trifle—the veriest trifle.'

'And I cannot even repay that! You see how hopeless and foolish an engagement between us would be.'

'No, I don't.'

'I have nothing in the world, and no expectations.'

'No more have I,' cried the lad with exultation. '*I* have nothing in the world, and *I* have no expectations. Why, we were ordained for each other!'

In the course of further parley, it transpired that the young man's name was Edward Whiston; that he was articled to a solicitor, and had just served his time; also, that he had gained applause in private theatricals, and had an idea that his real vocation was the stage—an evident resource in case Mr Johnstone, the father, did not turn up, and Mr Johnstone, the uncle, refused to receive his niece, a state of affairs which would render an immediate marriage prudent. Annie did not quite see the logic of this, but owned that her distress at seeing Mr Edward Whiston (well, N—ned) come in for a bad lunch every other day, was caused by a peculiar objection to receive charity from him, which would not have occurred to her in the case of any other human being. Smith, Brown, Jones, or Robinson might have killed themselves with bad pie-crust, and while wondering at their taste, she would have pocketed their shillings with rejoicing.

Finally, it occurred to Ned Whiston to look at his watch, and the position of the hands drew a whistle of dismay from his lips. 'Nearly three!' he cried; 'and Jenkins is waiting for my return to go and get his dinner.' And with a hurried hand-squeeze he took his departure.

Next day at 1.10 he reappeared, followed by a man bearing a tray, which contained oysters, stout, and slices of cold beef.

'Since it hurts your feelings to feed me with your wares, I have brought my own luncheon,' said Ned, when he and Annie were alone again. 'There is double what I can eat, I see, will you not help me out with it?'

I had always a better opinion of Ned Whiston for divining that Annie's larder might be understocked, and providing her with a meal in this diplomatic matter; and Annie, who was faint as well as anxious, appreciated it too. It sounds shockingly unromantic to suppose that eating and drinking can have any connection with the affections, yet there seems an incompleteness about either the friendship or the love upon which the digestive organs have not set their seal. I do not deny that the more ethereal kiss may be the correct *sigillum amoris*, but every corner of the shop was visible from the street, and as for asking her lover into the back-parlour while her father was absent, Annie was far too correct a young lady to think of such a thing, and, indeed, Master Ned had not the impudence to hint at an invitation of the kind being welcome. So they ratified their engagement with oysters and porter, seated opposite to each other at a little round marble-topped table; and when the meal was concluded, they felt as if they had been acquainted for months.

On returning so late to the office the day before, Ned Whiston had been subjected to troublesome questioning as to what he had been doing with himself all the time; so he took care to leave early to-day, announcing his intention of returning at the same hour on the morrow.

But on the following morning he was sent off to Chester with certain important deeds. That was on the Thursday, and he did not get back till Saturday night; and as he lived at home, some fifteen miles out of town, with observant relatives, he could not get away on the Sunday without exciting awkward curiosity; so that it was not till luncheon-time on Monday that he entered Dreary Street with a throbbing heart. The shutters were up at No. 10. Poor Ned felt for a moment as if his heart and lungs had struck work. Was she dead? No, no; impossible. Her father, perhaps; he had disappeared suddenly, and might have committed suicide. The idea of disturbing a recent sorrow made him drop the bell-handle without ringing, and look round for a likely place for information. There was a brush-shop immediately opposite, and the portly dame who kept it was standing in the doorway, eyeing him with a certain curiosity. She had a good-natured look about her, so he crossed the road, and asked her if she knew what was the matter.

'Lor!' exclaimed the woman; 'and I who thought you would perhaps tell *me*: sure you were a friend or relative, or something, I thought, going there most days the last month and more!' And she seemed quite injured.

'I only went as a—a customer,' said Ned; 'but I have got to take a sort of interest, and so, seeing the shop shut up'——

'I see, I see; you look quite pale: come in and sit down. Lor! I've been a young girl myself, and I remember hearing how Jim was took when he first heard I had the measles.—No, it's nothing of that sort; she went away quite well, as far as I could see, only crying.'

'She has gone away, then?'

'Bless you, yes; didn't I say so? A gentleman, not her father, came in a cab at twenty-five minutes past ten yesterday morning, or perhaps it might be a little nearer the half-hour; I saw him, because my room looks out on the street, and I was before the glass putting on my bonnet for church. My husband used to go to chapel, and, I believe, prefers it now, only I won't put up with nothing so vulgar. What gentle-folks do you see at chapel? I say to him. Why, look at the carriage company as goes to church, compared to'——

'What aged gentleman?' interrupted Ned.

'Well, middle-aged; or, as he was got up

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youthful, perhaps we might say elderly. A fine man, though, tall and stoutish, with a light-brown wig, and whiskers dyed to match. Wig and dye I know not natural, because of the crow's-feet; no man ever had such crow's-feet as them without a bit of gray. Well, he got out, and went into the house, leaving the cab waiting; and as I felt a sort of interest in that Miss Johnstone, poor thing, her father being such a regular bad un, I waited too, and gave up my church for once; not but what I hold that it brings luck to'——

'Exactly; I agree with you. And how long did the gentleman stop?'

'Till twelve o'clock, keeping the cab waiting; which would have been much cheaper to have paid the first off, and taken another. And then he came out, followed by Miss Johnstone, who had a box, which the cabman took and put on the roof; and a bandbox and umbrella, which she took inside with her. But first she locked the house-door and took the key out, and, as she turned to get into the cab, I saw that she was crying.'

That was all the information Ned Whiston could get at the time; but when he revisited the spot later in the day, he found a weazened man with a very sour expression on his face coming out of No. 10, and asked him if he knew what had happened.

'Yes,' replied the man: 'the father 's drowned, and the daughter 's hooked it, and I am done out of my rent—that 's what has happened.'

CHAPTER II.—JOSS-HOUSE VILLA.

You are probably under the impression that no one has ever yet adopted the Pavilion at Brighton as an architectural model, and if that is the case, I must request you to dispel the false idea, for Joss-house Villa, near Southend, was a reproduction in miniature of that remarkable edifice. When Mr William Johnstone was a young man and a nominal barrister, it was considered that he bore some resemblance in face and figure to the Prince Regent; and, since nature had moulded him after the fashion of the first gentleman in Europe, he considered it his duty to act conformably; so he dressed himself hideously, attended prize-fights and cock-pits, intrigued, played high, got frequently intoxicated, stuffed his head with a prodigious quantity of scented snuff, and imitated his royal prototype in every other way that his constitution and purse would allow. By the time he was thirty, however, both began to give out, so he wisely determined to retire into the country with a rich wife. Dissolute men are very fond of falling back upon the latter plan for retrieving their broken fortunes, but women are not quite so foolish as satirists make out, and do not always fall in with these prudent little arrangements. Mr Johnstone, however, was more fortunate; the royal resemblance which had been his bane now proved his remedy, and, coupled with an insinuation that perhaps there might be a natural reason for it, proved too much for the loyal heart of a drysalter's widow, who was not, as scandal reported, quite double her second husband's age, and whose temper was therefore naturally soured by the persistency with which people whom they met on their wedding tour would mistake them for mother and son. After his marriage, Mr Johnstone happily refrained from assimilating his domestic arrangements to those of his royal prototype, but the ruling passion broke out when he came to build a home for himself on a small estate belonging to his wife near the mouth of the Thames, and resulted in the model of the Pavilion alluded to: a style of architecture which suited Mrs Johnstone also well enough, as, in addition to the associations, more than half the rooms in the building could be used for nothing but the storing up of jams and pickles, the concoction of which articles was the delight of her life.

She managed to preserve herself—whether with sugar or vinegar, I decline to state—for fifteen years after marriage, and then she turned to mould, leaving her husband in a position to set up a grocery, had he been so minded. He was not; neither did he relapse into the sowing of wild-oats, perhaps because his morals had improved, but also because it was doubtful whether the soil would stand a second crop. He only visited London occasionally, and then his flag was pulled down. Hoisting and lowering that flag was his morning and evening amusement. On royal birthdays and coronation days he fired twenty-one small cannons, going from one to another with a red-hot poker, which was quite a sight. Otherwise he vegetated, and differed from a turnip principally in being occasionally bored, and entertaining vague wishes that some eligible woman would look him up and marry him. But the years passed away; George the Fourth became the prey of worms and satirists; a generation sprang up which knew little of that model gentleman, and had the bad taste to dislike that little. Mr Johnstone could not now have gone about with ten yards of tablecloth round his neck, and coat buttons between his shoulder-blades, without causing the very sheep to baa at him. He modified his apparel, therefore; but his heart clung to the old times, and hugged the old resemblance; so he still had his wig made up in exact imitation of the ex-dandy's hair, still adopted his favourite attitudes, still took scented snuff. With his elder and only brother he had not, of late years, been on good terms. He owed him no grudge for having been born first; he forgave him for selling the small landed estate which had been in the family for a respectable number of years; but when he disgraced the name, by a succession of petty tricks and contrivances for raising a few pounds, and especially when he tried to make a milch cow of *him*, he quarrelled with him. His enmity dissolved, however, in the news of his death by drowning while crossing over to Jersey, and he hurried to London at once, and brought Annie to his Chinese home with dispatch and secrecy. 'I am glad to adopt you, my dear,' he said; 'but I do not want to adopt all your creditors.'

It had been a struggle to Mr Johnstone to break up the ordinary routine of his existence by establishing his niece as mistress of what had now for years been a bachelor home; but it almost always pays to do the right thing, and he was rewarded for his conquest of habit and indolence by being released from the thrall of his housekeeper, a tyrannical, stupid, pilfering, tippling dame, to whom he had not dared to mention his intentions with respect to Annie, which indeed had from the circumstances of the case been necessarily conceived and executed very suddenly, and upon whom this niece of her *master's* (term of courtesy) burst therefore like a thunderbolt from a clear sky. As Annie was very young and quiet in manner,

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Mrs Gobble hoped at first, indeed, to overawe her, but soon finding that she had met her match, her emotions became too much for her, and, combined perhaps with an injudicious amount of nourishment, brought her gout to such a climax, that she could not even play at doing her work, and had to retire.

Annie's society had one curious effect upon her uncle: it resuscitated all his hankerings after a second marriage. For if he was to have a lady at the head of his house, why, he reasoned with himself, should it not be a wife? So a flirtation which had been budding between Mr Johnstone and Miss Plumptree of Southend for the last three years began to throw out decided shoots. It was not so very absurd. Mr Johnstone was a little over sixty, and Miss Plumptree was a little over forty. Both were comfortably off, and had calm and sober leanings towards matrimony. Miss Plumptree was not only forty, but fair and fat—just such a figure as the monarch of Mr Johnstone's soul would have admired; and this fact tended greatly to feed the mature flame. Then there was increased intimacy, for whereas he had only met her occasionally before his niece came to live with him, he now saw her almost daily, a fervent friendship having sprung up between her and Annie.

They were sitting together now in a willow-pattern summer-house, on the brink of a small pond, the lair of a dragon who was supposed to spout, but who followed the example of many gentlemen who are elected into a certain House for a similar purpose, and didn't. It was in the strawberry season, and a fine dish of the fruit stood on the table between them, with which, needlework, and confidential chat, they were beguiling the morning hours not unpleasantly.

'And so you have never heard of him since?' said Miss Plumptree.

'Never,' replied Annie.

'Just like all the men, dear: "Out of sight, out of mind."'

'Nay, I do not blame him, poor fellow. I do not see how he could have found me out, if he tried ever so, I left so suddenly, so mysteriously.'

'Oh, well,' sighed Miss Plumptree, 'if he had been his great-grandfather, he would have discovered you somehow; but young men are not what they were; they are so selfish, so listless, everything is too much trouble to them.—And you never hinted anything about it to your uncle?'

'O no,' said Annie; 'besides, he does not take hints: you must speak out plainly if you want him to understand your wishes.'

'Hum,' said Miss Plumptree.

'And then,' continued Annie, 'he was so young, and not in a position to marry for ever so long; and the acquaintanceship was so short; and his friends would be sure to disapprove; so that altogether, perhaps, it is better as it is.'

'And do you love him still, dear?'

'I think I do; he was kind, you see, when I had no one else, and'——

'There, don't cry, dear. Have a strawberry.'

Annie recovered her equilibrium, and turned the subject.

'I can't think what has happened to Uncle William,' she said; 'he does take such a funny interest in how I look all of a sudden. He takes in a paper with the fashions in it, and stands looking critically at me with his head on one side, and his eyes screwed up, for minutes together; and then he walks round me gravely, as if I were a horse; indeed, I expect him to say: "Come up; tuck, tuck; come over!" every moment, or to look in my mouth. And if my hair is not done, or my dress cut according to the fashion-plates, he scolds me. And then he takes me over to Southend whenever he hears that a packet is coming in, and walks me up and down that long pier. And he is always on the look-out for concerts or entertainments of any kind we can go to. Can you explain it?'

'I think I can give a guess,' said Miss Plumptree; 'in fact, I expect that my influence may have something to do with it. The plain truth is, my dear, that he wants to get you married.'

'No!' cried Annie with a jump. 'But he told me distinctly, when I first came here, that, though I might expect to be provided for in his will, I must not look for any dowry, or even much of a trousseau, in case I were to marry; and that did not look much like great anxiety on the subject.'

'No, dear; but his views have undergone a change. The fact is that he does your humble servant the honour to wish'——

'Oh, and you will take him, won't you? It will be so nice to call you aunt, and have you living in the house!' cried Annie enthusiastically.

'Well, dear,' continued Miss Plumptree, 'it seemed to me that the opportunity was a good one for advancing your interests, so I refused to give him a definite answer while you were unsettled; not but what I would sooner have you for a companion, of course, but it does not do to be selfish; and as your uncle is inclined to be what we may call careful in his money matters, which is often the case with those who have been somewhat extravagant in youth, I thought a little stimulant to his generosity would be beneficial.—Hush! here he comes. Can anything be the matter?'

This possibility was suggested by Mr Johnstone's face and manner, the former being bewildered, the latter hurried and excited, as he came towards them from his Joss-house with an open letter in his hand.

Something the matter? Indeed there was; nothing less than a threat of losing his late wife's property, and being reduced once more to the straits which had driven him into premature matrimony thirty years before. One of those Doctors' Commons grubbers who live by holding out that they have discovered something to somebody's advantage, which generally turns out to be a fraudulent mare's nest, but every now and then—just often enough to tempt fresh flocks of gulls—proves to be a discovery of real importance, had fished up evidence that the late Mrs Johnstone had by rights only a life-interest in her first husband's property; and having thereupon discovered the person who under such circumstances would be the claimant, he had put himself into communication with him. Said claimant proved indeed to be in the legal profession, which was a disappointment for the grubber; but as there was really something in the evidence he had lit upon, his time was not entirely thrown away.

This was the startling information which was conveyed to Mr Johnstone in the hard sharp words of a lawyer's letter, and which he now communicated in his distress to Miss Plumptree and Annie. They cheered him with sanguine speeches; and

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when he had gathered his wits together, he started for London, to seek an interview with his solicitor.

That acute gentleman informed him that there seemed to be really something in the claim which was set up, but that it would take a deal of legislation to prove it, and, so far as he could see, it was odds on the man in possession eventually winning the day. But still, if an advantageous compromise were to be suggested, it might be as well to take it into consideration.

So Mr Johnstone took to walking for hours about the garden of Joss-house Villa with his eyes bent on his toes, and his hands clasped behind his back, lost in thought, and muttering at intervals: 'Advantageous compromise.'

He was accustomed to spread a silk pocket-handkerchief over his head after dinner, and take forty winks—at the rate of one wink to two minutes; but his slumbers now were strangely disturbed. He would turn and mutter, and his mutterings, to the excitement of Annie's curiosity, invariably formed some part of the words 'Advantageous compromise!'

CHAPTER III.—THE ADVANTAGEOUS COMPROMISE.

Miss Plumptree and Annie Johnstone sat in the same queer summer-house overlooking the dragon in the chickweed, employed in the same description of needlework, the advance of the year being shewn by a basket of apricots which stood in the place of the strawberries. Mr Johnstone sat near them in silent abstraction. At intervals, indeed, he would tilt his chair forward to bring his hand within range of the mellow fruit, of which he was devouring a choleraic quantity; but he seemed to do so mechanically, as if he did not quite know what he was about; and indeed, while his palate was engaged with the apricots, his mind was absorbed in contemplation of his position.

'That fine, that remarkably fine woman,' he said to himself, as his eyes rested admiringly on Miss Plumptree, 'will not marry me until that girl is off my hands, which is less likely to happen than ever, now that it is doubtful if I can give her, or even leave her a penny. And yet, if these fellows really manage to take away my money—and there is no knowing what lawyers may not do in that way—it will be an extra reason why I should marry a woman with a nice competence to make up. I wonder how George the Fourth would have acted under similar circumstances? But bah! how could he possibly have been placed in them? When a king has his property taken from him, he does not go to law; he fights, or rather other people fight, which is better still, and settle the matter that way.'

His meditations were interrupted by a servant bearing a card, who told him that a gentleman wished to see him.

'Where have you shewn him?'

'Into the grand music-hall,' replied the girl.

Too much flurried to say a word to either of the ladies, Mr Johnstone hastened to the grand music-hall, an apartment fifteen feet by thirteen, where he found a young man.

'The—ah!—the claimant, I believe?' said Mr Johnstone, glancing from his visitor to the card he held in his hand.

'Yes,' replied the other. 'The course which I have taken, in calling upon you personally, may seem somewhat strange, especially for a lawyer; but there has been some mention of the possibility of a compromise; and to tell the simple truth, you have been in possession so long, and the information which enables me to contest your rights has come from so disreputable a quarter, that I am rather ashamed of my position, and would prefer settling the matter amicably to commencing a long course of litigation. A very unprofessional view of the case, I own, but I beg you to believe that I should have no such scruples if I were acting for a client. It is a delicate matter, however, to make the first approaches towards a compromise in writing, because, if your opponent is unwilling to entertain it, he may take it as an acknowledgment of weakness, and become confirmed in the strength of his case; or he may find a weapon in some sentence of your letter which may be turned against you. So I have determined to sink the lawyer. I am only a very young one, and call upon you personally to talk the matter over quietly, and see if you are inclined to meet me half-way. Of course, you will commit yourself to nothing without consulting your solicitor.'

'I am no great friend to litigation myself,' said Mr Johnstone; 'and if you can shew me that your claim is really a good one, I am ready to listen to what you have to propose.'

The young man then commenced translating the case from jargon into English; and when his auditor seemed to have a pretty clear idea of it in all its bearings, he told him that he had sooner the first sketch of a compromise should come from him.

'Are you married?' cried Mr Johnstone, his eyes brightening with a sudden idea.

'No.'

'Then, by George!' slapping his thigh, 'why not marry my niece?'

'You do me great honour, I am sure,' stammered the young man. 'So unexpected! so sudden! No idea of marrying, unless—— Besides, I have not the pleasure of knowing the lady; in fact, was not aware you had a niece.'

'Oh, you shall soon know her,' cried Mr Johnstone; 'she is in the garden. Come, and be introduced.' And he led the way towards the summer-house, his visitor following with a face of comic perplexity.

'Marry another; perhaps afterwards to find *her*—never!' he said to himself.

'Annie,' said Mr Johnstone, 'let me introduce you to—— Holloa!'

No wonder he, as well as Miss Plumptree, was astonished, for the stranger cried out: 'Annie, my Annie, is it possible!' and rushed forward to seize her hand, which she gave him with a little cry of: 'Ned!'

'Why, Annie, have you met Mr Whiston before?'

'Yes, uncle.'

'O yes, sir,' said Ned Whiston; 'and when she disappeared from Dreary Street so mysteriously and suddenly, I was in despair. I have looked for her everywhere; I advertised in the sensation column of the *Times*, not by name, of course, but so that she might understand.'

'We have it sent the second day, and the supplement does not come with it.'

Well, I expect that you do not want the whole story over again, so we may omit the rest of the conversation. Everything was arranged

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satisfactorily. Ned Whiston, who was doing a respectable and yearly increasing business, married Annie when the peaches came in; a nice sum was paid down on their marriage, and the remainder of the property secured to them on Mr Johnstone's death, subject to an annuity to be paid to his widow, if he left one.

A month after the young people had been settled in their new home, Mr Johnstone and Miss Plumptree were quietly tied together; and the first thing the former did, after returning to Joss-house Villa, was to walk into the kitchen and put the poker in the fire.

'What *are* you about, dear?' inquired his bride.

'I am going to fire a wedding salute; twenty-one guns,' replied her husband. And he did.

OUR LADY-BIRD FRIENDS.

The unsummerly summer of eighteen sixty-nine will be memorable in entomological annals for the commotion created by the appearance of the pretty little beetles known as May-bugs, lady-bugs, lady-cows, or lady-birds in

> Continuous clouds
> Of congregated myriads numberless,

disputing the possession of our watering-places with the holiday-makers, astonishing town-bred throngers of the public parks, delighting the proprietors of suburban gardens, and decking even London tombstones in unwonted splendours.

Insect invasions usually come in the category of plagues—plagues bringing dearth and famine in their wake. 'The land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness,' says the poet-prophet, warning his countrymen of impending foes coming upon the land to waste its fields and make its husbandmen ashamed. 'As horsemen shall they run; like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people in battle-array. They shall run like mighty men, they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and shall not break their ranks. They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief. The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble; the sun and moon shall be dark, and the stars withdraw their shining!' We are not, happily, liable to be frighted by such terrible visitations as that depicted by the seer of Israel; although at times the foes of vegetation muster strongly enough to fill our cultivators with dismay. The extraordinary influx of lady-birds, however it might alarm some weak-minded folks, who fancy anything unusual the forerunner of pestilence, was not a calamity to be deplored, but rather a blessing to be rejoiced over. The bright-coated bands were but the battalions of an army of deliverers bent on exterminating the legions of aphides that had quartered themselves in our fields, hop-grounds, and gardens.

The past summer has been prolific of these pests, as every hop-grower knows to his cost, and every floriculturist to his grief. Now, to 'the fly'—whether it be red, black, or green—lady-birds are determined, remorseless enemies; and doubtless the only reason our visitors had for coming in such extraordinary numbers was, because they were wanted; and they certainly did not come a day too soon. Any one possessed of a garden, even if only what goes by that name in the suburbs of a large town, knows too well how the fly plays havoc with his pet flowers, and defies his desperate attempts to get rid of it. This year the aphides have been particularly abundant. Clear them out of a bed one day, and thousands—who had apparently been waiting for accommodation—might be found there next day, the powers of these destructive mites, in the way of increasing and multiplying, being beyond all calculation. And when we have myriads of them driving their beaks into the tenderest tissues of the plants they favour with their unkind attentions, developing their bladdery bodies upon the juices intended for the development of leaves and flowers, we need not be surprised at witnessing the amount of mischief they work in a very short time. Entomologists tell us that the female lady-bird deposits her amber-coloured eggs in the midst of the marauding crew. Out of these yellow eggs soon crawl certain six-footed flat worms, of a dirty green colour, ornamented with a few yellow spots. As soon as hatched, the worm begins to feed upon the game around, eating some hundreds a day, until it arrives at the proper dimensions to fit it for its transformation; when fastening itself upon a leaf by the end of its tail, it waits in abstinence until the larval skin splits, and the worm comes forth a perfect lady-bird—its dull hue changed for a spotted coat of orange, yellow, scarlet, or black. Here, according to Mr Wood, its good offices end; that enthusiastic naturalist, while admitting that the presence of the lady-bird in the garden is an unmitigated benefit, and that in its larval state it is one of man's best friends, qualifying his praise by saying that, in its perfect state, it is 'almost neutral.' We should be sorry to set our limited experience against the observation of so good an authority; but, in justice to our pretty helper, we must state that our verbena-beds, which, spite of syringing and tobacco-water, remained things to shudder at, within a week of the irruption of lady-birds became pictures of healthy vigour. It was just the same with other plants; and instead of it being hard to find a plant in our garden that was not more or less infested with aphides, it was exactly the reverse, notwithstanding that we could not find any deposits of lady-birds' eggs, neither in out-of-the-way places, nor where we had noticed the insects most actively employed in performing perambulations over the plants.

Lady-birds are found in Asia and Africa, and in all parts of the European continent. There are said to be more than fifty kinds, mostly distinguished by the number of spots they bear and the colour of their wing-cases. Entomologists, like botanists, are deplorably fond of bewildering themselves and everybody interested in the study of their so-called science, by making every little difference an excuse for creating a new species. Lady-birds are, however, very intractable subjects, revelling as much as other ladies in variety of costume, so that they set their would-be classifiers at defiance; although it must be owned the blame of the consequent confusion rests quite as much with their scientific sponsors, for it is palpably absurd to make such trivialities as the number of spots an insect may happen to sport the basis of

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distinction. The number of these spots varies from two up to twenty-two, while some bear squares instead of spots, and others are content without any markings at all. The value of the method of distinction adopted may be judged from the fact, that a writer on the matter says: 'Whenever the entomologist finds a lady-bird which he does not know, he is mostly safe in putting it down as a variety of the Two-spot.' Entomology owes much to the lady-bird, since it owes the pleasantest expositor of its mysteries to our little friend; Kirby being impelled to study the tricks and manners of the members of the insect world by having his notice attracted to a brilliant and lively specimen, that recovered its freedom after twenty-four hours' immersion in a spirit-bath. The lady-bird does not seem to be provided with any weapon for defending itself against its enemies, unless its power of exuding an acrid yellow fluid, resembling opium in its odour, from its legs answers the purpose. 'It is doubtless to this fluid,' says Mr Phipson in his *Utilisation of Minute Life*, 'that they owe their property of curing the most violent toothache when they are placed alive in the hollow part of the tooth.' Smashed lady-birds were once in repute for curing colic and measles.

Like the swallow, martin, redbreast, wren, and cricket, the lady-bird has the benefit of a long-standing belief that any one wilfully killing it will infallibly break a bone or meet with some equally troublesome punishment before the year is out—a notion probably springing out of its being supposed to be under the special protection of the Virgin Mary—to which it of course owes its most popular name. In Suffolk and Norfolk, it goes by the name of Bishop Barnaby (why or wherefore, none can tell), and instead of the couplet—

> Lady-bird, lady-bird, fly away home;
> Your house is on fire, your children all gone—

is addressed with:

> Bishop, Bishop Barnabee,
> Tell me when your wedding be;
> If it be to-morrow day,
> Take your wings and fly away.

Or, as a Norfolk version has it:

> Bishop, Bishop Barnabee,
> Tell me when my wedding be;
> If it be to-morrow day,
> Take your wings and fly away.
> Fly to the east, fly to the west,
> Fly to them that I love best.

Forby says some obscurity hangs over this popular name, which has certainly no more relation to the companion of Saint Paul than to drunken Barnaby. It is sometimes called Benebee, which may possibly have been intended to mean the blessed bee; sometimes Bishop Benetree—of which it is impossible to make anything. The name has probably been derived from the Barn Bishop; whether in scorn of that silly and profane mockery, or in pious commemoration of it, must depend upon whether it was adopted before or since the Reformation. The bishops of old wore scarlet and black in their robes, which may account for the episcopal dignity conferred on the scarlet and black beetle; while it may perhaps take the rest of its title from its appearing in the month in which the festival of Saint Barnabas occurs.

In 1807, a correspondent of the *Annual Register* writes to say that the immense flights of lady-birds which have recently appeared in Kent have caused some alarm to the superstitious of both the small and great vulgar who frequent the watering-places, where the streets have been literally covered with lady-birds; whereas, instead of being looked upon as foreboders of pestilence, they ought to be hailed as soldiers returning from a glorious victory, seeing that through their agency the hop-growers may rejoice in half a crop, where they would have had no crop at all, besides enjoying a fair prospect of an abundant harvest in the following year. Kirby saw the banks of the Humber so thickly strewed with the common lady-bird that it was difficult to walk without destroying them, and at another time saw a vast number of various species on the sand-hills at the northmost extremity of the Norfolk coast. In 1835, the wiseacres of Berkshire actually called out the public fire-engines and charged them with tobacco-water, in order to destroy the hosts of lady-birds they fancied threatened their crops with annihilation. We fear there is a good deal to be learned in this way yet; agriculturists and gardeners are too ready to destroy their best friends: a little encouragement of nature's police would pay them better than all their pottering with expensive and troublesome nostrums, which seldom achieve the purpose of their being.

IN SORROW.

When thou art sorrowful, and cares around
Crowd fast upon the steps of happier days;
When thou believ'st e'en brightest things can lend
The saddest echo to the gayest lays—
As men of old were fed with angels' food,
Go, seek thy remedy in doing good.

When those to thee the dearest shall have died,
And each fresh day grow weary to thine eyes;
When every hope that others build upon
Comes to thy senses with a sad surprise—
Take up the burden of another's grief;
Learn from another's pain thy woe's relief.

Mourner, believe that sorrow may be bribed
With tribute from the heart, not sighs nor tears,
But nobler sacrifice—of helping hands,
Of cheering smiles, of sympathetic ears.
Oft have the saddest words the sweeter strain;
In angels' music let thy soul complain.

Then Grief shall stand with half-averted foot
Upon the threshold of a brighter day;
And Hope shall take her sweetly by the hand,
And both kneel down with Faith to meekly pray.
Lifted from earth, Peace shall immortalise
The heart that its own anguish purifies.

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A GROUP OF ARTISTS.

IT is curious how many odd corners of humanity there are, and how well they are worth peering into. In some, we may find (metaphorically, like the old woman) a silver penny; in others, we may even have the luck to light upon a pearl. Going the other day among some photographists, this truth was illustrated charmingly.

'Taken like life!' a tall, thin, soft-spoken man accosted me with, at the threshold of the first studio I visited. 'Wait on you in a minute. Better walk in.'

My addresser had not done all his part by simply getting me to walk in. His higher duty was to induce me to double my bargained outlay by having my portrait coloured, and he set about this with skill.

'You sat beautifully!' he cried, holding the portrait so that I could not catch a glimpse of it. 'It's positively perfect! I need not ask whether you'll have it coloured?'

No, I said—no. That would do nicely.

'Not coloured!' he cried, being too much astonished to credit what he had heard. 'You wanted a portrait, and this is not a portrait as it is! You have a colour, and this is pale.'

It would do nicely, I said. I was quite satisfied.

'But you are spoiling it,' he said, as though it was a Titian, and I a Goth and Vandal both, in monstrous combination. 'You cannot know what colouring will do. You should *not* let it be as it is; you should not, really!'

I still fought the battle (the battle for an extra sixpence), and stood my ground.

Then my friend brought out his last shot. 'Come,' he said; 'I'll tell you what; I cannot spoil a picture for the sake of a few pence.' I'll colour it for you for half what I would charge any one else. There! I can't say more than that! Come!' After which, when my armour remained still unpenetrated, he never said a word. I was below a parley; and, completing his bargain with lofty dignity, he allowed me to go my way.

In five minutes, I was inside another studio, and in communication with Artist Number Two. I was thrust into him. I say *thrust* in, because it was literally so. An eloquent man outside had opened a rattling door the moment I had addressed him, had given me an appreciative slap upon the back, popped me inside, and taken himself off again, chuckling loudly at the speed and success of his manœuvre. I was shot and bagged with a sort of first-of-September rapidity, very invigorating to his sense of self-approval; and sharper and truer would be his aim for the next half-hour from mere relish of his victory.

I was a sad interruption to his assistant; that is, I was a member of the De Trop family, who was quickly made to feel myself so, for I came into the midst of busy talk with a tall acquaintance. I was addressed with suave politeness, and then familiarly there was laughed out a gay supplement to some former remark; I was asked deferentially the style of portrait I required, and the next breath of the speaker was devoted to verbal fence and parry; I was told courteously to keep my eyes fixed, and a merry reminiscence succeeded so quickly to the order, there was not a comma to keep them apart; finally, as a further proof of the little consequence I was, when the artist had retired to the dark closet to complete his work, the tall acquaintance walked up to the camera he had left, and deliberately bent down and peeped at me as I sat.

I endeavoured to take the undue examination as easily as I could. 'An interesting sight, no doubt,' I said; and smiled, and arranged myself more comfortably, to try to look as if I didn't care.

But I *did* care very much. Had the fellow taken a peep and gone, it would have been nothing; I might have concluded he had a taste for scientific investigation; and we might have fallen into conversation as deep as our ignorance allowed. But he kept on looking, and would not say a word. I tried him with a remark about photography in general; I spoke of the weather and the neighbourhood; I alluded—as off-handedly as I could—to the study afforded to photographers by the people they see in shoals, and there was no more

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sound in answer to me than if my tormentor had had but one faculty left him—gigantic concentrative Gaze.

'At anyrate,' I cried at last, goaded to the sudden recollection of a fact that gratified my spite, 'you can only see me standing on my head!'

And this finished my odd inquisition! A lady entered at the moment, in greasy short hair and a dirty long skirt, who was very fine and glaring, and whose duty, like that of my first friend, was to coax me to have my portrait coloured. Like him, she set about it gallantly.

She began by smiling fascinatingly right up into my face. 'Ah,' she cried, 'it *will* look nice when it's coloured! How *well* you have sat! Pictures *never* look well in their own black and white; do they? I *can't* like them till they have the colour. You will be *surprised* what a difference I shall make!'

'I think them much better as they are,' I said. 'I would rather have this just as it is.'

'Ah,' cried the lady, 'that depends on how the colouring is done. You have seen it done anyhow; *I* should do it properly. And I should just gild your ring and chain, and everything! You 'll be surprised!'

This was all as though I really *meant* to have it, and the lady's hands were absolutely getting ready her materials as she sweetly spoke; but *diminuendo* went her winning ecstasy when I adhered to my No. Never, evidently, had she experienced defeat before; and no more blandishments were given me; they were all lavished on the tall acquaintance. The lady's hands were nimble in varnishing the back of the little image of me that had just been taken: her mind and tongue were with the long man who stood beside her.

'No, I won't,' she said to him, holding me—that is, of course, my image—over a candle, as if it were congenial to her to give me a scorch. 'I won't, indeed. The last was quite enough!'

'Do!' urged the tall friend, finding a monosyllable for her, though he had not even that for me.

'Oh, I daresay,' laughed out the lady, twisting me into a tinsel frame.

'You'd better,' the tall friend gaily persuaded. 'Do.'

Have what? I wondered, as I saw my small self folded and pinched, and papered and pressed down; and then the last pinch was administered to me, and I said 'Good-day.'

'A Doorman Wanted' was pasted upon the show-case of the next studio I entered; and this brought to light the fact that being doorman to a photographer is a distinct 'line.'

The opposite is operator. This I learned when I had penetrated to my third studio, and was chatting to the owner.

'Trust no one to be your operator,' was his sage warning. 'Do your operatin' yourself. *They* only care how quick they gets it done, and don't think if they pleases at all.—It made me take to my own operatin' myself,' added the artist, a burly, labourer-looking personage in very greasy clothes. 'I *must* turn pictures out so that people will come again.'

His was a wretched place—so thoroughly irregular and unsavoury indeed, that the artist's wife thought it incumbent on her to push her small self to the front to offer me an explanation.

'We have the bricklayers all over the house,' she said in a thin treble that assured me of the sort of *agitato* melody she would be able to pipe upon it when things 'crossed' her. 'We ain't got a decent place nowhere to put a thing in. The mess is awful!'

Truly, as I saw; and truly, as I thought, it would have been, if no workmen had been busy, and all had been at its best. The aspect of my small Xantippe herself gave me this conviction. The bricklayers were not at work on *her;* so she need not have had ladders about her, so to speak, or have been mortar-sprinkled, or strewn with shavings. But this was a reflection I kept to myself. I only answered the little woman with an assurance that she need not trouble herself about me in the least.

'But it *looks* so,' Xantippe continued to apologise, with an air that seemed as if she thought she ought to blush. 'One can't be tidy, nor clean, nor nothing.'

I felt for her, I assured her; and said that, to *my* mind, it was so inconvenient to have workmen about a house, I thought there never ought to be anything to pay at the end of it.

Xantippe revived. 'You may well say that,' she chirped out. 'Why, the money this 'll cost is dreadful. There 's twelve rooms in the house, there is, and workmen in every one!'

I was properly impressed. And then, it being time that I should take my seat, I took it; and Xantippe's husband, emerging smilingly from the dark cupboard in which he had temporarily been immured, threw his loud voice into the conversation again, and formed a very sounding bass.

'You can't help dirt in photography,' he said for a first plunge; and it made his small wife look more revived still, and glance down at her gown and stroke it, as if every sin it had were now accounted for, and she could not have made it different if she had tried. 'Spoils!' went on the man—'why, it spoils everything we have!'

'That 's a pity,' I said, 'for portrait-taking is very interesting. 'So many people pass before you, I would very willingly change places with you—for a day or two, at anyrate.'

This was seized by the burly fellow in a business spirit at once. 'I've taught a many in my time, I have,' he said. 'For you see,' he continued, as he focused me through the camera, 'photography 's wanted so much now for gover'ment. Most of those I've taught has been for the surveyin', engineerin', and artchitex—they all want it now. Why, I've taught so many down at Woolwich, I've been offered a gover'ment place myself!'

'Really!' I said. And that was all I *could* say, for the appreciated gentleman signed to me at this moment to be dumb, and look where he had placed his finger; and, after flinging his black cloth upon the camera, and extracting something from it with the *aplomb* of a dentist pulling a tooth, he hid himself hurriedly in the cupboard. I rose to go towards Xantippe's table, but her husband's ears were open, though the chemistry he was engaged in was supposed to be all-absorbing, and he stopped me before I had gone a step.

'Don't move!' was his sharp order, rumbling out of his shut-up cupboard like the beat of drums. 'Don't move yet! I 'll take another of you first.'

Very conscientious of him, I thought, as I retook my seat. And then—The good people want new

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portraits for their newly arranged show-case after their alterations, and this is only a *ruse* to reserve a copy of mine! And as this new reading came to me, I sat much more imposingly on the chair, and posed my head as attractively as it would go. Since they wished to have my portrait, for *their* sake it should be as good as I could make it.

'Yes,' the big operator resumed, once more at his camera, taking in and out his plates; 'I was offered a gover'ment place myself, I was; but I didn't take it—I staid where I am—the pay wasn't enough. They'd only give five guineas a week, and I was paying my operator two guineas myself. then.—And what's five guineas a week, you know! Why, I should be wanted to travel about—to Scotland, and the Ilerwight, and all manner of places; and a sovereign don't go very fur, you know, when you come to go them long distances by train!'

I accepted the good man's position, when I had been again taken, and was once more free; and no one, surely, could have negatived it.

'And now,' he began, emerging once more from his wee laboratory, and coming to where I was watching Xantippe's pasting, 'you shall see both the portraits, and have which one you like. This one—this is the last—is a capital one, and when it's coloured, it'll look fine.'

Ha, ha! I thought—the old battle about the tinting. Well, I have faith in my now twice-tried resolution; so for a little dalliance before we begin.

'I am watching your wife,' I remarked easily, feigning I did not hear. 'How clever she seems at all this sort of work.'

'She wouldn't do for a photographer's wife if she warn't,' blurted out the operator, as though he could change his wife as easily as his doorman, if she didn't suit.

'She must do pretty nearly as well as you,' I said again, still feigning to overlook the photograph held out to me, and only taking notice of Xantippe's smiling face. 'How useful she must be.'

'Ah!' the man said, led to explanation by interest in his art, 'there's a many things a female can do in photography, there is; but there's one part she ought never to go into—she ain't fit for it.—The dark closet! Too much work for the 'ead!'

As Xantippe acquiesced with a look and a good many nods in this Blue-Beard arrangement of her husband's, I had only suppressed amusement to give to it, and passed on to discharging the first shot in the little forthcoming war.

'Oh, thank you,' I cried, as if at that moment conscious of the portrait being thrust under my eyes—'thank you. That will do nicely. I am much obliged.'

The operator, however, was equally on the alert as I. 'You shall see the two,' he parried—'the first *and* this. And'—to prepare me before the disappointing exhibition—'you know, of course, how badly they look before they're coloured?'

'No, I don't,' I answered. 'I think they look badly *after* they are coloured;' and I put down my money as though the thing were quite decided.

Xantippe laid her hand upon the money with queer avidity (it was exactly the price of *two* portraits), and her husband took up arms.

'You'll be very sorry,' the man argued. 'And what's the expense? why, a mere nothin'!'

'Really, I *prefer* it as it is,' I said. 'I am saying exactly what I mean.'

'Ah!' Xantippe put in here glibly, abetting her husband with a repetition of her nods and smiles, 'you don't know how *nice* they look with a little tint on 'em! You can't tell!'

'O yes,' I answered, smiling with benignant unsuspicion at this feminine pertinacity, 'I *do* know, and I *can* tell, nicely.'

'Look there, then!' cried Xantippe, executing as sudden a manœuvre as ever won *bonâ fide* battle; and she pushed into my hands the first portrait her diplomatic husband had taken of me, all framed, and gilt, and coloured, so that, for mere shame, I *must* have it, whether I would or not! And the little shrew positively chuckled. She overran with rapid little nods and smiles.

'Ha, ha, ha!' I laughed out heartily.

No wonder the man had given me the second sitting! The two had plotted this waylaying, had entertained me during its short hatching, and here was I, the conqueror conquered, in such amusement at the duet of business dexterity, I had not the heart to say it should not win!

'You are wonderfully clever,' I exclaimed, going on with my laughter still. 'Really, I don't know which is the cleverer of the two!'

Small Xantippe, woman as she was, thought I was captured by her singularly akilful colouring; and her little head rose, and her smiles came, and her hands stroked her sides with pride. 'It *do* look nice, don't it?' she gloried. 'There's the laylock there, and the dark-brown here, like life to a pin!' And I did not undeceive her, but, still laughing, went away.

It was a singular door through which I arrived at the next studio. It was a hole in the ceiling of a cheap confectioner's shop, through which one went up and up like a tremulous 'property' in a play. And it was singular how I was prevailed upon to go there. I was deeply studying the show-case appertaining to it, when the owner accepted the challenge my looking was to him, and approached me.

'You are the worst side of the case,' he said, in a nice fluent voice, and very politely. 'Would you do me the favour, if it is not too much trouble to you, to come round this other side?'

He was a real cavalier. Dingy, of course—a cavalier, perhaps, when his party had been discomfited; but a regular Prince Rupert man for all that. And he was tall, and bronzed, and handsome, with a red-brown moustache; and he wore a soft hat, that sat on him in seventeenth century fashion, and only wanted a plume and glittering buckle to make it the thing itself.

'This side, if you will be so good,' he repeated. 'Pray, do me the favour to look this way.'

'There is a beautiful thing there,' he announced, pointing to the portrait occupying the *place d'honneur*. 'We are particularly successful in *cartes—and* in vignettes;' for my eyes had fallen on one of these last, instead of implicitly following the direction he indicated, and he had wisdom enough to care only for the making of a breach—not which way it was effected. 'Vignettes are the best of photographs, in *my* opinion; and it is a style that *you* would do in beautifully. I am so convinced of this,' continued the cavalier, coming out with his masterpiece of insinuation, 'that if you can spare the time to sit, and will allow me, I will take a portrait of you, just to keep for myself!'

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I was thrown right over by this, of course; and vanquished, I went in.

The next artist I visited was fat, aged, and frowning, in his shirt-sleeves, and on a wooden leg.

'Can you take my picture at once?' I asked him.

I was favoured with a sharp sour look and a testy scowl.

'I am in a hurry,' I explained; 'I have no time to wait.'

'I can take you,' gruffed out the old lameter, his voice as surly as his look. 'Go up!'

'If I am incom'—— I began.

'I can do you,' repeated the lameter as surlily as before. 'Go up!'

And when I *was* up, the old fellow stumped himself to me, and began to screw my head into the iron rest with considerably more than necessary force.

'I can sit still,' I said, hating the imprisonment: 'I don't want this!'

'What?' screamed the old man, deafened by the clatter of his wooden leg upon the floor—'what? Eh?'

'I don't want *this!*' I shouted: 'I can sit still!'

'You *can't* sit still?' screamed the old man interrogatively.

'I *can* sit still!' I repeated: 'I can do without this rest!'

'Oh!' yielded the old fellow. 'Do without it then.'

I did; and was that much more comfortable. But every other little word I had with my *vis-à-vis* was in the same quarrelsome style.

'Put your head more to the right!' he cried, when, after much clatter and fussiness, his plates were prepared. 'Look out there!'

'So?' I asked, turning, as I thought, the way he indicated—'so?'

'No!' he roared; 'to the right! There!'

'So?' I asked again, with, possibly, an aggravating smile.

'No!' he roared once more; and he made right at me with his stump, stump, stump, and seized my head and twisted it, and would have liked to wrench it off, I am sure.

A different character entirely was revealed to me by Photographer Number Six. In person, this gentleman was short, and round, and young; in manners, he was peevish and desponding.

'You lean too backward,' he cried, in a pining voice, from behind the camera when he was operating: 'sit straighter up.'

I stiffened my back as well as fatigue would let me, and altered the position of my eyes.

'Now you've got your eyes higher than your head,' was his peevish complaint.

I laughed. 'How *can* they be?' I asked. And the young man laughed faintly with me, and put his remark in less equivocal terms.

'You're shewing your teeth,' was his next accusation, before my smile had quite died away.

'No wonder!' I reminded him; 'besides,' I added, 'I generally do!'

'Then,' conceded the artist, 'shew them now. I don't hold with people going again' nature. Stick to nature.'

My next 'subject' was his near neighbour—a handsome woman, young, and a widow. She had a firm voice, and a rapid, busy way of doing her work, that shewed her evident conviction that if it were to be done, then 'twas far best it should be done quickly. She might have been tender and down-eyed enough once; but now she had the 'operating' branch of a brisk photographic trade to carry on; she had children to keep, and rent to pay; and what was there for her but to turn tigress, and clutch at what was needful for her with vivid paw? Room was scarce with her too; so her children, having no definite place in which to play, obtruded themselves into her business precincts, and thereby taxed her patience. One of them came tumbling out into a near passage, hushing an empty hat and shawl in baby-fashion; but this poor mother had no time or temper for a smile at the pretty mimicry. Vexation bristled from her instead.

'Be off!' she harried out, with hand and voice both upraised. 'Play with that best hat again, and *I'll* be after you!'

Then the woman who was her helper made more of her hot words fly. She was a pallid dawdling creature—a widow too!—who only par-cleaned the little squares of glass given her, and returned them so that specks and streaks could still be damagingly seen.

'*This* won't do!' cried the superior soul. '*This* won't get your living. You must work hard, my good woman—as hard as we all have to do for everything!'

Severe philosophy this; and severer still to have been forced to live the life that led to it. There were two women, too, in the room, whose lines had fallen in such different places. They were loose red-haired hoydens, who had bounced up into the studio, dragging with them a gallant as boisterous as themselves, and him they had just succeeded in coaxing to sit, and to treat them each to a sitting. The only anxiety of the girls was for each to outvie the other, and get all favours for herself alone.

'Give it me when it 's done,' lured one of them. 'Do; there 's a dear!'

'Aw,' cried the other, 'that 's a shame. It ought to be for me. You like me best, dear, don't you?' and her wide arms were about the lover's neck, with a close hug.

'What a lark!' was the man's cry, chuckling at the rivalry, and shrewdly avoiding saying which way his vote should go. 'I see. Let 's all be took in a mob!'

They were harmless, all. It was only their hilarity and irresponsibility that made them noticeable. There was serious life in store for them, of course, even as there were sunny spots lighting up the struggle of the artist-widow. *She* had a large jug of the pretty Rhine pottery on her window-sill, sent her, she said, from Germany full of butter; and *they* had let their lover go from them, to call together some other *convives* to add to his promised 'mob;' and I saw him, a street or two further on, revelling in a noisy public-house, with perfect oblivion of the quest on which he had gone. Things are balanced more evenly than, at first sight, could be supposed.

A singular scene was enacted before me in the rooms of photographer the last. In common with all my artists, he was only rich enough to occupy a small part of a house; and in one of the many homes a roving life had led him into, a fellow-lodger had incessantly aggravated him by putting a certain door wide open, when he had been equally determined that it should be shut. A petty thing this;

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but the annoyance had so galled and worried our photographer, that the memory of it rushed upon him green and sapful when the woman who had been his antagonist presented herself, during my visit, to make his wife a friendly call.

He came face to face on her, as he emerged from his dark cupboard; and because he only looked from under his thick eyebrows, and did not speak, his wife asked if he had forgotten who it was.

He merely looked again—being a broad black-whiskered fellow, seemingly mighty strong. But he growled an answer out at last. It was 'No. I know the sulky thing. I ain't likely to forget.'

The woman had no resentment for this. She folded her hands on a heavy basket of vegetables she had rested on the table; she shrugged her shoulders a little; looked down; grinned; and was dumb.

'I know her,' the man cried again, taking the smiles and silence (as they were meant) as so much confession and repentance. 'She blackguarded me once for an hour, *I* remember.'

The woman gave a downright laugh then. She had come off conqueror from this long vituperation, it was clear, and she knew how hard to be forgiven was such vanquishing; but she had not miscalculated when she had thought the olive branch would now be accepted.

The man held his hand out for it in his own rough way. It was only by a kindly question, but that was quite enough. 'How's Mat a poddlin' on now?' he asked. 'Pretty square?'

After which, the big fellow opened his breast quite. 'I'm a precious rough customer, I am, you know,' he said. 'Precious rough if I'm treated to a bit of tongue! I'd be gentle if folks would let me; but I think nothin' of chuckin' a fellow out of winder when I'm riled!'

So, speaking of his passions as of something over which he had no control, as of a sort of whirligig firework that *would* go off if anybody touched it, the woman accepted his position thoroughly, and the *amende* was made. I did not wait for the smoking of the pipe of peace; it was enough for me to have seen it produced, and I walked away.

WRECKS.

The old English law relating to wrecks was founded upon principles analogous to those by which the seaman who fell overboard was punished by his captain for being out of the ship without leave. If a merchant was so unfortunate as to lose his ship, and the wreck was cast upon the shore, it was claimed by the king, as the ultimate owner of everything in his kingdom, on the ground, that the merchant had evidently parted with his property. It made no difference if the merchant was known, or if he came ashore himself out of the wreck; the law completed the ruin which the elements had hesitated to finish; and the poor wretch was obliged to submit to a spoliation which must have made him regret his advent to the inhospitable shore.

This was considered to be too 'hard lines,' even in feudal days; and Henry I. decreed that if any man escaped alive from the ship, it should not be deemed 'wreck,' in the sense of giving the king ownership in it. Henry II. enlarged the terms of this order by saying, that if man or beast remained alive, it should not be king's wreck; but the law continued to give the king ownership where all the voyagers were drowned, even though it might be known who was the rightful owner of the lost ship. Richard I., on his way to Palestine in the year 1190, granted a charter, 'for the love of God, and the health of his own soul, and the souls of his ancestors and successors, kings of England,' by which he relinquished all claim to wreck throughout his dominions, and declared that every shipwrecked person escaping alive should retain his goods; and that if any one died in the ship, his sons or daughters, brothers or sisters, as they might be his heirs, should have his property; but if he had no such relations, the king should have his chattels.

Edward I., 'the English Justinian,' first reduced into the shape of a positive law the principles concerning wreck which had been enunciated by Henry I. and II., and by King Richard. By the fourth chapter of a statute passed in the third year of his reign, it was agreed 'that where a man, a dog, or a cat escape quick out of the ship, that such ship nor barge, nor anything within them, shall be adjudged wreck.' Goods saved from wrecks were ordered to be in the custody of the town nearest the scene of the disaster; and if any man could prove within a year and a day that they belonged to him, he was to have them: if not claimed, the goods, or the proceeds of the sale of them, were to belong to the king. Any one doing contrary to this was to be 'awarded to prison, and make fine at the king's will, and yield damages also.' This good law was the foundation of all subsequent legislation on the subject, though, as time went on, it was found necessary to particularise a little more what was and what was not wreck, and to define more exactly the obligations of those who might 'assist,' as the French have it, at shipwrecks and misadventures by the sea.

Disputes appear to have arisen at various times as to the title to wrecked goods for which no owner appeared. They of the household quarrelled amongst themselves when it came to a division of the spoil, and a law was needed to settle the question. It was ordered by a statute of Edward II., confirmed by other statutes since made, that 'the king shall have wreck of the sea throughout the realm,' whenever the real owner or his representatives cannot be found. The same statute gave him ownership in all whales and sturgeons caught within the kingdom.

This was the law applicable to wrecks until quite modern times—the king was owner of shipwrecked vessels or goods for which no owner appeared; his right was set aside on the appearance of the owner or his representatives within a year and a day; and those who were instrumental in saving the wreck were to be paid for their trouble a reasonable sum, which was called 'salvage.' For the wrecks themselves, there is reason to think they were many and disastrous, in days when men navigated by sight, that is, by headlands and landmarks, and not scientifically, by means of compass and a reckoning, and when the appliances which now exist for saving life and property imperilled by the sea had not any being, even in the thoughts of man. Questions must constantly have arisen respecting the right to shipwrecked goods, and the amounts which should be paid for salvage; and it is to be feared there was a continuous necessity for enforcing the king's ultimate right to wreck of the sea, in order to prevent the tendency there was in the coast-

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dwelling people to insure, by processes more or less nefarious, the wreck coming within the definition laid down by Henry I. and Edward I. There is reason to think that the practice was not an uncommon one for the survivors of a ship's crew to be made away with by the coast-men, on the principle of dead men telling no tales, and because it was hoped that a large share of plunder might be obtained and secreted before the royal officers or the agents of the owners could put in an appearance upon the scene. It is right to notice here that the evil reputation for wrecking which at no distant date was monopolised by the Cornish coast-men, was at one time the common property of all dwellers on the English coasts, for there is abundant proof that it was only because of the means of repression which existed in other parts, and which could not, by reason of the wildness of the country, be introduced into Cornwall, that the men of north, south, and east were more virtuous than their brethren in the west.

The notion which existed, that wrecks were the natural property of whosoever could come at them, was not, after all, very extravagant; and this notion being once entertained, there were not many steps between it and a system by which that natural property was secured to the finders. In out-of-the-way places without ready communication with the interior, wrecks might occur, and no one be any the wiser, but for the tell-tale evidence of one or two half-drowned wretches who might survive the assaults of the ocean. Why not prevent the evidence? The temptation was very great. If the evidence was suppressed, there was a fine harvest to be made; if allowed to be given, there might be but a poor salvage allowance to recompense for all the trouble and risk of saving the goods. It was in cases where this temptation was powerful above the virtue of the people to withstand it, that such things were heard of as 'fettling the head with a brick,' interments of half-dead bodies, and other means of getting rid of uncomfortable proofs. A system which admitted of such things as these, admitted, after a short education, of positive acts calculated to bring about shipwrecks; and the wreckers advanced from the position of negative agents in the destruction of life and property, to that of active destroyers. They hung out false lights, concealed known beacons, and 'hobbled the white horse.' The last-named process consisted of tying a lantern on to the tail of a horse, which was led up and down the shore: the light from the lantern shone out seaward, and moving irregularly, and swaying to and fro with the motion of the horse, deceived mariners with the idea that it was a ship's light at sea. The vessels were intended to stand on and to take the ground at a spot convenient to the wreckers.

If precedents were wanted as warrants for such behaviour, it seems they might have been found in plenty. Wrecking is a sin older than the first maritime code of laws which Richard I. drew up and published under the title of the Laws of Oléron. These laws, consisting of forty-seven articles, are said to have been matured by Richard on his return from one of his Palestine trips, and to have been promulgated at the Isle of Oléron, from which they are named. From two of the articles, it appears that by 'an accursed custom,' prevailing, it is assumed, in the king's continental dominions, the third or fourth part of ships that were lost belonged to the lord of the place on which the wreck occurred; and that pilots willing to ingratiate themselves with these lords, purposely, 'like faithless and treacherous villains,' ran the ships they had in charge on the rocks. The code declared that the lords, and all who assisted in plundering the wreck, should be accursed, excommunicated, and punished as robbers; that 'all false and treacherous pilots should suffer a most rigorous and merciless death,' and be hung up on high gibbets on the spot, as a warning to others. The wicked lords were to be tied to a post in the middle of their own houses, which were to be set on fire at the four corners, and burned with all therein. The sites of the houses were to be converted into a market-place for the sale of hogs and swine; and all the goods of the offender were to be confiscated to the use of the aggrieved persons. If 'people more barbarous, cruel, and inhuman than mad dogs,' murdered shipwrecked folk, they were to be plunged into the sea till they were half dead, and then drawn out and stoned to death. It was also provided by the Laws of Oléron, as a check upon pilots, that a pilot who damaged ship of cargo through negligence or other cause should make good the loss, if he had means to do so; if he had not, he was to lose his head. It was, however, ordered that before proceeding to cut off the pilot's head, the master and mariners 'must be sure he had not wherewith to make satisfaction.'

These Laws of Oléron were the model upon which all maritime codes were formed in Europe; and they remained in force, supplemented by a few explanatory statutes, till quite modern times. In George II.'s reign it was found to be necessary to remodel the law of wreck in very many particulars. The morality of pilots had not increased materially since Richard I.'s time, and the wrecking propensities of the people generally had grown apace, while the punishments provided by the old code were so much at variance with the spirit of the time, that they were inoperative, and no longer a terror to evil-doers. An act of George II.'s recites, that notwithstanding 'the good and salutary laws now in being against plundering and destroying vessels in distress, and against taking away shipwrecked, lost, or stranded goods, many wicked enormities have been committed, to the disgrace of the nation;' and proceeds to lay down very stringent rules applicable to wreck and to wreckers. Death was the punishment prescribed for those who stole things from a wreck ('whether any living creature be on board such vessel or not'), and for *those who killed or prevented the escape of shipwrecked persons*, or hung out false lights, with intention to bring any ship or vessel into danger. This law, which was the foundation of the existing Merchant Shipping Act, provided that justices of the peace should have power to search places and people suspected of harbouring goods stolen from wrecks, and to send to jail persons who could not give a satisfactory account of shipwrecked goods in their possession. Salvage was settled, and a tribunal was appointed to arrange any disputes concerning it, and other regulations were made for more thoroughly protecting the interests of shipowners, ship-insurers, and ships' crews. When this act expired, many of its provisions were re-enacted in somewhat different shapes; the punishment of death was commuted for a sentence of less severity in cases of theft, and additions were made to the old

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law, so as to punish with life-long penal servitude the new crime of wilfully firing, scuttling, or casting away a ship, for the purpose of cheating owners or insurers. By a salutary law which struck at the root of systematic wrecking, the hundred or district in which the wrecking took place was made liable to pay the value of the property plundered.

The existing law of wreck is to be found in the Merchant Shipping Act of 1854 and its supplements. By them, the supervision of wreck, all over the kingdom, is given to the Board of Trade, whose officers are empowered to take charge of a wreck, to exercise magisterial powers in protecting it, to press into their service for the purposes of the wreck both men and carts and horses, to trespass if need be on private property, and to receive as owners all pieces of ship or cargo that may be cast on shore. In case of suspicion of foul play, the justices may hold a sort of inquest on the wreck; and machinery is provided for securing the fullest investigation into the circumstances attending the loss. The question of salvage is exhaustively dealt with, and order is taken for the due custody of wrecked goods, the return of them to the owners on payment of salvage, and the sale of them by public auction if not claimed within a year and a day. Wreckers and their accomplices are provided for with fines, imprisonment, penal servitude, according to the degree of their offence; but the case of 'fettling the head with a brick,' preventing a man's escape so that he dies, and killing shipwrecked people, is dealt with by the general law of murder, and no longer by any special statutes.

Now, as formerly, the sovereign, or the lord of a manor to whom a grant of wreck has been made, is the ultimate owner of lost property; and if after being in custody of the receiver of wrecks for a year and a day, the shipwrecked goods are not claimed, the proceeds of the sale, less the amount of the salvage, are paid to the crown or to the lord of a manor, as the case may be.

STUBBS'S LUCK.

IN EIGHT CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

Less than kin, and more than kind.

'WHEN are you going down, Stubbs?'

'I don't know: not just yet, at anyrate, and perhaps not at all.'

'Not go down at all! Why, my dear fellow, you couldn't spend Christmas in this place: you'd drown yourself in Barnwell Pool.'

'I spent last Christmas here, anyhow; and it was not so very stupid after all. I skated down to Ely, and stopped on my way back at that queer inn called *Five-miles-from—anywhere* at Upware; had some fun in the fen, shooting and so on; and when the frost broke up, I got plenty of sculling without being obliged to twist my neck off looking out for muff-boats. Then the billiard-rooms were pretty well deserted, so that I was able to practise on nearly every table, and I improved my game immensely (as you know, old fellow). Besides which, I went to town once or twice, to see a pantomime or so; and, moreover, I did a good stroke of reading.'

'Ah! that's the way you get the pull of us, and beat us at billiards as well as "book-learning." I can't say, however, that your picture has made me envious.'

So talked Laurence Horton and William Stubbs, as they walked arm in arm down Trumpington Street from Unity College, Cambridge, to the railway station. Horton had left his luggage to follow by 'bus, preferring to go afoot, for the pleasure of Stubbs's company, and for the circulation of the blood. They went swinging along at a very fair pace; the snow was scrunched noisily beneath their feet; the icicles glittered like barley-sugar in the rays of the wintry sun; the sky was clear and blue above their heads; and they gloried in the freshness of the eager air. For the date of their walk was many years ago; there were frost and snow at Christmas then; and December and May had not changed months.

Of the two young men, Horton was considerably the taller: he had dark curly hair, friendly looking gray eyes, a pale face, a slight figure, and an air of easy self-possession, which neither rudeness nor haughtiness could easily ruffle. Stubbs's hair was light brown; his eyes were of a soft, deep, melting blue; his face was fresh-coloured, and his figure particularly graceful; but he walked with just the slightest approach to a swagger, and his expression, had not the softness of his eyes been remarkable, would have struck a stranger as being full of defiance. The explanation was not difficult. Stubbs was one of those of whom it might have been said: 'Hit him hard; he has no friends.' Not that he was unpopular in his college; indeed, there was not a greater favourite. It was certainly a very small college, but there was not a man in it who did not know and like Stubbs, who was captain of their boat, their best bowler, their second-best billiard-player, and one of their best scholars. But then these are not generally the friends who can push you on in the world; they are your rivals and opponents, not your patrons and helpers. And Stubbs had become early acquainted with grief. Death had hob-and-nobbed with him when he was but a babe. At eight years of age, he became an only child. At nine, Death found him out again; and even strangers were moved to tears as the little chief-mourner, with streaming eyes and a child's frank sobs, his footsteps cumbered by his long black cloak, stumbled weeping towards his father's grave. There was after this a respite of six years, during which Death was busy with other prey; and then the Devourer returned to his favourite quarry. Mrs Stubbs was reunited to the Rev. William Stubbs beneath the communion-table of the church he had died in serving; and William Stubbs, junior, was relationless and alone. And the little money which had come to him was just enough, in addition to the exhibition he had won at a public school, to keep him on an equality with his comrades during the usual university career.

Now Horton had heard at odd times scraps of Stubbs's personal history, and it struck a chill to his kindly heart to think that Stubbs should spend in solitary isolation the season which to Laurence was a time of multitudinous merriment and continual gaiety. And theirs was no common friendship; they had been together in many a well-contested boat-race, when Stubbs's voice had cheered on the crew, and his 'Now for it!' had preceded a spurt which had drawn shrieks of admiration from the red-shirted, blue-shirted, pink-shirted, and striped-shirted demons who ran and leaped and yelled upon the bank. They had ridden side by side and fence for fence when the jumps

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were stiff and the pace alarming, and each, as he recovered from a stunning fall, had seen the face of the other bending anxiously over him. They had spun, stroke for stroke, down the ice-bound Cam to the island famed for its abundant eels. On Barton Ponds, their burnished skates had flashed and whirred and droned in unison as they challenged each other to a trial of skill on inside edge and outside edge, in 'circle' and 'spread-eagle,' and 'Dutch roll,' and 'flying Mercury,' and 'bunch of currants.' They had played famous matches at billiards; and they had read together the gems of Greek and the flowers of Latin. And so it came into Horton's mind that this man Stubbs was more his brother than his acquaintance; that his father's house had a void which Stubbs could supply; that his own double-bedded room demanded Stubbs to make it symmetrical. As, therefore, the friends were preparing to shake hands and part, says Horton abruptly: 'Look here, old fellow; you say you've no engagement for Christmas: come and stay with us—come to-morrow.'

Stubbs looked blank as he answered: 'I'd stay with *you* with pleasure, but—but'——

'Oh!' broke in Horton, 'you're afraid my people might object. I can only tell you the governor will be delighted. But I know you're awfully proud, so I'll get you a formal invitation from him. There, the train's just off.—Good-bye, old boy.'

CHAPTER II.—STUBBS'S LUCK.

As Stubbs walked home to college, he began to ponder upon the subject of Christmas. How would he like the Hortons and their fashion of spending Christmas-day? The last time he could recollect spending Christmas-day in a family, it had nearly been the death of him. It was a very religious family, and they observed the festal day religiously—that is to say, they went to church morning and afternoon, and afterwards gave themselves up to such serious eating and drinking that it was clear the seniors must be ill the next day, and the juniors most likely before morning. There was a general interdiction of all amusements except 'cross questions and crooked answers,' if that—even when it is a game, and not a domestic habit—can be called an amusement (which Stubbs denied). And when Stubbs had inveigled one of the daughters, whilst mamma was out of the room, to play and sing with him a lively song, the other members of the family had looked undigested pudding at him; and mamma, hurrying back at the hateful sounds of joy, had asked: 'Whatever is the meaning of this? Isabella playing profane music! Can that be *my* Isabella?'

And Isabella had answered sulkily: 'You ought to know best, mamma; I haven't altered much since you left the room, I imagine.'

Then mamma had asked poor Stubbs: 'What *would* your poor mother have said, Mr Stubbs?'

And Stubbs had replied: 'I really can't say for certain; but I think she would have waited until we had quite finished, and then would have said: "Thank you, dears;" at least that is what she usually said.'

So Stubbs had registered a vow in—well, the place where he always registered his vows—that he would never spend another Christmas-day with Isabella's family. From that time to the present, Christmas-day had been to him a day of solitary confinement: he had shut himself up in his own rooms and read hard; he had gone to bed early; and a sense of void had come over him as his sleep went from him at the sound of distant merriment, and the silver voice of laughing maid caused bitter thoughts to the friendless man. He had never owned to anybody how lonely and sad he had been; but now all he had suffered in his loneliness came back to him, and he was glad that Horton had thought of him. It is true that he was unaccustomed to society; that he knew scarcely half-a-dozen families; and that he heartily disliked 'going out;' but he 'believed in' Horton (as the saying is), and was convinced that all would be right with the Hortons. It was, therefore, with no small pleasure that he received from Horton the following note:

GROVE HOUSE, HIGH BECKHAM, *December 22.*

DEAR STUBBS—The governor, who hopes you will excuse him for not writing in person, bids me to say that he will be really grateful to you if you will condescend to share my double-bedded room during our Christmas vacation, as I am such a bore, and annoy everybody so awfully when I have no suitable companion, that I make the house intolerable. (You will understand that I am writing to dictation and under compulsion). So I shall expect you by the train which leaves Cambridge at 2 P.M. on the 24th. You must get out at the Reddenham Station, and I will drive over in the pony-chaise to meet you. Mind you come.—Yours always, LAURENCE HORTON.

If you refer to the guide (not yet published) to country-places which do not exist, you will observe that both Reddenham and High Beckham are in the county of Missex, not far from the river Spree, and that Reddenham Station is between Broxbourne and London. Now, not every train stops at Reddenham; Stubbs, therefore, with the usual thoughtfulness which characterises Cambridge men, intrusted his luggage to a porter, telling the place to which he wished to go, and asking whether there would be any change of carriages. The porter answered 'No,' and received a shilling for his trouble, or, more correctly speaking, for releasing Stubbs from possible trouble. But Stubbs would have done better to refer to a time-table, or to ask his question of the guard of the train, for at Broxbourne a voice was heard jumbling together (as only railway officials can jumble) the names of certain places, and adjuring passengers, who wished to get out at the places (the names of which it was impossible to make out), to descend forthwith and wait for a coming train. Stubbs considered that after his satisfactory interview with the porter he was absolved from all further bother, and travelled on contentedly until the train stopped again.

'Tickets, please,' said the collector.

'I want to get out at Reddenham,' remarked Stubbs affably.

'Reddenham! Lord bless you, sir, you've passed it ever so far. This is London, this is. You ought to have changed at Broxbourne. Didn't they holler out?'

'O yes,' said Stubbs; 'they holler'd out enough to split themselves, but I couldn't make out a word they said; and the porter I gave my luggage to at Cambridge assured me I shouldn't have to change.'

'Where did you take your ticket to, sir?'

'To Reddenham.'

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'Let me look at it, please?—Oh, all right—there's one-and-fourpence to pay.'

'Come, that's rather too bad: I'm taken to a place I don't want to go to, and I'm to pay extra for it!'

'I can't help it, sir; you'll have to pay.'

'There's your one-and-fourpence, then; but how am I to get to High Beckham?'

The ticket-collector, having got his money, retired, as people usually do under the circumstances, and muttered something unintelligible; but an antediluvian old lady, taking an interest in Stubbs's youth and soft blue eyes, remarked: 'There's a coach from the *Black Bull* in Aldgate every Saturday at three o'clock.'

'Thank you,' replied Stubbs; 'but I want to be there by six o'clock this evening, and it is only Wednesday.'

The old lady had no further suggestion to make; so Stubbs was obliged to take a cab all the way, and, during his drive, had leisure to reflect upon the dismay he must have caused Horton, who he felt sure would have waited for him in the biting frost, and would chaff him terribly upon his usual luck; for 'Stubbs's luck' was a by-word at Unity.

CHAPTER III.—GROVE HOUSE.

A drive of more than an hour and a half (for the roads were slippery, though the horse was 'roughed') brought Stubbs to the door of Grove House. It was a house which stood in its own grounds, and entrance was effected through a high wall towards the road, so that Stubbs could not see what the place was like. But a vigorous ring at the bell brought out a ruddy maid, who shrieked out immediately: 'Oh, Mister Laurence, here's the missin' gentleman!' And the cry brought Laurence himself to the gate.

'Your usual luck, eh, Stubbs?' said Laurence, shaking his friend by the hand. 'I saw you pass in the train, and wasn't fool enough to wait; so you needn't apologise.—Come in, old boy, come in; you're just in time: old cook has been ringing the dinner-bell like mad, and the governor has just gone up to his room.'

Stubbs's luggage was left in the hall, and himself ushered into the drawing-room. There was no up-stairs drawing-room in cosy Grove House; dining-room and drawing-room were both on one floor, on the same side of the ample hall; and on the opposite side of the hall was the comfortable study, which served on occasion as breakfast-room.

'Come along, old fellow; I'll just introduce you to my sister, and then you can go and wash your hands,' cried Laurence, preceding his friend to the drawing-room.—'Ellen, this is my friend Stubbs.'

The most elegant figure Stubbs had ever seen faced about at these words, and the owner, coming forward from the fire-place, held out her hand without ceremony, and with a frank, beaming smile, saying in a voice which thrilled Stubbs with pleasure: 'I'm very glad to see you, Mr Stubbs. We were quite prepared for some misadventure, for the fame of your ill luck preceded you.'

And now entered Mr Horton, senior, who was Mr Horton, junior, with the inevitable changes wrought by age; perhaps, also, he had a little more urbanity in his manner, and a little less self-contentedness in appearance.

'How do you do, Mr Stubbs?' said he heartily. 'I am very glad indeed to see you.—Late! O dear no, not at all: I have only just come in myself.—Confound that woman; she'll pull the bell down.'

'It is the third time, papa,' said Miss Horton laughing, 'and you know cook gets frantic then.'

'O well, just take Mr Stubbs into your room, Laurence.—There's hot water, Ellen?'

'Yes, papa. At least it *was* hot,' added Ellen slily, when cook first began to ring the bell: 'I had it taken up at once.'

'Come along, Stubbs,' cried hungry Laurence; 'I'm almost famished;' and in three minutes cook was appeased, the soup was served, and conversation was fitful and monosyllabic. But when the inner man had been solaced with soup, and old Mr Horton had said: 'A glass of wine with you, Mr Stubbs; I'm very glad you've come,' and Laurence and Ellen had 'joined them,' and Laurence had laughed boisterously at the elaborate bow with which Stubbs (in honour, of course, of Ellen's presence) had responded to Laurence's careless nod, and had been duly reproved by Stubbs (supported by Ellen) for introducing college brusqueness into the family circle, the talking assumed a continuous flow. At length Ellen rose to leave the room, and Stubbs was not a little astonished at the coolness of Laurence, who shouted to his sister, as she went down the hall: 'I say, Ellen, I'm going to leave this door open, and you leave the drawing-room door open, and play lots of waltzes, and sing lots of songs: it will be cheerful for Stubbs over his wine.'

Stubbs was about to protest; but Laurence said: 'Pooh! she likes it; don't you, Ellen?'

And a laughing voice answered: 'Oh, very much. You must let me know when you are stunned, Mr Stubbs, or I may go on too long—for sheer pleasure.'

Old Mr Horton chuckled with amusement; and it was plain that the only son reigned lord-paramount over Grove House.

Stubbs had never felt so serenely happy in his life as upon that Christmas Eve, when he sat listening to the sweet, clear notes of Ellen Horton. But compliant Ellen was not tried very long. Laurence soon bade Stubbs to a pipe up-stairs (for the double-bedded room was not only a sleeping-chamber, but also a sort of study and divan), leaving old Mr Horton to his *Quarterly* and consequent nap, and dispensing with his sister's services in the gracious words: 'Shut up now, if you like, Ellen; Stubbs and I are going up-stairs to have a pipe.'

'Thy servant heareth,' replied Ellen with a laugh, but continued to carol for her own entertainment; and it is my private opinion that Stubbs, had he been asked, would rather have gone into the drawing-room to Ellen than have followed Laurence into the atmosphere of tobacco. But he was not asked. He was offered a pipe, and Stubbs had never been known to refuse that offer. When the two friends had imbibed sufficient nicotine, and acquired sufficient disagreeableness of odour, they descended to the drawing-room for a cup of tea. This was followed by a game of chess, another song or two from Ellen, and a display of frightful yawns from Laurence Horton, who, saying he had been skating all day, and was dog-tired, demanded

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Stubbs's opinion about going to bed. It was past ten; they could have another pipe over the bedroom fire; and it wouldn't hurt either of them to go to bed early, as they had late hours enough at Unity. Stubbs was also tired, and ready for sleep; so, with a salutation to Ellen, and a smile at old Mr Horton, who was napping in his chair, they took their candle and retired.

CHAPTER IV.—AN APPARITION.

Stubbs had hardly fallen asleep that night when he awoke with a sound of bell-ringing in his ears. Half-asleep, half-awake, he fancied he could hear the opening and shutting of an outer door, then the whispering of soft voices on the stairs, and the subdued sounds of silver laughter at the entrance to the opposite chamber. But he was soon asleep again, and in the morning had nearly forgotten all about it, when, having interchanged at the breakfast-table 'Merry Christmas' with his friends, he observed Laurence's eyes fixed upon a plate, egg-cup, and cup and saucer, which had all of them evidently been already used.

'Oh, Lucy didn't stay at Mrs Kershaw's, then?' remarked Laurence.

'No,' said Ellen; 'Mr Kershaw brought her home late last night, and she was afraid she would disturb your Highness's rest, for she was merrier than ever.'

'*I* didn't hear anything,' said Laurence.—'Did you, Stubbs?'

'I've a dim recollection,' answered Stubbs, 'of hearing something very pleasant, like the tinkle of a silver bell; and though I wished to hear more, I grieve to say that I was too sleepy to'——

'That is fortunate,' interrupted Ellen, 'or you would have heard something very like the roar of two madcaps. I am sure poor papa must have heard us down-stairs.'

Papa, trying to look severe, admitted that he did, and that he thought it very unseemly conduct; against which charge Ellen made no further defence than to put her arm round his neck, and kiss his cheek, as she left the room on household affairs.

Laurence and Stubbs strolled out into the garden, for the sun was bright though the frost was keen, to smoke the after-breakfast pipe; and whilst the former went to speak to the gardener, whose cottage stood hard by the garden end, the latter had time to make his observations on the place, and puzzle his brains in guessing who was Lucy. He paced up and down, and round and round, gradually increasing his speed, for it was a nipping air, and he was chafing with the enigma, when, after one of the turns which set his back to the house, he heard a peculiar clatter on the path behind him. It came patter, patter, closer and closer, and it sounded like the tap of a dainty boot lightly struck on the frozen ground. He turned slowly round, and saw an apparition which startled his hat from his head, and his pipe from his mouth. The apparition was young and short, and wore a bonnet of the prevailing mode, but without a veil; so that the delicate skin, just stimulated by the frost; and the smooth black hair, hiding the tops of the ears; and the high, broad forehead; and the deep-blue eyes, and the well-formed nose, and the rich red lips, and the teeth that seemed made for nothing coarser than smiles, and the dimpled chin, and the oval face, were all revealed to the naked eye. The apparition, moreover, held in one hand a black muff, and with the other lifted a black dress, over which was a hooded gray cloak, so as to shew just a few inches of red petticoat and white stockings sprouting out of tiny black kid boots. The latter hand the apparition, having dropped the dress, stretched forth to the grateful Stubbs with modest unconstraint, and just the faintest blush, saying in tones which made his very heart to laugh: 'How do you do, Mr Stubbs? I'm so glad you have come.'

Stubbs was disposed to answer that he had never felt so well in his life, barring a slight tremor about the region of the heart and knees; but he resisted, and replied simply: 'You are very kind. Yes; I came last evening.'

'And you and Laurence were so fatigued that you had gone to bed before I came home; I heard'——

'I assure you I had no notion you were expected, or—or'——

'Oh, don't say anything polite, please; I was only afraid I disturbed you.—But where is Laurence? I want to wish him a "Merry Christmas."—By the way, I wish you one, Mr Stubbs.—To the gardener's, you say? Let us walk there; I'm so cold.—Where is your pipe? You were smoking a pipe when I first saw you.'

Stubbs had ignominiously thrust it up his sleeve, and now produced it ruefully.

'Pray, go on,' said the apparition; 'at least, if it is not out; and if it is, I daresay you have a match. I don't mind it in the least; Laurence has drilled me too well for that.'

But who was she? She was not a bit like Laurence, or Ellen, or old Mr Horton.

'Ah, Lu—glad to see you,' said Laurence with a salute, the cold fraternal style of which seemed to solve Stubbs's problem as she sprang forward with a 'Merry Christmas, Laurie, dear.'

'Same to you, Lu,' replied his worship coldly.—'So you've made acquaintance with my friend Stubbs.'

'Yes; Ellen told me I should find you both in the garden, and as you were not there to introduce me, I—I—no; I declare, I never said who I am. It never struck me you wouldn't know who I am, Mr Stubbs. I beg your pardon; I'm'——

'I ought to have known,' interrupted Stubbs, 'that you are Laurence's sister.'

'Oh, what fun!' said she laughing: 'and I'm not; and yet my name is Lucy Horton. I'm Laurence's first-cousin. My father and mother both died when I was quite a baby, and I have lived here ever since with my uncle, who is my father's brother; and I always call Uncle Horton papa, and he considers me his daughter.'

'Well, Lu,' resumed Laurence, 'have you been to the school this morning?'

'Yes, of course I have; that is why we didn't meet at breakfast—you know that.'

'Look here, Stubbs,' said Laurence smiling; 'Lucy goes out at unearthly hours on Sundays and Christmas-day, and all days of that sort, and teaches all the dirty little brats they can bribe to go to the Sunday school.'

Lucy looked grave and sad.

'Don't talk of them like that, Laurie,' she said gently. 'Very few of them are dirty, and nearly all of them are so thankful for every little attention;

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or if *they* are not, poor little things, their parents are for them.'

Laurence laughed; and 'What do *you* say about it, Stubbs?' he asked.

'I should like to inquire whether it is not—on the Sabbath, at anyrate—breaking the fourth commandment,' replied Stubbs smiling.

Again Lucy looked grave and sad; and 'Please, don't joke about it, Mr Stubbs,' she said so earnestly, that Stubbs swore inwardly he would lose his right hand first.

And now the Christmas chimes pealed forth, calling Christian men to prayer; and a cheerful party were the Hortons and their guest, as they walked briskly along to the taper-spired, ivy-covered, simple-looking little church, not far from the ice-bound river. There was a cordial greeting for many a friend, a Christmas-box for the blue-nosed sweeper; and Lucy's little pupils, in quaint red cloaks, bobbed generally to the party, and smiled affectionately at the teacher herself. Some of the smaller ones ran confidingly up to her, and had a playful pinch of the cheek and a 'Merry Christmas, dear,' for their pains; whilst the elder ones said: 'Servant, miss,' not at all with a look of menial subservience, but with glances of love, as of those who frankly acknowledged obligations by no means humiliating. Stubbs experienced an unwonted sensation of peaceful content and devotional gratitude as he sat by Lucy in the ample pew, and as he listened to her voice, and joined his own with unusual fervour, and gladdened his eyes with the holly-twined pillars and the holly-formed letters above the altar, which had been carefully arranged in a segment of a circle, whereof the curve said: 'Glory be to God on high,' and the straight line: 'Peace on earth, good-will towards men.'

CHAPTER V.—A FAMILY GATHERING.

There was a joyous luncheon soon after church, for two carriages had arrived with welcome visitors. There were Uncle Tom and Aunt Maria, and Sister Mary with her husband James, and others not so closely related, and they all held out their hands to Stubbs, as if they had known him for many a year; and Stubbs felt, more than he had thought he could, that he was a link in the society of kindly men. And after luncheon, the hats sallied forth for a long walk, and the bonnets staid at home for exercise in the garden, or for womanly converse by the blazing hearth.

After the bracing walk came the Christmas cheer; and happy Stubbs sat next to Lucy. The talk flowed freely on with many an anecdote and many a jest; and when at last the drawing-room was reached, they sat in semicircle round the fire, and spoke of Christmas reminiscences: how one had been there who was now with the dead; how another would be thinking of them in a foreign land; how another was absent by reason of feud; and how good it is that enmities should cease at such a time. Then the strain grew more cheerful; and they conversed of love, and marriage, and children, as they wandered to the scenes of New-year's Day and the dancing delights of gay Twelfth-night. Each could remember how at such a time symptoms had shewn themselves in Jack and Gill which had betrayed their secret to observant folk, and had resulted in a trip by gray-horsed chariot to a fashionable church for change of name. Isabella's mother, Stubbs thought, should have been there to see how a Christmas evening could pass without profane music, and without 'cross questions and crooked answers;' for the questions were pleasant and straightforward, and the answers of a similar character. But inexorable time brought round eleven o'clock, and with it came the clatter of hoofs and the drawing up of carriages at the door. Then the time-honoured butler of the house appeared with a two-handled cup upon a silver salver; he placed it upon the table and retired, and Mr Horton whispered something to Laurence, who laughed aloud, and approaching Stubbs, said, with as much seriousness as he could assume: 'I must beg you, old fellow, to shift your quarters, and sit next to me; an ancient ceremony is about to be performed.'

So Stubbs, who had been sitting between Ellen and Lucy, reluctantly left his place, and formed one extreme of the semicircle, of which old Mr Horton formed the other. Then the senior, taking the cup in his hands, turned to Aunt Maria, who was his next neighbour, kissed her affectionately, took a sip, and passed the cup to her; and so it went round with kiss and sip until it came to Laurence, who, having received it from Lucy, and having glanced slily at Stubbs, whispered to her something which caused her to bite her lip, and look steadfastly at the fire. He then, having handed the cup to Stubbs with the recommendation to 'take a good swig—it's rare stuff,' walked across and saluted his father, saying, on his return, to Stubbs: 'By the way, you might have liked to kiss the governor; I daresay *he* wouldn't mind.'

But old Mr Horton relieved Stubbs by shaking his fist at Laurence, and shouting: 'You're an impudent young puppy, sir.—If I were you, I'd kick him, Stubbs.' And so with general laughter the guests departed, each having some invitation to impress upon the family, and each taking care to say to Stubbs: 'You'll come, of course, Mr Stubbs; you'll not expect any formal asking?'

CHAPTER VI.—SLIPPERY GROUND.

The Christmas vacation was passing joyously with Stubbs: there were skating, sleighing, billiards, dinner-parties, and dances with Ellen and Lucy for frequent partners. They were both beautiful dancers; but there was about Lucy's movements a grace which struck even the most unobservant; she moved with the ease of a gossamer on the gale. Stubbs had been the pupil of both; for he had confessed his inability to waltz. He could shuffle through a quadrille, he had said, and could shamble through a polka, but waltzes and that sort of thing were beyond him. So Ellen and Lucy had taken him in hand; and it must not be considered sheer stupidity on Stubbs's part, if, when Lucy drew her dress aside to more conveniently shew him the steps, he was very slow to learn, and required a great deal of that elementary instruction (for she had the prettiest foot and ankle imaginable). Moreover, Lucy skated exquisitely; and, though Laurence was fond of long excursions to distant spots when the river was frozen, Stubbs was more pleased when his friend was lazy, and would stay at home to skate upon the garden-pond; for then Lucy (who, of course, could not go everywhere)

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would join them, and Stubbs had the privilege of taking off and putting on Lucy's skates. On such an occasion, Lucy had said with a laugh: 'Thank you, Mr Stubbs. Laurence says I ought to give you a copper.'

'We always give the lads coppers for putting our skates on,' said Laurence.

'But I have no coppers,' rejoined Lucy demurely.

'They pay in different coin in Holland,' remarked Stubbs tremulously.

'Oh, do they?' asked Lucy. 'Pray, how do they pay?'

'With the lips,' answered Stubbs boldly.

'They speak their thanks, I suppose you mean,' said Lucy archly.

'No; I do not: they—they—you can read all about it in books on Holland,' stammered Stubbs.

'Ah! but this is not Holland, you know: I must take care to have coppers another time;' and away flew Lucy on the outer edge.

And Stubbs said to his own heart: 'Here, by God's grace, is the one maid for me.'

At length the vacation was over, and Cambridge life began again. But Stubbs went back a new man. There was now a name which he blest when he rose in the morning, and when he lay down to rest at night. He had been objectless before, but now he would work with a view to an end. He had supposed he would glide naturally into holy orders; he would now aim to be worthy of his vocation, and of her whose religion was no sham. He would also strive for high honours, that he might have a reasonable chance of clerical preferment. Was it possible that Lucy guessed his feelings? Others certainly had; for once at a dance, as he stood talking to pretty Emily Field, whilst his looks kept wandering to where Lucy was dancing, Emily had said abruptly: 'I think Lucy the prettiest girl in the room.'

'So do I—by far,' poor Stubbs had admitted with more honesty than gallantry; but Emily had only laughed good-naturedly, and said: 'It is no use fishing for compliments from you, and I shouldn't have believed you if you had said anything else,' for Emily Field was as candid as she was pretty; and besides, there was some one, as she knew very well, who did not at all agree with Stubbs.

CHAPTER VII.—WHAT THE STARS SAW.

On flew hours, and days, and weeks, and then the Easter vacation came, and old Mr Horton gave Stubbs to understand that he and Laurence would be expected together. So he basked once more in Lucy's smiles, which were banished only once through him. It was on Easter Sunday, and Lucy had put on a new bonnet. She had been quizzed about it by Laurence, and had acknowledged that she always made a point of putting on something new on so notable a day; and then: 'Have you put on anything new, Mr Stubbs?' she asked innocently.

'Nothing but a new spirit,' answered Stubbs irreverently.

Then the sad, grave look came over Lucy's face, and Stubbs felt stabbed to the heart, for he fancied her eyes grew dim with tears; but she turned her head away hastily, so that he could not see; so hurt was she by the slightest irreverence.

On sped the weeks once more, and the May term brought plenteous leaves to the beautiful limes at the backs of the colleges, and cricket-matches and boat-races. And the Horton family went to Cambridge to see a boat-race, and the Unity boat made a splendid 'bump,' and Stubbs pulled stroke, and Lucy saw him. And when the Hortons departed, old Mr Horton said: 'Well, Mr Stubbs, you're one of us now, you know; you must come to us with Laurence for the Long Vacation, if you've no other engagement.'

And Stubbs replied: 'Upon my word, sir, you are very good, and I wish I could. But you see I go in for my degree next time, and I am going to read with a private tutor this Long.'

'Well, well,' said Mr Horton, 'at anyrate you can come to us for a week or ten days before you join your reading-party.' And so it was arranged.

Now, before the term was over, Laurence Horton and Stubbs had stumbled upon a topic of conversation which will crop up occasionally amongst young men at the universities and elsewhere. It was eyes—ladies' eyes; and Stubbs had maintained with considerable warmth that Lucy Horton had the most beautiful eyes in the world. Laurence had replied indifferently that it might be so, but that as he had always regarded Lucy as a younger sister, he had taken very little notice of them. They went on to noses, and it appeared that Stubbs had never seen any nose he liked so well as that which stood above the chin of Lucy Horton. Laurence whistled, and proceeded to mouths, when the mouth of Lucy Horton was pronounced by Stubbs the mouth of mouths. Hereupon, Laurence said abruptly: 'Stubbs, my boy, you are spoony on Lucy.'

This very common but very disagreeable language applied to 'the maiden passion for a maid' is usually considered tantamount to a criminal charge, and the person to whom it is addressed is popularly regarded as being 'taxed' with an offence, and it was therefore not without a slight blush that Stubbs replied defiantly: 'I know I am—what then?'

'Oh, nothing,' said Laurence; '*I'll* give you a testimonial.'

And as Laurence was lord-paramount over Grove House, Stubbs should, in Laurence's opinion, have considered the matter settled—but he didn't.

'You see, old fellow,' said Stubbs anxiously, 'I'm doubtful about my circumstances.'

'Pooh!' replied Laurence; 'you'll get a fellowship.'

'And if I do,' observed Stubbs, 'I shall have to give it up when I marry. The only way I can see is this: I believe I shall take a very fair degree, and so I may get a good mastership in a crack school, and take boarders. I confess I don't quite like the notion; but do you think Lucy would object?'

'Object!' echoed Laurence; 'it's just what she would like—a spotless parson and lots of children to look after.'

'Ah! but think of the details. Think of little Jones, please, sir, as the housekeeper would say, with the stomach-ache, and little Thompson with the mumps, and all sorts of miserable little Christians with all sorts of horrible complaints.'

'My dear boy, it's just what Lucy would be great in; she'd be like a mother to the whole lot.'

And so Stubbs determined that he would take the earliest opportunity of finding out how Lucy

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was minded towards him. It happened, therefore, on a certain evening in early June, when he was paying his short visit at Grove House, he said to Lucy, as they sat in the drawing-room: 'I wish you would sing me a favourite song.'

'What is it?' asked she.

'*Il segreto per esse felice*'——

'And pray, what does that mean in plain English?' growled old Mr Horton, who disliked 'outlandish' words, as he called them.

'*The receipt for being happy*, dear papa,' said Lucy.—'I'll sing it with pleasure, Mr Stubbs, on condition that you afterwards sing *La Donna è mobile*.'

'I'll not sing *that*,' blurted Stubbs decisively.

'And pray, why not?' growled old Horton again. 'What does *that* mean in plain English?'

'*Woman is changeable*, dear papa,' answered Lucy. 'Why will you not sing it, Mr Stubbs?'

'I would rather not,' said Stubbs a little sulkily. 'I will sing *Com' è gentil*, or, *Oh! summer night* (to give the first words of the English version, Mr Horton), if that will do.'

'Oh, certainly, Mr Stubbs; it will do very well,' answered Lucy, looking just the least bit in the world annoyed.

The songs were ended, and, the evening being close, every one strolled into the garden for air. There was summer lightning playing about, and Stubbs and Lucy sat watching it after the others had gone indoors again. Stubbs suddenly drew his chair near Lucy's, and said with some confusion: 'Do you know why I asked you to sing that particular song?'

'Oh, was not that a beautiful flash?' asked Lucy evasively.

'I think I know "the receipt for being happy,"' continued Stubbs, moving his chair still nearer to Lucy's.

'There's another beautiful flash,' was Lucy's only remark; and Stubbs asked somewhat angrily: 'Can you guess why I wouldn't sing that *woman is changeable?*'

'Because you are wilful, sir,' answered Lucy archly.

'Indeed,' said Stubbs, 'that is not the reason.—Have you read the German poems I gave you?'

'Some of them; and I think them charming.'

'Do you recollect *The Three Students?*'

'O yes; it is beautiful—so simple, and so pathetic.'

'Did you see,' Stubbs went on, 'some pencil-marks against the words spoken by the third student? Did you notice that I had translated them to the best of my ability: *Thee I loved from the first, thee I love to-day; and I'll love thee when all things have passed away?* And did you know, Lucy, it was you that I meant?'

Lucy turned away her head and said nothing, but slid her fingers into Stubbs's hand.

What scene the sheet-lightning afterwards illuminated was witnessed by the stars alone; and they winked upon it after their fashion.

The consequence was that next morning Stubbs was closeted some time with old Mr Horton, and came from the interview with a smile of triumph.

CHAPTER VIII.—STUBBS 'PASSES,' AND PASSES AWAY.

The reading-party broke up at the beginning of October, and each member of it went whither he listed until the day arrived when he must return to college. What need to mention that Stubbs went to Grove House? There was all he prized on earth; and there he was proud to confess to himself that 'Stubbs's luck' was not so bad after all.

At last the cruel day arrived when he and Laurence must return to college. And once more time flew, and Christmas was drawing near again.

But Stubbs was not destined to pass it at High Beckham. The mathematical examination was coming on in January; and mathematics and 'rheumatics' were almost equally disabling to Stubbs. Fears were expressed even by his private tutor that he would not manage to 'pass;' and if he failed to 'pass,' he could not try for classical honours. Great, therefore, was the consternation at Grove House. All his future depended upon his 'passing;' a 'pluck' looked like utter ruin for him. Every effort, therefore, must be made; nothing must occur to disturb his mind. It was proposed, then, by old Mr Horton, seconded by Laurence, supported by Ellen, and acquiesced in by conscientious Lucy, that correspondence between her and Stubbs should cease till the dreadful examination was over. She should indulge him with one long letter on Christmas-day, and, with that exception, he must try to forget that pens, ink, and paper were used for anything but mathematics.

So Stubbs staid 'up' another Christmas, whilst Laurence went home to High Beckham; for Stubbs was Laurence's senior by a year. But Stubbs and I were in the same year; so we dined together on Christmas-day, and made moan together over our fate, and read together until the awful morning broke, when the doors of the Senate-house, at nine A.M., opened wide, and swallowed us up.

Upon leaving the Senate-house, on the last day of the examination, Stubbs rushed like a madman to college, called at his tutor's, obtained his *exeat*, or 'leave to go away,' and then flew to his rooms to strip off his cap and gown. To his astonishment, the outer door was open. It must be that his bed-maker was putting things to rights. He hastily opened the inner door, and by the dim firelight saw a sombre figure seated in his chair. The figure turned its head round—it was Laurence Horton.

'Horton!' cried Stubbs in amazement.

'Stubbs, old boy!' said Laurence in a low voice; and as he rose from the chair and stood by the fire, Stubbs saw with a shudder that he was dressed in black.

'Stubbs, old boy, I've some very bad news,' said Horton sadly.

The other turned pale and trembled, but said not a word.

'It's about Lucy, Stubbs. Do you think you can bear it?'

Stubbs simply nodded, sank into a chair, folded his arms upon the table, and buried his face in them.

Horton laid a hand gently on Stubbs's shoulder, bent down, and whispered.

There was silence for the space of ten minutes, whilst Horton stood with his hands before his face, and Stubbs gave no outward sign of consciousness, save a heaving motion of the back and shoulders.

At length, Stubbs looked up an older man, and said softly: 'When—when—when?'—— He couldn't complete the sentence.

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'This morning at six,' said Laurence, knowing what the question should have been.

There was another long silence, and then Stubbs said faintly: 'I shall go at once—there is time to catch the train. Are you coming?'

Laurence nodded. A fly was brought, and the two friends went away together. As they travelled in the train Stubbs commanded himself sufficiently to ask for an account of what had befallen Lucy, and why they had not sent for him. She had been on the ice, Laurence said, on Christmas-day, after she had written her last letter to Stubbs; the ice had given way, and before she could be got out she had been thoroughly drenched. No bad effects shewed themselves immediately, but when a day had passed she became alarmingly ill. She grew better, and then worse, and that morning she had sunk rapidly. 'And why we did not let you know anything about it,' said Laurence in conclusion, 'you will learn best when you reach home. We had no fear at first, and at last we had good reason for silence.'

Ellen would fain have accompanied Stubbs into the chamber of death, but he begged that he might enter alone; so his grief was hidden from mortal eye. Clasped in one hand of the dead was a prayer-book which he had given her, and in the other was a paper, on which was written in pencil: 'Good-bye, dearest Willie, till we meet again. It was at my request that you were told nothing: it could have done me no good, and it would have injured you. Forgive me if it *seems* unkind; I could not *be* unkind to you. Papa promised you should take this from my own hand.'

So there was bitter mourning in Grove House, and the hearts of the red-cloaked pupils were heavy.

Stubbs 'passed,' but his performance in the classical examination was not equal to expectation. The examiners, of course, could not know that over all the papers they set hovered a sweet little face, and that all the words were turned to 'Lucy.' They put his name low down in the list; and his comrades talked of 'Stubbs's luck.'

But Stubbs cared little where the examiners put him. He had made up his mind for a different life from that which Lucy would have shared with him. He was only one-and-twenty, and Mr Horton's influence was sufficient to procure him a cadetship. So he departed for active life in India. He devoted himself to the practice of the sabre, and his swordsmanship was a matter of talk. In many a dangerous affair, with the once ruddy face begrimed with powder, and the soft blue eyes darting out fierce fire, he had plied his sword to terrible purpose, as he charged with his troop of irregular horse. And when Indian hate—whether called forth by greased cartridges, or long-borne tyranny, or natural malignity—broke out in open mutiny and murder, Stubbs and his troop did good service. Their Rhakee tunics, scarlet sashes, and picturesque turbans were regarded by the rebels as the outward garb of avenging furies. And thus it happened that on a day Stubbs came upon a party of rebel horse, commanded by the notorious Rumbeer Singh, who was commonly called, from his bravery, 'The Lion.'

'Remember, lads, the Lion is mine,' cried Stubbs, as they galloped down upon the enemy; and in a few seconds he and the Lion were hand to hand. Then Stubbs's swordsmanship stood him in good stead, for he had no mean antagonist opposed to him.

'That was well meant,' said Stubbs coolly, as he parried a vicious cut; but the Lion only grinned with rage.

At it again they went, cutting and thrusting, and wheeling their well-trained horses. At last, the Lion left an opening, Stubbs gave point, and the Lion fell. A loud cheer rose from Stubbs's men, but at that very moment a ping was heard, and Stubbs's saddle was emptied of its rider.

Over the Hortons' pew, in High Beckham Church, is a marble slab with this inscription: 'Sacred to the Memory of WILLIAM STUBBS, late Captain, S—— Irregular Horse, who fell gallantly fighting against the Indian Mutineers, January 7, 1858.' And under a glass cover in Laurence Horton's study at Grove House lies a little prayer-book, wrapped in a piece of paper. Pencil-marks are still faintly visible upon the paper, on which, as well as on the prayer-book, are stains as of blood; for Stubbs had carried prayer-book and paper close to his heart; and the Hortons had regarded Stubbs as their relation.

FRENCH BANK-NOTES.

THE French adopt a very elaborate plan of lettering and figuring their bank-notes, as a security against forgery. The notes are issued in groups called *alphabets*, of 25,000 each, comprising 25 *letters* of 1000 each; and the successive issues or alphabets are numbered in regular order. Not only is every note different from every other, in some of the symbols which it bears, but it tells how many notes of that particular denomination have been issued. M. Maxime Du Camp gives a particular instance, of a 1000-franc bank-note; it tells the date of issue at full, 25th May 1868; at two of the corners, the number 32 denotes the 32d alphabet, while a T denotes the particular letter of that alphabet; in two other corners, 369 denotes the 369th note in the series or letter T; while 0,793,369 denotes that there have been done to that date 793,369 notes, of 1000 francs each, printed and issued. Every note, in fact, has a kind of surname which assigns it to a particular family, and a kind of baptismal name which belongs individually to itself alone. From the mode in which they are printed, it is absolutely impossible that two notes can be *quite* alike; and this offers a powerful check to forgers. The system adopted at the Bank of England is different in its symbolic arrangement; but we have no reason to believe that it is less effective.

Everything connected with the manufacture of the notes is managed with extraordinary care. The paper is made near Coulommiers, in an establishment expressly reserved for this purpose. A commissioner, appointed by the bank, resides constantly at the mill. The paper is made by the hand method, in very small sheets for one note each. Each note bears a water-mark, which is changed according to a certain system. All the pieces of paper are closely examined in relation to their strength, dimensions, and purity; and so severe is the test, that sixty out of every hundred are rejected, and consigned to the pulp vat. The perfect sheets are packed in iron boxes, locked, sealed by the commissioner, and transmitted to the bank at Paris, where another

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searching examination is made. The notes are packed in another and a larger receptacle, of which two high officials—the secretary-general and the comptroller—retain two keys; and without the concurrence of these two officials, the precious (though unprinted) bits of paper cannot be taken out of the strong box.

So much for the paper. Now for the plates. Taking the 1000-franc note as a specimen, the steel plate for it cost M. Barre three years of labour; electrotypes are taken from this plate, for printing from; and as 50,000 impressions can be taken before the electrotype is worn out, a succession of such casts will render it unnecessary to print from the steel plate itself. For notes of other and lower denominations, photographic as well as electrical agency is brought into requisition. An elaborate design is drawn on a large scale; a reduced photograph is obtained from this; a plate is engraved from the photograph; and electrotype casts are obtained from the plate. This intervention of photographic aid is said to render the processes more rapid, more sure, and less costly. The plate for the 100-franc note is so exquisitely engraved that it took five years to prepare.

When a new batch of notes is to be printed, an equivalent number of the choicely prepared and preserved sheets of paper is handed over to the superintendent of the printing-office. This office is among the inner buildings of the Bank of France, and is governed by very rigorous rules in all things. The operatives are all picked men, skilful, active—and silent. The sheets, the ink, and the matrixes of the plates are kept securely under lock and key until actually wanted. The printing is effected by steam-worked presses. The ink is blue, and its composition known to only a few of the authorities. An inspector goes his rounds during the continuance of the operations, watching every press, every workman, every process. A beautiful machine, distinct from the press, is employed to print the variable numbers on the note; fed with sheets of paper, it will number a thousand of them in succession, changing the digits each time, and scarcely requiring to be touched meanwhile; even the removal of one note and the placing of another are effected by automatic agency. At every successive stage, the note is examined. So complete is the registration of everything, that a record is always at hand of the number of sheets rejected ever since the Bank of France was established, be it for defects in the paper, the printing, or the numbering. When the master printer has delivered up his packets of printed and numbered sheets, each note is stamped with the signatures of the secretary-general and the comptroller. This completes the *creation* of notes. The notes so created are kept in a strong box, of which the secretary-general and the comptroller have keys, and are retained until the day of *issue*. The chief cashier tells the governor that he wants a new supply of a particular denomination of notes, the governor tells the council, the council tell the secretary-general and the comptroller, and these two functionaries open their strong box, and hand over the notes demanded. The notes at this time are not really money; they do not become so until the chief cashier has put his signature to each, and registered its number in a book.

The life of a French bank-note is said to average two or three years, and does not terminate until the condition is very shaky indeed—crimpled, pierced with pin-holes, corner creases torn, soft, tarnished, decrepit while yet young. Some have been half-burned; one has been found half-digested in the stomach of a goat, and one boiled in a waistcoat-pocket by a laundress. No matter; the cashier at the bank will do his best to decipher it; he will indeed take an infinity of trouble to put together the ashes of a burned note, and will give the owner a new note or the value in coin, if satisfied of the integrity of the old one. The bank authorities preserve specimens of this kind as curiosities, minute fragments gummed in their proper position on a sheet of paper. Very few of the notes are actually and irrecoverably lost. During the last sixty-seven years, 24,000 bank-notes of 1000 francs each have been issued, and of this number 23,958 had been returned to the bank by the month of January last: leaving only 42 unaccounted for. Whether these 42 are still in existence, or have been burned into uncollected ashes, or are at the bottom of the sea, or elsewhere, is not known. Of 500-franc notes, 24,935 have been returned out of 25,000. The bank holds itself morally and financially responsible for the small number of notes unreturned, ready to cash them if at any time presented.

The bank sends the old notes again and again into circulation, if verified and usable; but they are examined first, and any that are too defective are cancelled by stamping a hole in them. These cancelled notes pass from one official to another, and are grouped in classified bundles; the book that records the birth of each note now receives a notification of its civil death; and after three years' incarceration in a great oak chest, a grand conflagration takes place. A huge fire is kindled in an open court; the defunct notes are thrown into a sort of revolving wire-cage over the fire; the cage is kept rotating; and the minute fragments of ash, whirled out of the cage through the meshes, take their flight into infinite space—no one knows whither. The Bank of France prints a certain number of notes per day, and destroys a smaller number, so as to have always in reserve a sufficient supply of new notes to meet any emergency; but the actual burning, the grand flare-up, takes place only about once a month, when perhaps 150,000 will be burned at once. The French go down to lower denominations than the Bank of England—having notes of 100 francs and 50 francs, equivalent to L.4 and L.2. There must be a great deal of printing always going on in the Bank of France, seeing that, in 1868, they issued 2,711,000 notes, of an aggregate value of 904,750,000 francs (averaging about L.13 each), and burned 1,927,192, value 768,854,900 francs.

It *sounds* a very dreadful thing, for 30,000,000 sterling in bank-notes to be wilfully burned in one year! But there is always a phœnix to rise from the ashes: the bank can regenerate as fast as it kills. The Bank of France, in 1846, put in circulation a beautiful crimson-printed note for 5000 francs; but the French people did not like notes of so high a denomination, and all but a very few of this kind have been returned and cancelled. On one occasion, a superb individual, wishing to pay a dowry in handsome style, obtained twelve notes of 5000 francs each for the purpose; but they were returned the very next day by a banker, who much preferred smaller notes for his general

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purposes. The notes now regularly kept in circulation in France are those of 1000, 500, 100, and 50 francs.

When photography became established as a practical art, it was found that bank-notes printed with black ink lent themselves too readily to the machinations of the forger. Thereupon, the Bank of France determined to employ blue ink, which baffles the photographic imitator, and to have some engraved device or other on both surfaces. This plan has been completely successful. In regard to other modes of falsification, an experienced chemist is constantly employed in studying all new discoveries that may perchance be brought into requisition, in order to devise means of averting roguery. Forgery of the notes is now extremely rare. On one occasion, three persons attached to a deposed royal prince were found to have been concerned in a deep-laid scheme of note-forgery; a packet containing twelve false notes of 1000 francs each was presented to be cashed, but the fraud was detected in time to avert loss. About 1853, a more determined attempt upon the bank was made. False 100-franc notes came to the bank with great rapidity and regularity. They were so admirably executed that no banker, money-changer, or trader could detect the fraud, and therefore no reason presented itself for refusing to take them in the ordinary way of trade. The experts at the bank alone detected them by means of a tiny black spot near the figure of Mercury. For eight years continuously did these notes make their appearance, defying all endeavours on the part of the authorities to discover the malefactors. The bank did not like to make the fraud known, lest it should shake the confidence of the public in the 100-franc notes generally. At last the clever scoundrel was discovered; he was an engraver, and it was found that he had successfully put into circulation false notes to the value of nearly 200,000 francs. His end was strange and horrible. Transported to Cayenne in 1862, he tried to escape into the Dutch settlements; faint and exhausted, he became fast embedded in the thick slimy mud of a river, and was there *eaten alive by crabs!*

The Bank of France makes all its payments in notes, with the necessary exception of sums under 50 francs; but as these notes can be immediately cashed in an adjoining office, the claimant has at all times virtually the command of specie payment. In 1868, there were 722 million francs' worth of notes exchanged at the counter for gold. One million of francs in the larger denomination of notes will only weigh 1644 grammes, and can be packed into the size of a large octavo volume. M. Maxime Du Camp states that he one day saw notes to the value of 105 million francs (L.4,000,000) spread out on one table. Nevertheless, these notes *do* make a formidable pile when assembled in great number. He relates an anecdote of a tanner at Dijon who declared publicly that the annual budget of France (about 2000 million francs) would reach in bank-notes to the top of the steeple at St Bénigne Church: a busybody took the tanner up before the police for having said something seditious. The tanner proved his case, with abundance to spare; for it was shewn in evidence that 2,000,000 notes of 1000 francs each would make a pile 200 mètres high—a height which certainly no steeple at present reaches, whatever may be said of the Tower of Babel.

The approach to the vaults of the Bank of France is by a descending stone staircase, the masonry of which would defy the pick, and so narrow that two persons cannot pass it abreast. Four iron doors present themselves, each secured by three locks; and two keys kept by two officials must be used before any of the locks can be opened. Within the vaults are ranged leaden chests, containing bags each filled with 10,000 francs in silver; whereas the smaller bags of gold, also containing the value of 10,000 francs each, are heaped up in piles. Silver ingots, deposited by bankers and money-changers as security for advances, are ranged symmetrically in masses; but the ingots of gold, by their yellow brilliancy, are more suggestive of exhaustless and most tempting riches. When our authority visited the place on a recent occasion, the vaults contained—in leaden chests of silver coin, bags of gold coin, and ingots of the two metals—the prodigious value of 726,275,666 francs 68 centimes (let us give the odd centimes, by all means). This sum approaches very nearly to 30,000,000 sterling.

WALLIS'S PICTURE OF CHATTERTON.

On his truckle-bed outstretchèd, heedless now of smile or frown,
Half-undressed the poet lieth, with his white arm dangling down:
From his cold and clammy forehead fall his rich, sweat-matted locks;
And the dear dead face's calmness human pity courts and mocks.

In the cold air of the attic, by the stripling's fragile frame,
Just a puff of smoke ascendeth from the taper's dying flame;
And the floor is strewn with papers, lying torn in tattered slips,
With the curse on Bristol, breathèd by the poor, pale, poisoned lips.

Through the half-oped garret casement dreamily the dawn creeps in,
Touching tenderly the sleeper—child of Sorrow, and of Sin:
Soon the world without will waken, poorer by a poet heart,
And all heedless underneath him, crowds will press unto the mart.

Oh, the magic powers of genius! oh, the painter's potent spell!
Praise be to thy pencil, Wallis; thou hast done thy brave work well;
And the tragedy enacted on that memorable day
Lives to us in all its horror, preaching to our hearts for aye.

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WAS SHE WORTH IT?

CHAPTER I.—THE ASSEMBLY-ROOMS OF BARNCOTE IN 1847.

THE Upper Ten Thousand of Barncote are gathered together at one of their monthly assemblies. It is the 31st of December, and in consequence, the ball is a more brilliant and 'dressy' affair than usual. As a rule, the Barncotians, in those days, set their faces against any sumptuary extravagance, and the monthly assemblies usually entailed on Paterfamilias only the expense of a few yards of ribbon and a bit of white muslin.

This is an exceptional occasion: the officers from the barracks are present *en masse*, and, by special request, in uniform; the band of the 4th Bays is also in attendance, and relieves the cornet-à-piston and three fiddles with a strident galop or rattling polka. The female Barncotians were arrayed in great splendour, and in all the bravery of diaphanous muslins, shimmering satins, and other millinery properties. The black coats present were rather at a discount; not that the young ladies were not fully aware of the temporary character of a flirtation with the 'Bays,' and the much higher chances of a satisfactory settlement with the young native lawyers, brewers, maltsters; but that, round dances not having been long in vogue in the county, the natives, as a rule, could not or would not dance them; so that when the brass band struck up a lively polka, there was a general move on the part of the civilians to the card-rooms adjoining for a little loo.

There were two card-rooms, one leading out of the other. In the first were a couple of whist-tables. At one of these sat Colonel Poyser of the Bays, a gray-haired old soldier; Callum, the Barncote brewer; Mrs Poyser, the colonel's wife, a clever meek old lady, whose silver hair was done up in rolls on the top of her head; and Lady Whittaker, the relict of a city grandee. Leaning over her father's shoulder, her curls getting in the old man's way as he sorted his cards, and causing him to puff and snort, and wave his hands impatiently in the air, stood Lucy Callum, as fair a vision as ever maddened the heart of a susceptible Barncotian. Sweet Lucy Callum, pen and ink can't picture thy charms, dear fair Saxon maiden! That her hair was nut-brown—*not* shot with gold or tinged with red, but of the extinct good old-fashioned russet brown; that her skin was as fair and pure as the white lip of a sea-shell, tinged with the hue of youth and health, and her rosy lips just parted, shewed the dearest little teeth in the world; that her eyes were of a deep lucid gray, fringed with long lashes a shade darker than her hair: to tell you all this is only waste of time; you would fail to realise the sweetness of Lucy Callum. And yet I wish I could paint her for you. She is of a type of womanhood now extinct, of a simpler, easier world, of a more quiet and faithful time. —*Forty-seven*, ah me, since then, the world has changed from an old respectable, staid, and proper world, to a raddled old harridan dancing the Cancan!

There stood by the vicar's wife at the second card-table, pretending to look over her cards, but in reality drawing long draughts of love from the contemplation of Lucy Callum, a young and handsome fellow of some twenty years of age. This was Tom Bellamy, a distant relative and ward of John Callum the brewer.

The entrance of the young men from the ball-room disturbed the whist-players, and the game was suspended for a moment, as they passed through into the inner room.

Colonel Poyser looked anxiously from under his bushy eyebrows, but none of his youngsters were of the party; only Captain Prodder and Major Bond, who could take care of themselves. The Bays was a quiet, gentlemanly regiment, and old Poyser was like a father to his youngsters, and kept them away as far as he could from the temptations of unlimited loo. Whist the old man encouraged, and didn't mind what the points were, but 'those gambling games' he set his face against most sternly.

Tom Bellamy made a move as though to pass between the red curtains into the inner room.

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Callum looked up over his gold eye-glasses: 'No loo to-night, Tom.'

'Well, I'll just take a hand, uncle,' said Tom carelessly.

Old Callum was wonderfully fond of a little quiet gambling himself, and report said that at the private card-club at the *White Hart* a thousand or two would sometimes change hands on a single night; report said also that the change had frequently been unfavourable to Mr Callum. His nephew therefore felt as though Satan were reproving sin, when his uncle (titular: he was only a distant cousin really) admonished him for losing twenty pounds or so at loo.

But Lucy left her father's side, and took Tom by the arm: 'Dance this polka with me, Tom. I've refused half-a-dozen, to keep a dance for you, and then you've never asked me once.'

'Well, you know,' said Tom, 'I ain't much good at the polka; and as for asking you, there's been no getting near you all the evening, for these soldier fellows.'

You see Tom, though tremendously in love, was but a young cub. A long-legged young cornet here entered, and carried off Miss Callum. Tom had missed his chance, and was as sulky as a bear. He walked into the next room. Some sweet little cherub, however, sitting up aloft, had determined that Tom should not drop his money that night. Young Winter, a cool and cautious hand, who never continued playing when the cards were against him, and who, having been twice looed for five pounds, had resigned his seat, on the pretence of going to find a partner for the Lancers—young Winter caught hold of Tom by the arm: 'Come with me, Tom; I have something to say to you of importance.'

Archibald Winter was a few years older than his friend. He was now a junior partner in the firm of Winter, Boothby, and Winter, Solicitors, of Pump Street. His female friends called him ugly. He was short and thick-set; his dark hair hung down to the velvet collar of his coat: a projecting forehead and heavy brows shadowed a pair of keen and piercing eyes. He was not prepossessing, but powerful-looking. Not popular with the youth of Barncote, he was reputed 'near,' and a keen hand; but he didn't consort much with young men, and the only friend he had was Tom Bellamy.

'I want to have a long talk with you, Tommy; and we'll go across to the billiard-room, and have a smoke: there'll be nobody there to-night, and the marker's got a holiday, so we'll have a quiet chat all to ourselves.'

Tom walked out rather unwillingly; he didn't like leaving the game in the hands of the long-legged cornet, although he didn't know how to play his cards when he had them.

The billiard-room was a subscription affair. It was on the ground-floor of a house, the upper rooms of which were occupied for offices. A deaf old woman lived in the basement, and looked after the rooms. Winter closed the outside door, and bolted the latch. There was a good fire burning in the room; he turned up the gas, and pulled off the linen cover of the table: 'Tom, I'll play you a level fifty, and take eight to five in half-crowns.'

You see Archibald was a canny youth, and liked to be paid for his time even when counselling a friend.

'I can't do it, Archie; but I suppose I must try.'

Winter gave a miss in balk, and Tom twisted in off the spot, brought the red over the middle pocket, scored up to forty, and muffed a cannon a baby couldn't have missed. Tom made a face, and looked at the end of his cue.

'It isn't chalk that's wanting, it's caution,' said Winter, proceeding to make half-a-dozen easy little cannons; and then holding the red, and finding his opponent under the cushion, he gave another safe miss; and Tom failing to get in again, he won the game in a succession of easy breaks.

'Trouble you for a sov., Tommy. And now, let's sit down, and have a chat and a pipe. Tommy, you'll be of age in a week.'

'Did you bring me here to tell me that?' said Tom sulkily. The loss of his loo, of his Lucy, and of his sovereign, had rather soured the youth's temper.

'Now, Tom, I want to know what you're going to do?'

'As to what?'

'As to making a start in the world.'

'Well, that's pretty well decided for me. I'm to go into my uncle's business.'

'What! brewing?'

'Yes.'

'Then why did your uncle incur the expense of making you a scientific farmer?'

'Five years ago, when I went to old Scrumble to learn farming, my uncle didn't intend to make me a brewer.'

'Oh! two years ago, then, when you went to Barber, to learn surveying and agency-work?'

'Two years ago, my uncle told me he couldn't take me into his business.'

'Ah! Then how is it the old chap has changed his mind?'

'He told me this morning. He has had such good accounts of me, that he thinks he shall be safe in taking me into the business.'

Winter grinned. He got up and opened the door, looked out into the passage, closed the door carefully, sat down, and whispered: 'Do you believe him?'

'Why shouldn't I?'

'Look here, Tommy. Five years ago, your uncle was a rich man, and the brewery bringing him a fortune. Two years ago, the brewery was flourishing, and your uncle firm on his legs. Now—listen, Tommy—he isn't worth a penny!'

Tom jumped on to his feet as white as a sheet: 'Nonsense, Archie.'

'I know it, Tommy. He's lost five thousand each year for the last two years on the hop-duty.* He's been buying up hops for a rise for the last two years, and they've been going down ever since. He's lost fifty thou. at least by that; and he's been going on awful at loo too. I tell you, Tom, and I know it, he can't hold out another six months. It is Birkin's bank that keeps him up: he owes them so much, they're afraid to stop him. Where's *your* five thousand, Tommy?'

'In consols, I know: he told me so.'

'*He told you so*,' said Winter scornfully. 'Look here; unless you act at once, that'll go too, if it hasn't gone already.'

* In 1847, there was a duty on hops, and large sums were wagered on the probable amount.

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'That can't be, Winter. Birkin the banker is the other trustee, and the stock couldn't be sold without his sanction.'

'Well, you're so far right. If you insist on having the stock transferred to you when you come of age, they'll find either the stock or the cash. But Tommy, boy, keep it out of your uncle's clutches, or you'll lose it all, stock, lock, and barrel.—Now, look here, old fellow; Lord Theynam was at our office to-day.'

'Well, what of that?'

'He came to ask the governor—you know we are his local solicitors—if he knew of a clever young fellow to take his agency here. He's going to pension off old Birks. The salary ain't much—one hundred and fifty pounds a year—but it's fair to start with. His head man, you know, gets twelve hundred pounds a year. The governor called me in; and I mentioned your name, and his lordship knew it at once; said your father had been of great service to him; and, in fact, he'd have sent for you then and there, but I told him you weren't in the town; and he's coming in again on Saturday.'

'I don't care much about lords,' said Tom ungraciously, 'and I'd rather not be a flunky.'

'Dash it, man! the money don't smell. Tommy, my dear old boy, here are two roads in life: one leads to a competency and a sure and respectable position in life; the other, to bankruptcy, ruin, death! Tell me now, before you go, you'll ask Lord Theynam for this agency?'

Tom took up a cue and began knocking the balls about. Just at the moment, the band in the assembly-rooms struck up. The band and the dancers had come in refreshed from supper. It was a joyous galop, and the quick beat of eager feet shook the room in which they stood.

Tom caught the impulse of the moment. 'Come along, Archie; let's look up some partners. I'll see you about business in the morning.'

Winter followed with a grunt of dissatisfaction.

Pretty Lucy was very angry with Tom for playing truant, and would hardly speak to him till the party broke up. It was a lovely night, the full moon throwing a golden band of light over the rippling waves; each tiny ripple, as it sped on to the shore, carried the glory with it, and shattered it on the shingle. The beat of the waves seemed to make a harmony with the beat of two human hearts. Anyhow, before they reached No. 1 Montgolfier Terrace, Tommy and Lucy had made it up.

CHAPTER II.—NO. 1 MONTGOLFIER TERRACE IN 1847.

Tom Bellamy found his way to his uncle's house as soon as he decently could, on the morning after the ball. He wanted to assure himself that the episode of the night before wasn't only a delightful dream. When Lucy Callum appeared in a pink morning wrapper, looking pale and sorrowful, his heart gave a mighty throb as he thought: 'She has changed her mind!' But Lucy set his fears at rest, nestling in his arms for a moment, and allowing him to take two or three little kisses. But she looked up into his face with such wistful eyes: 'O Tom, poor papa is *so* ill!'

'Why, what's the matter? He looked so well last night.'

'Yes; but he was taken ill this morning: the doctor says it's paralysis; he has been insensible for a long time, and Dr James says—— O poor papa!' And here Miss Lucy broke down, and sobbed her heart out against Tom's waistcoat.

Tom didn't know exactly how to comfort her. He was fond of his uncle, and shocked at the idea of his death; but he couldn't hit on anything likely to console his sweetheart. 'These trials, you know,' he began—'it's all for the best, dear: there's a brighter world.' And then it struck him that a world without short whist, unlimited loo, old port, and brandy and water, however bright it might be, wouldn't suit the old gentleman; and so he took to kissing the poor damp salt cheeks that were turned up to him for sympathy; and by-and-by the great soft-hearted boy began to blubber too; and that seemed to do her good, for she stopped crying, and began to comfort Tom, stroking his hair off his forehead, and calling him all sorts of pet names; and then, when Tom had mopped himself up, and was thinking what a great booby he was, she ran away to look after her papa.

After a while she came back. 'He's sensible now, and asking for you.' Tom crept up-stairs, and stood by his uncle's bedside. The old man had the mark of death on him. 'Tom,' he whispered in a hoarse voice that seemed to come from a long way off—'Tom, look after Lucy, and stick to the business, for better or worse.'

'By God's assistance, I will!'

You see Tom's feelings had been wrought up a good deal; especially seeing that he was thinking more of Lucy than the business, which the old man had coupled with her.

The dying man took Tom's hand and pressed it: it wasn't the sort of hand-clasp that a father would give who has just bestowed a beautiful daughter and a large fortune on a suitor, but an appealing, clinging, deprecating squeeze; at least so Tom felt it; and perhaps he was right.

Well, John Callum died and was buried; and after the funeral came the reading of the will. It happened also that the day of the funeral was Tom Bellamy's birthday. The will was dated a week before the old man's death. It was short and to the purpose. He bequeathed everything of which he died possessed, after paying his just debts and funeral expenses, to his daughter; and appointed Thomas Bellamy sole trustee and executor. It was his wish, he had added to his will, that his daughter should marry his ward and kinsman, if, as he believed, there was a mutual attachment between them; but in any case he was satisfied to intrust his daughter's welfare to Thomas Bellamy. There were present at the reading of the will, Winter, father and son (the former officiating); Mrs Drux, Callum's widowed sister; old Birkin, the banker; Lucy and Tom. As nobody except the two lovers had any expectations from the will, there was a general grunt of approval. Winter, having folded up the will, looked round on the company, and said: 'I believe I, ahem, violate no, ahem, secrets, when I inform you that there is, ahem, every prospect that our esteemed and, ahem, departed friend's wishes will be fulfilled. On this, ahem, sad and, ahem, trying occasion, it is perhaps not, ahem, seemly to enter into, ahem, congratulatory matter, but we all wish 'em well, and God bless 'em.'

Lucy came over to Tom's side, and put her hand

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into his. It was a pretty little hand; and Tom, who didn't know exactly what to do with it, had almost made up his mind to have another cry—he was a soft-hearted fellow, and his heart was very full—when he caught sight of Archibald Winter's face in the pier-glass. It was so wild-looking and livid, that he hardly recognised it as his friend's. He turned quickly round; but Archie had recovered himself, although he was still white in the face. This little incident quite put Tom into spirits. His love-affair had been almost too quietly and quickly arranged; but to find that there was a jealous rival in the field, and that rival his best friend, why, it was quite thrilling; and now, too, he remembered the conversation of the other night. 'So that was your little game, Master Archie, was it, to put me off the scent, eh?' said Tom to himself; and he began to fancy that he should find his uncle's affairs in better order than that sly fox had led him to expect. I don't think he was a bit angry with his friend, but rather flattered and proud at the tribute paid to the value of the prize he had secured so easily.

The guests went out; the banker taking young Tom by the hand, whispered: 'Call at the bank to-morrow, Tom, about eleven.'

Tom and Lucy and Mrs Drux sat over the fire to talk about the future. Tom, you see, was master of the house now, and of all within it, of the big brewery in Albany Street, of the drays, and wagons, and horses, and men, and all things thereunto pertaining; and he was a little bit set up by his importance.

Mrs Drux was a comely old dame, portly and dignified. She would tell you that she came of the first families of Wessex, and so indeed she did; although her forbears were but bankers and brewers and farmers, and such-like. For the men of Wessex have not faded (or had not then faded) in the shadows of great houses. The land was held not by great territorial lords, but by yeomen and squires. Lords there were, and big houses and great parks; but their big houses were but county villas, in the estimation of the Wessex men. They did not dominate the county, and shut out the sunlight from the plain county-folk. These Wessex people were narrow and exclusive too in their society. Trade did not disqualify; but it must be carried on by a Callum, a Poyser, a Birkin, or a Sponge. Their cliques and coteries, their circles and assemblies, are all dead and withered up; their people have worshipped strange idols, and bowed the knee to Baal.

'Now, my dears,' said Mrs Drux, beaming amiably on the two sweethearts, 'I'm an old woman, and can speak my mind, and there's no use in shilly-shallying. I know it was poor dear John's wish that you should be married at once, and I don't see why not. The business wants looking after, and Tom can manage it much better as owner and master, than as executor to his poor uncle. Here's the house all ready for you, and wanting a master; and I daresay you won't turn your old aunt out of doors just yet. You know, Tom, dear, that I've got ten thousand pounds of my own, which John invested in the business, and gave me five per cent. for; and I paid him two hundred and fifty pounds a year for my keep, and so on; and we can go on in the same way for a while, till you find the old woman a nuisance. So, Tom and Lucy, I say this day month for the wedding-day. No fuss, but just slip out and get married; and then take a week at Boolong or the Isle of Wight, and come home to business again.'

Lucy knelt down by her aunt, and hid her face amongst her voluminous skirts. 'O aunt,' she whispered, 'it can't be so soon.'

'Dear heart alive, and why not? La! your poor dear papa, that's in heaven now, will be rejoiced at it; but there—I shall leave you and Tom to talk it over.'

And so they settled it.

Tom's interview with the banker was protracted. Archie Winter had been right so far—the bank had made heavy advances to his uncle. But the old banker spoke so quietly and kindly, shewed such confidence in Tom's prospects, so flattered his self-love, that Tom found that, almost before he knew it, he had undertaken to take over the business, with its liabilities, on his approaching marriage—a step which the old banker cordially and warmly approved. He was a kindly old soul, poor Birkin, and honestly desirous to do the best for everybody, consistently with the interests of the 'bank.'

'And now, my boy, about this little fund of yours—the five thousand pounds, you'll bring that into the business, of course?' Why, yes, of course, Tom would. 'Well, brewing does pay better than consols, eh, Tom? You must sign a power of attorney before you leave, and we'll sell them out for you.'

It wasn't till Tom had got to his own lodgings, and was smoking a pipe, that the thought struck him: 'Where's Mother Drux's ten thousand pounds? Ah! it's in the business somewhere; and my five thousand pounds is going to join it.'

He started off to the brewery, to look over the books; but he couldn't make head or tail of them. Panks, the book-keeper, had been keeping the books for the last thirty years on the same principle, and *he* couldn't make head or tail of them. Tom made up his mind to have an alteration here, and walked off to see his lawyer, after signing a few cheques from a brand-new cheque-book, which Tom took a little pride in. It was something to have a banking-account in those days. *Now*, every man who has cash or credit to the tune of twenty pounds, may have his account, and draw his cheques just like a millionaire.

Winter senior was at the office, and glad to see his young client. Tom explained his wants, and his dissatisfaction with the state of the brewery books. 'If you'll take my advice, Tom, I wouldn't make any change at present; keep things going for a time, till you feel qualified to take the management yourself.'

'Oh, as for the books,' said Tom, 'I'll square them up soon enough. I'm not going to have a lot of idle fellows eating up the business. There's Panks the book-keeper, and two clerks, and two travellers, and a collector, and a boy, and an old man to take care of the office, and an old woman to take care of the old man. I'll do the whole lot myself, and make a clearance of the crew.'

'Gently, Tom, gently; these things mustn't be done in a hurry. Leave things alone, and learn the business, Tom.'

'Well, that's just what's troubling me,' said Tom: 'I know nothing of brewing.'

'You don't want to, Tom; you don't want to. What's required is management, Tom,

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management, and keeping the connection together. Your name stands high here, Tom: all the magistrates know you, and knew your father before you. We 'll have you on the borough bench, Tom, the next batch that 's made.'

'Thankee,' said Tom; 'but still, don't you think if I'm to brew good beer, I ought to know something about the way?'

'Listen, Tom. It isn't by brewing good beer you 'll keep up the business. You don't suppose anybody will drink your beer who has the choice of Bass or Allsopp, do you? Management, Tom; management—that 's everything! To buy up all the little public-houses, and advance money to the big ones; to open new houses, and get licenses for your own men, and keep Humby's people out. Then you 'll have to sweeten the police; that you 'll have to do through your subs; and the worst of that is, that it 's wasteful, such a lot of money sticks in the way. Then there 's a good deal of trouble in getting hold of public-houses. Why, I know lots of houses your poor uncle has taken on lease for thirty, forty, and sixty pounds a year, and lets again at ten, or fifteen, or twenty pounds.'

'I wonder,' thought Tom, 'if Mrs Drux's ten thousand pounds is invested in that sort of property?'—'That don't seem a profitable way of investing money—does it, sir?' he said aloud.

'*Profitable*, bless me! all that comes out of the beer.'

'And out of the pockets of the clodhoppers who drink our beer, sir.'

Winter looked up sharply—he didn't approve of that way of handling topics. 'Well, Tom, I 'm rather busy just now; but let me advise you at once to call on all the gentry of the county, and solicit their patronage. You won't get anything out of it at first; but they 'll like it, and it 'll be remembered at licensing-time; and don't go in a stuck-up sort of way, but just as a tradesman, and have a big card printed "Mr Thomas Bellamy, Common Brewer, solicits the favour of the continuance of the gracious patronage accorded to his deceased uncle." There—something of that sort. And, Tom, put on a black dress-coat; it looks humble and unassuming, and they *do* like it so. And you must be friendly with the butlers, Tom, and tip them well; they 've often saved money, and are looking out for public-houses. They won't drink your beer, Tom; but for harvest-homes and tenants' dinners, and that sort of thing, Tom, you may get some good orders from them.'

'I 'm dashed if I think I shall like the business: there seems to be a great deal of flunkyism in this brewing.'

'Silly boy, silly boy! you 'll never get on without it.—Well, good-bye, Tom. Wedding-day fixed, eh? Wish you joy—wish you joy.'

The wedding-day was fixed, and the wedding came off at the appointed time. Mr Birkin gave the bride away, and joined the family over the cold fowl and bottle of sherry which did duty for a wedding-breakfast. Whilst the bride was changing her coloured dress for a black travelling one, old Birkin drew Tom into the little breakfast-parlour.

'Tom, I 'll get you to write your name across these bills; they represent the amount of our advances to your firm. We shall renew them, of course, from time to time, and we shall only charge you for the stamps and the ordinary current interest.'

'Now, suppose,' said Tom, 'just for the sake of argument, that I *won't* accept these bills.'

'Well, in that case,' said Birkin, 'we should have to realise our collateral securities.'

'And what does that mean?'

'Selling the brew-house, and this house and the furniture, and the public-houses, and disposing of the business to the best advantage; or perhaps we might carry it on ourselves.'

'Well, that 's candid,' said Tom. 'Perhaps I 'd better sign! It was only my joke, you know, Mr Birkin.'

Mr Birkin smiled grimly. 'Ah, Tom, you must get out of the way of joking in business.'

After that, Tom's faculties became confused, for Mrs Tom made her appearance, and they drove off to the station. Happy Tom!

CHAPTER III.—No. 1 MONTGOLFIER TERRACE IN 1857.

Ten years have made many alterations in Barncote. It is the close of a November day—the sun is going down into the sea in a gold and purple haze. The esplanade is crowded; fair girls are dashing past on horseback; carriages are rolling by; and yet with all there is a hush and a calm, that may be felt. You hear the ringing laughter of light-hearted girls, the beat of the horses' hoofs, the jingling of the harness, and the rattle of the wheels; but between all you can catch the measured plash of the waves, the thud of the oars in the rowlocks of the boat in which the fisherman stands throwing out his nets, and the hail of his comrade on shore.

Ten years have prospered well with Barncote. In '47, only a provincial bathing-town; in '57, a 'queen amongst watering-places.'

Montgolfier Terrace has shared in the general advance. No. 3, where Mr Hanks lived, is now occupied by the Countess Bigaroon, family, and suite. Admiral Bobbin, the sea-lord, lives in No. 4. By-and-by, when the daylight is altogether gone, and the tattoo is sounded at the barracks, and the picket is tramping along, turning our gallant defenders out of the public-houses, where they have been stupefying themselves with Bellamy & Co.'s Entire, if you stroll up Montgolfier Terrace, you will see through the windows on the ground floor, wide open, although in November, men and women in evening dress, and dinner-tables loaded with crystal and flowers and sparkling lights; and you shall hear the band in the enclosure playing selections from *Fra Diavolo*, and through the din the susurrus of the surges, and the creaking of the capstan, and the 'Heave oh!' of the fishers, hauling up the *Mary Jane* out of the reach of the advancing spring-tide.

No. 1, however, has not shared in the general advance. No. 1 still dines at one, and has tea at seven, and sups at nine, for No. 1 does not affect the mode, but is only the residence of Alderman and ex-Mayor Bellamy, a mere local magnate.

On this night in November, the worthy alderman is enjoying his tea in his drawing-room, and we will look in upon him, and see how the past ten years have affected him and his fair partner.

Lucy Bellamy is as beautiful as ever, a charming

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model of an English matron. Still of the placid forehead, the limpid eyes, and flowing lines of figure, which mature age has only developed and rounded to perfection.

Happy Tom! A little girl of eight is climbing about his knees, and claiming a share of the tea-cake he is consuming. But Tom hasn't worn so well. There are wrinkles enough about *his* forehead, and round his eyes; when his mouth is at rest, it is a little drawn down at the corners. Seen now as he leans back and shuts his eyes, it is a sad and weary face; but it brightens up into life and love as his wife leans over his chair, and pushes the hair off his forehead in the old caressing way.

'You look so worn out, Tom, dear; it must have been a very trying day for you, poor fellow! Mr Birkin was such a kind friend, wasn't he, Tom?'

Tom grunted some unintelligible answer, which his wife took for assent, and went on: 'You mustn't grieve, Tom, dear. He lived his appointed time, and he 's now reaping the reward of his long life of good deeds.'

You see Mrs Tom was rather given to preaching; but then she was so good and devout herself, that her only grief almost was that her dear, good Tom didn't seem to think so much of spiritual things as he ought.

'Yes,' said Tom; 'he lived his appointed time; but for all that, I wish he 'd lived a little longer.'

'Ah, Tom, we mustn't repine,' said the sweet homilist. 'Didn't Arthur Birkin feel it very much?'

'By Jove!' said Tom, 'I wish I 'd felt it the same way. The old boy left every penny to Arthur.'

'Oh, I 'm so glad, Tom! I was afraid he didn't like Arthur, and that he 'd leave his money away to the Burgesses: he was so fond of the Burgesses.'

'Tell you what, Lu; what old Birkin was fondest of was the bank: he worshipped the bank. Do you think he 'd leave his money to be squandered by those dashing Burgesses? No. He saw what a hard skinflint Arthur was, and he didn't like him, for the old man wasn't a bad sort himself; but for all that, he knew that Arthur would keep up the bank; and that 's the secret of it.'

'Do you know, Tom, I thought perhaps he 'd leave you something?'

'Well, he didn't; that 's all,' said Tom roughly; and Lucy retreated to her own seat, rather offended. Tom shut his eyes again, and leaned wearily back in his chair. Mrs Tom softened again as she watched his pale face.

'Tom, dear, I 'm afraid you 're worrying.'

'Well, I 've had a good deal to try me lately.'

'In business you mean, Tom?'

'Well, yes.'

'But Tom, dear, you shouldn't let your mind dwell so much upon business. Think, dear, that you should lean upon a Higher Power, who orders everything as He wills.'

'Ah!' said Tom with a sigh that came from the bottom of his heart.

For the last ten years, Tom's religion had been this—to clear the firm with Birkin's bank. For this he had risen early, and late taken rest, and eaten the bread of carefulness. This accomplished, he would live his life in peace and thankfulness. The load he had heaped upon his own back had been very heavy upon him. At first, the consciousness that he had done his duty bore him up on his uphill way. That he had fulfilled his uncle's dying wish; that he had kept his memory from reproach; that he had saved Lucy and her aunt from destitution, and borne up the credit of the old firm: these were thoughts that sustained and comforted him. And then he knew full well that this was the price he had paid for his wife, for Lucy would never have married the man who had refused to carry out his solemn promise, made on his uncle's death-bed. But as years rolled on, and Tom's mind cleared itself from the mists of boyish enthusiasm, he took a very different view of the matter.

Tom's troubles came upon him with redoubled force this night. He had struggled so hard the last ten years; and he had so nearly succeeded—so nearly succeeded! But Birkin's death would probably ruin him; he would go down within reach of land. He had left home that morning with a hopeful heart.

The old man had been so kind to him in his lifetime; not a wicked old man of the sea, choking the life out of his slave, but a kind, considerate old man, driving him quietly, and letting him take breath ever and again. Surely he would leave him something: he might even leave him the amount of his indebtedness, for the bank had, after all, been paid nearly all the original debt, and the estate could so well afford it; for Birkins & Co. were shaky no longer. The waste of building-land, and the shells of tenantless houses, on which the firm had made such large advances, which, on the failure of the land-jobbers, and the building-jobbers, and the working-builders, the bank had been obliged to take possession of, and which had caused such a lock-up of capital: this piece of marsh by the seaside was now covered by aristocratic mansions, gorgeous squares, and noble terraces, and had proved a perfect Pactolus, streaming gold into the coffers of the bank. 'Oh!' thought Tom, 'if I can come back to my wife a free man to-night, there won't be a happier dog in England than I!' But it wasn't to be. As Tom sat by the fire that night, he felt tightening round his neck the wretched burden of his life.

As Tom sat by the fire, he looked at his wife, busy with some feminine work, one shapely hand holding the thread, whilst the other drove a tiny shuttle to and fro. Gracie sat coiled on the floor, leaning against her mother's knee, absorbed in a story-book, her lips just parted, and one little hand playing with a straggling curl. And then the thought came into his mind—it had been there often before, but unacknowledged, driven away, before it took shape; but now he took it up, and handled and examined it—the thought was a question: 'Was she worth it?'

'Yes; by Heaven!' was Tom's exclamation. It broke out unawares; it frightened his wife out of her wits, and made Gracie jump on to her feet.

'Papa!' said Lucy; and there was a world of mild reproach in her voice.

'Mamma,' said Gracie, a little casuist, deeply read in all the lore of catechism and commandment, 'wasn't that taking the name of God's holy dwelling in vain?'

'No, not in vain, my darling,' said Tom, drawing her to him, and giving her a long lingering kiss—'not in vain.'

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Next morning at breakfast Mr Bellamy told his wife that he had made up his mind to insure his life.

'But why, Tom?'

'I think it only prudent, my dear; so much of the business depends on my own work, that I ought to take care of your future, in case anything should happen to me.'

Mrs Tom put down the coffee-pot, and looked at her husband with suffused eyes. That anything should happen to Tom! 'But, Tom, dear, you don't feel ill, or anything?'

'The insurance doctors will take care of that, Lucy: they won't insure my life if there's any prospect of my premature death.'

'But, Tom, isn't there Aunt Drux's ten thousand pounds? Poor aunt! she told me just before she died what a comfort it was to her that we were so well provided for; and I was so pleased, Tom, that she left it to you, instead of settling it, or anything—it shewed such confidence in you, dear Tom.'

'Delightful!' said Tom, who didn't know exactly what he was saying.

'Well, then, Tom, if anything should happen, we should have enough to live upon; and just what would keep Gracie and me, would be all we should want without you, Tom.'

'Ah, the ten thousand your aunt left is in the business. But I shall never make you understand, Lucy. I can only say that I think it necessary to insure my life.'

Tom went to Mr Winter's office—Winter senior was dead, and Archibald ruled in his stead. He was agent for the 'Legal Luminary,' the 'Dubious and Disputable,' and one or two other life offices.

'Want to insure your life, Tom? Of course; what every prudent man ought to do. I told you long ago you should do it. What amount do you intend to propose for?'

'Ten thousand pounds.'

The last ten years have not made much change in Archie Winter. Except that he has had his hair cut—that instead of displaying a whole bosomfull of shirt-front, he is buttoned tightly up to his chin, in an Oxford Mixture suit, you wouldn't notice any alteration in him.

He cast a quick look at Tom from under his bushy eyebrows.

'Biggish sum, isn't it?'

'Not more than it ought to be,' said Tom. 'Nobody but myself could work the business so economically. Were I to die, it would be necessary to have a manager at five hundred pounds a year or so, besides a clerk or two: I don't want my wife to suffer pecuniarily by my death.'

'Still, after all, Tom, there would be a good income left for your widow.'

'Archie, I don't mind telling you, what I daresay you know; I've got borrowed capital in the business. Now, if I were to die, that would probably be called in. Well, this insurance would replace it.'

'Just so,' said Winter; 'I quite see your motives. Well, I shall be very glad to take your proposals. Suppose we say three thousand pounds in the Legal, three thousand in the Dubious, and two thousand each in the Highland Husbands and Scotch Veritable? Well, it's easily arranged. You'll fill up these forms: they're much about the same; some of 'em want to know if your grandmother wore false teeth, and some of 'em only ask if your father was troubled with corns.' Mr Winter here enjoyed a hearty laugh at his own joke. I fancy Artemus Ward borrowed this joke, but he didn't acknowledge it.

Tom had to go up to London, the assurance being a heavy one; and was poked about by the united doctors of the four companies, and questioned most minutely as to all his habits. He had frequent interviews with four boards of directors and four secretaries. The result was satisfactory. The united doctors could find no fault with Tom's constitution or physique. The united boards could find no flaw in Tom's reasons for insuring so heavily. There was no agent for whom the societies had a higher regard than Mr Archibald Winter. *He* was perfectly satisfied. The directors were perfectly satisfied. The proposals were accepted; and Tom had to draw a cheque for three hundred and sixty-seven pounds, the amount of the united premiums.

THE HILL-TRIBES OF CHITTAGONG.

Rising from the rice-swamps and level land of the Chittagong district, in the presidency of Bengal, a vast extent of mountainous country, inhabited by various tribes, covering an area of 6796 miles, is known as the Chittagong Hill-tracts, and is subjected to British rule. The eastern frontier of this strange and distant country is but three hundred miles from the western boundary of China, so that our ideas are at once transported far and wide when we begin to learn what Captain Lewin has to tell us concerning our fellow-subjects there.* It is an interesting country; and they are a strange people, separated from our general and vague notions of 'Indians' by their habits, their speech, and their traditions—resembling not at all 'the mild Hindu,' with whom we have been considerably disenchanted of late years, and as unlike the dwellers in tropical regions of the other continents. The landscape is for the most part sombre, with its traces of volcanic action, its long reaches of still water, and its walls of dark-green verdure; but there are occasional glimpses of wonderful beauty, when 'dark cliffs of a brown vitreous rock, patched and mottled with lichens and mosses of various colours, tower up on either side, while on the right or left shoots back a dark gorge of impenetrable jungle.' Here is a picture of the strange and lavish handiwork of Nature in her remote recesses. 'I remember,' says Captain Lewin, 'once going up the Twine Khyoung, a tributary of the Matamoree, whose stream ran briskly in a narrow pebbly bed, between banks that rose almost perpendicularly, and so high that the sun only came down to us by glints here and there. Enormous tree-ferns hung over our heads, some fifty feet up; while the straight stems of the "gurjun" tree shot up without a branch, like white pillars in a temple; plantains, with their broad drooping fronds of transparent emerald, broke at intervals the dark-green wall of jungle

* *The Hill-tracts of Chittagong, and the Dwellers therein.* By Captain T. H. Lewin, Deputy-commissioner of Hill-tracts. Calcutta.

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that towered up in the background; and from some gnarled old forest giant here and there the long curving creepers threw across the stream a bridge of Nature's own making. Sometimes we came upon a recess in the bank of verdure which rose on either hand, and there the tinkling of a cascade would be heard behind the veil, its entry into the stream being marked by a great gray heap of rounded rocks and boulders, toppled and tossed about in a way that shewed with what a sweep the water came down in the rains. Scarlet dragon-flies, and butterflies of purple, gold, and azure, flitted like jewels across our path; while silvery fish, streaked with dark-blue bands, flew up the stream before us like flashes of light as we poled along.'

Large and richly alluvial plains, covered with forest trees, are found in many parts of the district, which, if cleared, would be admirably adapted for plough-cultivation; and far in the jungle are tanks, fruit-trees, and the remains of masonry buildings—evidence that in some bygone time the land was cultivated and inhabited by men of the plains. They never come there now; the climate sets an insuperable barrier between them: it is innocuous to the hill-men, but deadly to those of the plains, with its tremendous rains and dense fogs. There are no hot winds, and the hottest part of the year is tempered by cool sea-breezes, so that Europeans might bear a residence in the Hill-tracts very well. It is the custom of the people to remain in their villages until the cultivation season commences in May, and then the whole country-side moves up, every man to his patch of cultivation on some lofty hill. In this custom Captain Lewin traces their comparative immunity from sickness, 'for,' he says, 'hill-men, on abandoning their usual mode of life, and taking to other occupations not involving the periodical move to the hill-tops, are nearly as much subject to fever as the people of the plains.' Theirs is a strange, self-contained, isolated life, with a periodic state of siege by the weather, as, during the rainy season, it is almost impossible to move about the country, which has no roads, on account of the rising of the hill-streams. Before the setting in of the rains, the hill-people lay in a stock of provisions, as at that season of the year the bazaars are abandoned by the men of the plains, and trade almost entirely ceases. The system of commerce is very primitive: its centres are four bazaars, to which the hill-people resort for salt, spices, dried fish, tobacco, and other necessaries only procurable from the plains. They bring down for sale cotton and timber, the oil-bearing seeds of a certain tree which grows in the jungle, and small quantities of ivory and wax. The Hill-tracts are peculiarly well suited for the production of cotton; and measures have been taken to introduce improved varieties of the plant among the hill-tribes. Throughout the whole district, large tracts of valuable forest trees are found. The fir-tree and the caoutchouc abound in the lofty hills in the east; but the 'unsatisfactory relations' which exist between the hill-tribes under English rule and those more remote, prevent any use being made of these valuable forest products.

In the wilder parts of the district, a curious natural product is found, which reminds one of the wondrous 'travellers' tree' of the Malay forests. Captain Lewin describes it thus: 'The forest trees are festooned with numerous creepers (*phytocrene*), hanging in a labyrinth of coils from every tree: some are as thick as a man's arm. On cutting one of these, water is obtained; and as they grow on the loftiest hill, where water is often not obtainable, this property of theirs is most useful. The most curious thing is, that should the coil be cut in one place only, so as to leave two pendent ends, no water issues. It is necessary to cut a piece clean out of the creeper with two quick consecutive strokes, before water is obtained. If, with an unskilled hand, three or four hacks are made before severing it, the only result is a dry stick. Two speedy cuts, however, and from the piece of creeper trickles out about half a tumblerful of clear cool water. The hill-men explain this by saying that when the stem is cut, the water tries to run away upward.'

In every country there is some one gift of Nature of supreme value and importance, the central object of the life of the people. The Arctic seal, the African plantain, the Arabian camel, the Icelandic reindeer, the Chinese rice-field, are balanced in Chittagong by the bamboo and the cane, which grow in profusion in the hills. Here is a lucid and animated description of the place they occupy: 'The cane is the hill-man's rope; with it he weaves baskets, binds his house together, and throws bridges over the hitherto impassable hill-torrents. The bamboo is literally his staff of life. He builds his house of the bamboo; he fertilises his fields with its ashes; of its stem he makes vessels in which to carry water; with two bits of bamboo he can produce fire; its young and succulent shoots provide a dainty dinner-dish; and he weaves his sleeping-mat of fine slips thereof. The instruments with which his women weave their cotton are of bamboo. He makes drinking-cups of it; and his head at night rests on a bamboo pillow; his forts are built of it; he catches fish, makes baskets and stools, and thatches his house with the help of the bamboo. He smokes from a pipe of bamboo, and from bamboo ashes he obtains potash. Finally, his funeral pile is lighted with bamboo. The hill-man would die without the bamboo; and the thing he finds hardest of credence is, that in other countries the bamboo does not grow, and that men live in ignorance of it. In Central India there is a migratory tribe called Bhatos, who follow the profession of athletæ, and perform most of their feats with the aid of a bamboo; and this tribe have actually deified it. Their patron goddess is Korewa, an incarnation of Mahadeva. Her shrine is situated at Kittoor, around which dense forests of bamboo grow. One they select, and the attendants of the temple consecrate it. It is called *gunnichari*, or chief, and receives their worship annually. To it, as to a human chief, all respect is shewn; and in cases of marriage, of disputes requiring arbitration, the gunnichari is erected in the midst of the councillors or arbitrators, and all prostrate themselves before it, before commencing their discussions.' One of the tribes of the Hill-tracts offers worship to the bamboo, but not in the same sense as the Bhatos; they regard it as the impersonation of the deity of the forest.

There is nothing unpleasant or degraded in the picture drawn by Captain Lewin of the hill-people, of whom he writes with humanity, sympathy, and

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appreciation, which, could we but hope they would be more generally felt and manifested by the representatives of English authority in India, might gloriously change the moral history of English rule, and largely influence the destinies of the eastern world. Before he enters upon an account of their origin and their characteristics, he describes their mode of cultivation, which is known as 'joom,' and contrasts their hill-life eloquently and advantageously with that of the dweller in the plains. 'In the month of April, a convenient piece of forest-land is fixed upon, generally on a hill-side: the luxuriant undergrowth of shrubs and creepers has to be cleared away, and the smaller trees felled, the trees of larger growth to be stripped of their branches, and left standing. Although the clearing of a patch of dense jungle is no doubt very severe labour, yet the surroundings of the labourer render his work pleasurable in comparison with the toilsome and dirty task of the cultivators of the plains. On the one hand, the hill-man works in the shade of the jungle that he is cutting; he is on a lofty eminence where every breeze reaches and refreshes him; his spirits are enlivened and his labour is lightened by the beautiful prospect stretching out before him; while the rich and varied scenery of the forest stirs his mind above a monotone. He is surrounded by his comrades; the scent of the wild thyme, and the buzzing of the forest bee, are about him; the young men and maidens sing to their work; and the laugh and joke go round as they sit down to their mid-day meal, under the shade of some great mossy forest tree. On the other hand, consider the toil of the cultivator of the plains. He maunders along, with pokes and anathemas, at the tail of a pair of buffalos, working mid-leg in mud; around him stretches an uninterrupted vista of muddy rice-land—there is not a bough or a leaf to give him shelter from the blazing noonday sun. His women are shut up in some cabin, jealously surrounded by jungle; and if he is able to afford a scanty meal during the day, he will munch it *solus*, sitting beside his muddy plough. Add to this, that by his comparatively pleasurable toil the hill-man can gain two rupees for one which the wretched ryot of the plain can painfully earn, and it is not to be wondered at that the hill-people have a passion for their mode of life, and regard with absolute contempt any proposal to settle down to the tame and monotonous cultivation of the dwellers in the lowlands.' The migration of the people when 'jooming' begins, and the villages are quite abandoned, is a curious thing to witness, also the assembling of the various jooming parties. Men and women, boys and girls, each bind on the left hip a small basket filled with the mixed seeds of cotton, rice, melons, pumpkins, and Indian corn; each takes a 'dao,' or hill-knife, in hand, and every hill-side soon echoes to their hill-call (a cry like the Swiss jodel), as party answers party from the paths winding up each hill-side to their respective patches of cultivation. Arrived at the joom, the family will form a line, and steadily work their way across the field. A dig with the blunt square end of the dao makes a narrow hole about three inches deep; into this is put a small handful of the mixed seeds, and the sowing is completed. A solitary joom is very rare; they are almost always in close propinquity, and mutual help is cheerfully given. The first thing to ripen is the Indian corn; then come the melons, to which succeed all sorts of vegetables; finally, in September, the rice and other grain, to which the monkeys and the jungle-fowl do much damage. In October, the cotton crop is gathered, completing the harvest.

The country suffers severely from the visitations of rats. 'They arrive,' says Captain Lewin, 'in swarms, and sweep everything before them; they eat up the standing corn, and empty the granaries of the hill-people—nothing stops them. They are said to come from the south, and they disappear as suddenly as they make their appearance. The hill-folk gravely assured me that during the last visitation, which occurred in 1864, the rats were transformed into jungle-fowl: in proof of this, they point out a peculiar dragging feather in the tails of the jungle-fowl, which they assert to be a rat's tail.'

Throughout the whole of the Hill-tracts, Captain Lewin has known no instance of a hill-man cultivating with the plough; in the few instances in which some acres of ploughed land may be seen near the villages of the chiefs, they are invariably tended by Bengalee servants engaged for the purpose. The deserted villages present a curious appearance, having all the evidences of occupation and recent life, but every living creature having disappeared. The migrating people leave half their property behind them: granaries containing grain, the women's weaving implements—all sorts of things to be removed at their leisure; and this they do with perfect safety, for '*there are no thieves in the hills!*'

To be a good and successful hunter is a great merit in the estimation of these people, whose country abounds in almost every species of wild animal. The elephant roams over the district in large herds, and the Assam rhinoceros is common; likewise the boa-constrictor, which is of enormous size. The domesticated animals are the cow, the buffalo, the goat, the dog, the cat, the pig, and the common fowl.

The author divides the tribes which inhabit the Hill Chittagong into two classes: 1. The Khyoungtha, or Children of the River, who are of pure Aracanese origin, speaking the ancient Aracan dialect, and conforming in every way to Buddhist customs; 2. The Toungtha, or Children of the Hills, who are of mixed origin, and who speak numerous dialects, and are more purely savages than the Children of the River. No record of their origin save that of oral tradition exists among them. The Khyoungtha possess a written language, but have no history; the Toungtha have no written character, and their languages express nothing beyond the wants and sensations of uncivilised life. 'The general physique of the hill-tribes,' says Captain Lewin, 'is strongly Mongolian. They are short in stature, not five feet six inches in height. Their faces are broad; the nose flat, with no perceptible bridge; the eyes narrow, and set obliquely in the head; high cheek-bones, and no beard or moustache. They have an honest bright look, with a frank and merry smile; and their look does not belie them, but is a faithful index of their mental characteristics.'

Certain customs are common to all the tribes; for instance, slavery, under two forms—that of the debtor-slave, in which persons borrowed money from the chief, or some other individual, and gave their children or female relatives to serve as menial

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servants until the debt should be paid. This custom has been put down, under our rule, with a high hand—not always, as the author shews, judiciously or with desirable results. The other form of slavery which once existed among our tributary tribes is now only carried on by independent tribes beyond our jurisdiction; that is, captivity to the bow and spear, men and women taken by force in war, and sold like cattle from master to master. Concerning this the author says: 'The origin of this custom, if not indeed the origin of the chronic state of warfare in which all hill-people seem to live, was the want of women. Among all hill-people, the woman is the chief toiler, and naturally enough their incessant labour, in all weathers, kills the women of a tribe, or renders them more liable to disease. Hence, among some tribes, we find the strange custom of polyandry prevailing; but among others a simpler course is adopted—the law of the strongest. Those who had few women went with arms in their hands, and took them from a weaker community.'

The Khyoungtha of the Hills are a fine race—manly, upright, and noble. They are firm believers in metempsychosis. There is no such thing as caste among them, all are equal, and the priesthood is not perpetual. Captain Lewin upholds the moral superiority of Buddhism over Brahminism. 'No one,' he says, 'can go among a people professing the Buddhist faith without seeing their superiority in manliness, truth, self-denial, and all the sterner, nobler class of moral excellences. These characteristics have operated strongly in raising the social status of the weaker sex, and among our hill Buddhists women are respected, and occupy an honourable position. They enjoy great freedom of action, and are unmistakably a power among the people. They, as well as men, can work out their own salvation, and attain "Nirvan."' The author's description of the religious ceremonies is very interesting and poetical, sometimes, but rarely, bordering on the grotesque. The dress of the Khyoungtha is simple and graceful, and the men are tattooed: the name of God is marked upon the shoulder. Men and women alike are passionately fond of flowers, and wear many ornaments. In each village community the adults have a head, and the boys also, and the unmarried men and boys sleep in a separate house, as in Borneo. The standard of morality, according to European ideas, is low, but an unfaithful wife is seldom heard of, and family ties and duties are powerful. The ceremonies attendant on marriage and death are complicated and picturesque. Their personal habits are not objectionable, except in one respect—both sexes allow their hair to become very long, and seldom wash it; 'the consequences,' says Captain Lewin, 'may be better imagined than described.' The Khyoungtha do not dance together. Their festive gatherings are enlivened by a travelling theatrical company, which comes round every cold season, and of whose performances the author gives a curious and very amusing description.

The Toungtha are different from the Khyoungtha in many ways. Their villages are generally situated on lofty hills and in places difficult of access. The men wear hardly any clothes, and the women a single scanty petticoat. Upon the women falls all the hardest work, and their position is lower. The religion of the Toungthas is simple—it is that of nature; they worship the elements, and have a vague notion of some divine controlling power. They are cruel, and attach but little value to life. Reverence and respect are emotions unknown to them; they salute neither their chiefs nor their elders; no form of greeting exists in their many tongues, neither have they any expression conveying thanks. They attach importance to an oath; it is a test in matters pertaining to crime, and by it they ratify engagements. The oath is made upon the things upon which their very existence depends—water, cotton, rice, or the dao, or hill-knife. They are monogamists, and as a rule, good husbands and fathers. Adultery is punished with death. Slavery is a recognised institution, but a man's slaves are his children, and universally well treated. Should a man's wife die, he may marry one of his slaves; his so doing, at once raises her to the position and privileges of a free woman. Each village is a small state, owing fealty to no one save its own leader. A man may leave one chief, and transfer himself and his family to the village of another; hence, the power of different chiefs, which depends upon the size of their respective villages, varies considerably from time to time, according to their success or popularity. They are a healthy and long-lived people, perhaps because they have no medicines, and very few stimulants. After he has given a general account of the hill-tribes, according to their classification as Children of the River and Children of the Hill, Captain Lewin takes them in detail, and gives us a number of interesting particulars concerning the subdivisions. All the details, especially those concerning their religious ceremonies and varying notions of the supernatural, are exceedingly curious. It is good to be instructed in the ways, and taught to understand the condition of, our fellow-men, more especially when they are our fellow-subjects, and our country is responsible for the amelioration, the debasement, or the 'letting alone' of these people. The author of this book, who has lived among the hill-tribes, who likes them, and understands them, puts in a plea, as strong as it is modest, for fair dealing with them on the part of England. 'They are very simple,' he says, 'and honest, and merry, but they have no sympathy with anything above the level of their bodily wants. There are whole tracts of mind, and thought, and feeling which are unknown to them, and which could not be made known by any explanation.' We may make them better and happier, but it must be in their own way, not in ours; not by inspiring them with the thirst for wealth, the desire for the superfluities which attach to our civilisation. There is no starvation among them; they know neither poverty nor riches, and they enjoy perfect social equality. This book explains the condition, mental, moral, and physical, of the inhabitants of an immense district, who are in our power, and for whom we are accountable. The student of them, the pleader for them, is surely the best judge in their case. In these strong and simple words, he epitomises his experience, and formulates his belief: 'What is wanted here is not measures, but a man: place over the hill-tribes an officer gifted with the power of rule; not a mere cog in the great wheel of government, but one tolerant of the failings of his fellow-creatures, and prompt to see and recognise in them the touch of nature that makes the whole world kin—apt to enter into new trains of thought, and to adopt and modify ideas, but cautious in offending national prejudice. Under a guidance like this, let the people by slow degrees civilise

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themselves. With education open to them, and yet moving under their own laws and customs, they will turn out, not debased and miniature epitomes of Englishmen, but a new and noble type of God's creatures.'

THE RED NOSE.

In the village of Tattlecombe were many curious persons; and very small matters sufficed to awaken their curiosity. It was generally satisfied at last, either by incontrovertible proof or by ingenious speculation; but there was one puzzle which could not be solved either by a collection of facts or a reduction of theories. Everybody wondered, and nobody knew why Mrs Murton had a red nose.

Wherever you went you were sure to hear something about Mrs Murton: you were questioned about her looks; you could not help confessing that she was a very pretty little woman; you had to allow that it was a great pity so pretty a little woman had so red a nose; you were strictly charged to furnish an explanation of the phenomenon; you were, of course, unable; and the village of Tattlecombe remained dissatisfied.

The problem had been submitted to a distinguished mathematician who lived in the neighbourhood, who had been very high amongst the wranglers at Cambridge, and who was said to have won his distinction chiefly by a successful solution of problems: and also to the wise woman of the parish, who was supposed to understand the language of the many-twinkling stars, and who could, for a consideration, see looming in the future any kind of husband any silly young woman wished for: but they were both obliged to give it up.

It certainly was no ordinary nose; and thereby hung a tale. Something else hangs thereby in the case of the upper ten thousand savage women; a gold ring or a piece of crystal is with them the hanging ornament; but Mrs Murton was highly civilised and refined, and as to *her* nose, it may be truly said that thereby hung a tale.

Now about red noses there are divers theories; and most of them are, according to my judgment and experience, wrong. You very seldom see a red nose, which, upon reflection, not in the looking-glass, but in the mind, does not appear to be the right thing in the right place. So much so, in fact, that if you were to meet a certain person of your acquaintance, and were to miss the usual redness of nose, you would at once say: 'My dear So-and-so, you don't look at all well;' and you would be on the point of adding, by way of explanation: 'Your nose is quite pale.' There is a very prevalent belief that alcohol is at the bottom (or, rather, tip) of every red nose; but I can (on oath, if necessary) declare that one of the reddest noses I ever saw was above the chin of a man who had been from his youth up almost a Rechabite, and to whom the doctor actually recommended a liberal allowance of generous wine, as the best means of toning down the colour. For a red nose is a great drawback to a clergyman, whose parishioners look upon it with suspicion; so that the efficacy of his ministrations is impeded by his nasal deformity. Indeed, the more reprobate amongst the boys of his parish lurk in undiscoverable hiding-places, and greet the reverend gentleman with snatches of a comic song called *Jolly Nose*.

Still there is a fashion of nose which, with a view to conformity, ought to be red, which properly accompanies a certain complexion, which harmonises with cheeks, and ears, and hands, which is undoubtedly the right nose in the right place, and which seems more natural and less remarkable than the most natural red hair.

But on none of these grounds was Mrs Murton's case to be explained. Arethusa was not more unlikely to have had a taste for alcohol; and, moreover, Mrs Murton's complexion was lovely; her cheeks, and ears, and hands were as delicately tinted as the daintiest blush-rose; and her nose, therefore, seemed quite unnatural, and out of place, so far as the colour was concerned—for in other respects it was perfectly natural, being exquisitely shaped, and unexceptionably situated. Mrs Murton was the wife of the vicar, a young man who was reputed to be a prodigy of learning, who had greatly distinguished himself at the university, and who had been presented by his college, not long after he took his degree, to the vicarage of Tattlecombe. It was whispered about, moreover, that Mrs Murton was not unacquainted with awful mysteries; that she had received what very credulous people are pleased to call a superior education; that she could read Latin and Italian with equal ease, that is, with considerable ease; that she was familiar with Greek; that she had even a smattering of Hebrew; that she was versed in ancient history, metaphysics, and theology; and that, woman though she was, she had studied and understood, even if she seldom put them into practice, the principles of logic.

The vicar and his wife had two little children of very tender years, both girls; and it was remarked that their education and management were left almost entirely to Mrs Murton, who, if ever the vicar attempted to interfere, would turn upon him with a tartness hardly to be expected from her habitual sweetness, and would say to him sharply: 'Pray, allow *me* to know what is best for *girls*;' and would accompany her words with an angry flash of the eye, and a glance of deep meaning, which at once silenced the reverend gentleman, and led witnesses to suppose that there was between Mr and Mrs Murton some secret which gave her an advantage, whenever she chose to exercise it, over her reverend consort.

Close observation led me to believe that the secret to which Mrs Murton owed her power was somehow connected with the red nose, and that the red nose was to Mrs Murton a thorn in the flesh. Many a time, when she had reason to believe she was unnoticed, have I seen her watching it in mirrors and all manner of reflectors; and every time I have remarked that a cloud momentarily passed over her face, and that for a minute or so after her contemplation she was irritable and snappish. But for a long while I could find no one

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who could read me the riddle, who could solve the puzzle which tortured the gossips of Tattlecombe.

Murder, however, will out; and at last I found somebody who could clear up the mystery which hung over Mrs Murton's nose.

I fell in, I am happy to say, with the delightful Mrs Tittle, who herself came from Tattlecombe. Tittle had been a friend of mine from early youth; and so Mrs Tittle admitted me with more than usual readiness to intimate acquaintance. I soon discovered that she was a woman who was sure to know whatever could be known by close inquiry, keen observation, and acuteness of hearing about all her neighbours' affairs: she even seemed to have a key to the cupboards where many of them kept their private skeletons, and so she was clearly the person who should be able to enlighten me. On a favourable opportunity, therefore, I said to her: 'You know Tattlecombe, I believe, Mrs Tittle?'

'O yes,' she answered, '*so* well! Dear little Tattlecombe! I know every tombstone and grave-mound in the pretty churchyard; every green lane for ten miles round; every lovely view in the whole neighbourhood; every cow, I verily believe, in the parish; and every queer old gossip in the thatched cottages.'

'And I daresay you know the Murtons?' I rejoined.

'The Murtons!' she replied. 'Ah! that I do—so well. Lily Murton, that is Mrs Murton, who was Lily Bourne, and I, were like sisters when we were at school together. But we have not seen much of one another for the last year or so. Do *you* know them?'

'Slightly. I was lately staying with a friend of mine at Tattlecombe, and I met them several times.'

'Is she not a pretty little woman?'

'Very.'

'Is it not a pity she has such a dreadfully red nose?'

'A thousand pities: it makes her look like a beautiful peach with a horrid blemish, or a snow-white something with a dirty port-wine stain upon it.'

'Ah! poor thing,' sighed Mrs Tittle, looking at the same time rather pleased than otherwise, 'she paid dearly for her superior learning.'

'Learning!' I exclaimed in astonishment; 'does learning give a lady a red nose?'

'It did in her case,' replied Mrs Tittle laughing.

'Dear me,' said I, 'was it the Latin, or the Greek, or the Hebrew?'

'Oh, I don't know,' she answered, 'that it was the dead languages exactly'——

'Perhaps,' I broke in, 'it was the theology: I knew a theologian with an awfully red nose. Or was it the history? or the metaphysics? or the logic? If she studied nosology, now'——

'I can only tell you,' interrupted Mrs Tittle, 'that it was the learning generally.'

'Well,' I said, 'I knew that learning resembled alcohol so far as getting into your head is concerned, but I did not know that it carried the resemblance so far as to discolour your nose.'

'I will tell you exactly how it happened,' said she confidentially. 'You must know that Lily was engaged to young Murton when he went up to Oxford. He was very good-looking and very clever, and Lily was quite silly about him, though the Bournes generally didn't like him.'

'Why not?'

'Oh, I really hardly know; but they thought him a conceited young prig.'

'Hear, hear!' I said.

'Now, you mustn't interrupt me,' observed Mrs Tittle severely, 'or I will not tell you my pitiful story. Young Murton, I must tell you, was destined for holy orders; and Lily, who worshipped the clergy in general, was quite ready to worship him in particular. She thought the holy office he was preparing himself for gave him unquestionable authority over her, and she was willing not only to love him (which she could not help), but also to obey him, even before they were married (much more, I suspect, than she obeys him now). Well, he had very prim notions; made Lily quite unhappy by preaching to her about the worldliness and frivolity of her family; and was especially bitter against what he was pleased to call the shallow, flimsy, showy, and even sinful education of young women. So he constituted himself Lily's instructor as well as lover, and insisted upon her taking from him lessons in his horrid Latin, and logic, and things. And as poor little Lily had to keep up her more lady-like accomplishments as well (for her father would not hear of her relinquishing *them*), she had to work like a galley-slave. And I really do think,' continued Mrs Tittle, looking at me appealingly, 'that her father was right; for, though it may be all very well to be just like a man if you are not going to be married, I think that in married life the very diversity of mental culture and attainments tends to prevent unpleasant collision. We wives have often to act towards our husbands the part David acted towards Saul when the evil spirit was upon the son of Kish. But if we had minds trained exactly as our husbands', we should most likely attempt to argue with them, instead of dealing with them by means of enchantments they can appreciate, but can neither practise nor understand. What do you think?'

I, being a bachelor, assented heartily.

'Then, you see,' she went on, 'if women are to receive the education some even of their own sex would give them, they will have double work to do; for they will have to do the new and not leave the old undone (in case they should ever marry).'

I thought it best to mutter something which might sound like entire agreement.

'To resume, then,' said Mrs Tittle. 'Poor little Lily had to work double tides (as they say), and she used, consequently, to read, read, read, both at her meals and directly after them. And in a little while her dear little nose grew red, and, by degrees, redder and redder. It was of no use to tell her what was the reason, or for the doctor to assure her that it was a symptom of indigestion, and that there was nothing so likely to impair digestion as reading at and directly after meals: she vowed, with tears in her eyes, that she "must do the lessons dear George took the trouble to set." Well, different people, I suppose, have different ways of making love; but Lily's and George's must have been the strangest since that one-eyed person, you know, made love to somebody whose name I think began very appropriately with Gal—but'——

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'Polyphemus and Galatea?' I asked.

'I daresay,' replied Mrs Tittle. 'Dear little Lily knew all about them; but *I* don't, though I fancy Handel wrote some music about their love-affair. But let me get on. I assure you I have been staying at the Bournes' when George Murton was there, and he and Lily would remain alone together in the study for hours, and when any of us knocked at the door, and called out to Lily to come into the garden, we very often got no answer, and we could hear George Murton talking angrily about "accents," and "quantities," and "long by position," and all that sort of stuff; and poor little Lily whimpering: "Yes, yes; I beg your pardon, dear George; I quite forgot." And if they did come into the garden, they walked up and down sombrely, whilst we played at croquet; and I verily believe he was examining her all the while in some nasty dead language. And he was always lecturing her about Lady Jane Grey and Plato, and exhorting her to set an example to her worldly, frivolous family. After all, I don't think George Murton had done himself much good with all his Hebrew and theology; I am sure his temper was very bad, and many a time I have seen him fling out of the house in an ungovernable rage, leaving Lily sobbing in the study; and when Lily was asked what was the matter, she would say: "Oh, George is *so* angry. I couldn't say my Virgil by heart." Or: "Whatever shall I do! I made three false quantities in two lines, and that hurts poor George's feelings more than anything." Or: "I couldn't give a proper account of the Manichean heresy, and George says he can't love me."'

'I wonder *she* could love *him*,' said I; 'I wonder she didn't treat him as Omphale treated Hercules.'

'*She* was infatuated, you should remember,' rejoined Mrs Tittle; 'whereas in the case you mention I believe the infatuation was on the side of the gentleman. And there really was some ground for Lily's infatuation. She and her family went once or twice to Oxford, and heard George Murton recite his prize exercises; and Lily's love was mingled with something like the awful fascination exercised by the Veiled Prophet of Khorassan, when she heard the cheers which greeted the repeated appearance of George Murton as he came forward time after time in his capacity of prize-man, and when she saw how his good looks became more than beauty under the influence of applause. No wonder she clung to him as to a higher power. Besides, at those visits to Oxford he relaxed a little; and Lily then thought him so kind as well as good and noble, that he completely subjugated her. As for him, I never saw anybody so imperious to another as he was to her; and, though I suppose he really loved her, I believe his love varied directly as her success in doing the papers he set her. I *know* that he postponed (fancy the *gentleman* postponing the happy day!) their marriage for three months, until she could satisfy his worship in history and logic; and the logic paper, Lily told me, was the hardest and most repugnant work she ever had to do in her life. At last, they were married; but he had spoiled her beauty for ever.'

'She does not appear to be in much awe of him now,' I remarked.

'No,' rejoined Mrs Tittle laughing. 'You see he gets no prizes now, no distinctions, no acclamations; even his learning is of very little use to him where he is. He is, as a member of ordinary society, quite a commonplace person; and, besides, she is not fearful of losing him now, and she can always twit him with having caused her only personal blemish.'

'Ah,' I broke in, 'not even Socrates could have borne *that* from Xantippe without wincing.'

'I don't know any Saint Tibby,' rejoined Mrs Tittle, looking suspicious; 'but I was just going to say that, as for Lily's own learning, it certainly enabled her to marry the man she loved, but she has long since discovered that it is of no further service to her. It is out of place in the circle in which she moves; and, though her reputation for it may do her good with some, it does her harm with others; and, moreover, she hasn't time to keep it up, and is forgetting it all in attending to her children and household. All this she feels deeply, and she throws it in the teeth of George Murton. She has found out also that taking holy orders does not necessarily sanctify the taker; and that an ordained sinner is but an unordained sinner with a difference—especially of necktie.'

'But Mr and Mrs Murton seem to be tolerably happy together.'

'O dear, yes; quite as happy as most married couples, if not happier; but the varnish has gone off the gentleman, and the blemish remains on the lady.'

'You mean the red nose?'

'Yes. The poor little thing confessed to me that she feels the infliction more than a sensible and Christian woman should feel such a thing. But then she pleads that it is so very peculiar in her case; she has the mortification of knowing that it might have been prevented; and she cannot help seeing that people notice it, or fearing—not without ground, as *I* know—that they attribute it to a wrong cause. She believed that by altering her habits after she had secured George for better and worse, she would be able at her leisure to get rid of her disfigurement; but one must not trifle with one's digestive organs, which, when they have once been upset, are almost as incapable as Humpty Dumpty of being set up again. She has tried exercise, regular diet, and every kind of pill ever invented for the cure of indigestion; but if she have at all improved her digestive organs (and I should think the contrary is more likely), she has made no change for the better in her appearance. She has even condescended to write (anonymously, of course) to those papers which give advice as to the removal of freckles, tan, redness, &c.; but to no purpose. She has sat for an hour at a time with her feet in cold water, but that obstinate nose refuses to be unreddened, and she remains a warning to all lovely and confiding girls who try, at the expense of their digestions, to secure the affections of pedantic lovers.'

Such is the history of Mrs Murton's red nose; and it causes one to fear that the project which is gaining favour of making girls solidly learned as well as elegantly accomplished may have a baleful effect upon their noses. Let the maids of merry England see to it.

As for *men* who mourn over their red noses, and would feel hurt by such a remark as one 'bus driver does not scruple to address to another, saying: 'This here frosty weather seem to suit you, Tom; that there old beak o' yourn is a-colourin' beautiful,' they may derive some comfort

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from the following quotation taken from the works of a popular writer, not of the masculine gender: 'He had a fair complexion, a small straight nose—*very red*, womanish lips, a slightly receding chin, a low forehead, large blue eyes, and light auburn hair. He was rather *handsome*, and was generally said to have a *most prepossessing countenance*.'

What more could a reasonable *man* wish for? It should be mentioned, however, that the popular writer's red-nosed man with the prepossessing countenance poisoned his brother, and committed bigamy.

LOVERS STRUCK BY LIGHTNING.

THE recent death of two lovers, struck by lightning in a field, is paralleled to a remarkable degree by an event which took place a century and a half ago, and which exercised the pens of three of our poets —Pope, Gay, and Thomson. It curiously marks the difference between the two periods, that the catastrophe was treated poetically at that time; whereas now our newspapers are 'ventilating' it as a matter of science, connected with currents, fluids, positive and negative electricity, and so forth.

Briefly, the episode in George I.'s reign was as follows (it will be found somewhat more fully treated in Chambers's *Book of Days*): On the 31st of July 1718, John Hewit and Sarah Drew were in a field near Stanton Harcourt in Oxfordshire. They were rustic lovers; he about twenty-five years of age, and she a comely maiden a little younger. They were betrothed, and had on that very morning obtained the consent of the parents on both sides to their marriage, which was to take place in the next following week. Pope and Gay were both guests at Stanton Harcourt at the time; and the latter recorded the tragic incident of the day in the following words: 'Between two and three o'clock in the afternoon, the clouds grew black, and such a storm of thunder and lightning ensued, that all the labourers made the best of their way to what shelter the trees and hedges afforded. Sarah was frightened, and fell down in a swoon on a heap of barley; John, who never separated from her, having raked together two or three heaps, the better to secure her from the storm. Immediately after was heard so loud a crash as if the heavens had split asunder. Every one was now solicitous for the safety of his neighbour, and they called to one another throughout the field. No answer being returned to those who called to the lovers, they stepped to the place where they lay. They perceived the barley all in a smoke, and then spied the faithful pair; John with one arm about Sarah's neck, and the other held over her, as if to screen her from the lightning. They were struck dead, and stiffened in this tender posture. Sarah's left eye was injured, and there appeared a black spot on her breast. Her lover was blackened all over; not the least sign of life was found in either. Attended by their melancholy companions, they were conveyed to the town, and next day were interred in Stanton Harcourt churchyard.'

Pope wrote the following epitaph on the unfortunate pair:

When eastern lovers feed the funeral fire,
On the same pile the faithful pair expire:
Here pitying Heaven, that virtue mutual found,
And blasted both, that it might neither wound.
Hearts so sincere, th' Almighty saw well pleased,
Sent his own lightning, and the victims seized.

It is said that Lord Harcourt, at whose house Pope was staying (and in a room of which, hence called 'Pope's Study,' he finished the fifth book of his *Iliad*), feared that this epitaph would be a little beyond the comprehension of the simple villagers around; whereupon the poet wrote a second, which was engraved on a stone in the parish church of Stanton Harcourt. It ran thus:

Near this place lie the bodies
Of JOHN HEWIT and SARAH DREW,
An industrious young man
And virtuous young maiden of this parish;
Who, being at harvest-work
(With several others),
Were in one instant killed by lightning,
The last day of July 1718.

Think not by rigorous judgment seized,
A pair so faithful could expire;
Victims so pure Heaven saw well pleased,
And snatched them in eternal fire.

Live well, and fear no sudden fate;
When God calls victims to the grave,
Alike 'tis justice soon or late,
Mercy alike to kill or save.

Virtue unmoved can hear the call,
And face the flash that melts the ball.

It is believed that Thomson had this incident in his thoughts when he wrote the lines (in his *Seasons*) beginning

Young Celadon
And his Amelia were a matchless pair.

On Sunday, September 5, 1869, Thomas Hardaker and Emma Carrick were walking in the fields near Leeds, on a footpath leading from Stanningley to Farsley. The young man was a toy-dealer; and the young woman a weaver, employed at one of the woollen mills which so abound in that neighbourhood. The couple had been Sunday-school teachers together, were betrothed, and had arranged to be married in a month or two. On the Sunday afternoon they took tea at the house of the poor girl's father at Stanningley; then walked to Farsley, where Hardaker was staying; and were returning when the catastrophe befell them. They took a field-path, and were last seen alive in conversation in a narrow road, bounded by two walls. They retreated a little towards Farsley, on seeing that a storm was coming on, and took partial shelter behind a garden-wall. Two iron gates or palisadings were on either side of them at no great distance; and these metals are supposed to have had an intimate connection with the sad result. It was about nine o'clock in the evening, dark, and gloomy; rain fell slightly, then heavily, and vivid

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flashes of lightning were followed by terrible peals of thunder. The circumstances led to a supposition that the lightning, attracted by the iron of the first gate, swept onward to the second, and caught the hapless couple on the way. No one saw the death-stroke; but the evidence afterwards adduced lent support to this supposition.

At eleven o'clock on that night, a cloth-weaver, passing that way, almost trod on the bodies of the two young people, who were lying across the footpath near one of the gates. He touched them with his umbrella, and bade them get up, thinking they were intoxicated; but as they were senseless and motionless, he hastened for a lantern. It was then found that the poor young people were really dead. Emma Carrick was lying flat on her face, Thomas Hardaker on his back; her dress was but little touched, but his right boot was split or ripped up. The only actual mark of lightning on the bodies was to be seen on the faces, which were scarred and burned about the forehead and nose. Besides the ripping up of the young man's boot, small holes were burned in his shirt and his purse. Gold, silver, and copper, in the purse and the pocket, were partially melted; and two shilling-pieces were fused together. So little was the discoloration of the faces, that when the lovers were laid out side by side, they seemed to be tranquilly asleep. No poet was near, to write monody or epitaph; but the sad event made a deep impression on the neighbours, by whom the young couple were well known and respected.

There is something very mysterious in these attacks of lightning on the human body. We know in a sort of rough, general way that metals and other substances differ greatly in their power of conducting electricity; but science must advance beyond its present stage before we can lay down infallible rules for guidance. Some persons have supposed that lightning does not penetrate far beneath the surface of the ground; but in 1843 three men were struck with a flash at the bottom of a mine six hundred feet deep—the lightning having passed down a chain in the shaft. Others, again, believe that safety is to be found in bed. It certainly is so generally, but by no means universally. In 1828, lightning attacked a cottage near Chichester, destroyed with a crash the wooden part of a bedstead, threw the bed-clothes on the ground, and with it the mattress and a person who was sleeping on it—fortunately without further mischief. Again, in the same year, near Doncaster, a flash of lightning tore the coverlet from a bed, but without doing any injury to its occupant. Again, in 1772, Mr Hearthley of Harrogate was killed by lightning while asleep in his bed; his wife, lying by his side, was not even awakened by the shock. A Roman Catholic church was once struck by lightning during the celebration of mass; two of the three officiating priests were struck dead, while the third remained untouched. Sometimes trees are sought, sometimes shunned, for shelter during thunder-storms, according to the prevalence of certain opinions. Some years ago, a theory was broached to the effect that lightning often strikes the elm, chestnut, oak, pine, and sometimes the ash, but not the beech, birch, or maple; then there was an assertion that, when the oak and the pine grow near together, the latter escapes while the former is attacked. Generally speaking, however, the opinion prevails pretty strongly, that the further distant we are from trees during a thunder-storm the better. The supposed protective power of glass, too, is not always reliable. In 1780, two persons were killed at Eastbourne while standing inside a window during a thunder-storm; the glass was reduced to powder, but the wood-work of the window remained uninjured. Any articles of metal worn about the person are pretty certain to increase the danger from lightning. In 1819, lightning attacked the prison at Biberach, and out of twenty prisoners in one apartment, attacked only a brigand who was chained round the waist, leaving the others unscathed. In 1749, during a thunder-storm, a lady raised her arm to shut a window; the lightning flashed, and 'a golden bracelet so completely disappeared that not a vestige of it could be found,' without the lady herself being hurt. The *complete* disappearance of the bracelet is probably a bit of exaggeration. The melting, without the actual disappearance, is credible; for in 1844, a lightning-flash struck a fishing-boat off the Shetland Islands, shivered the mast, and melted a watch in the pocket of a man sitting near the mast, without scorching his clothes or injuring him. In 1858, when a peasant-woman was killed by lightning near Auxerre in France, not a wound was found on her body, but a silver comb was melted in her hair—probably defining the spot where the death-stroke was given. Brydone relates an incident of a lady whose bonnet was reduced to ashes while she was looking out of a window at a thunder-storm: it is supposed that the wire in the bonnet attracted the electricity. It is, however, not very likely that ladies will adopt the highly scientific precaution suggested by him for such occasions: 'Every lady should wear a small chain or thread of brass wire, which she should hang, during the time of a thunder-storm, to the wires of her bonnet, by which the fulminating matter might pass to the earth, instead of traversing the head and other members.'

Not the least embarrassing of the questions which arise in reference to lightning-flashes is to guess in what way the action will shew itself when two or more persons are near each other in a line or in a curve. Will it act most at the extremities of the line, or in the middle? In 1808, a lightning-flash struck a house in a Swiss village: five children were sitting on a bench; it killed the first and last in the row, but gave only a violent shock to the others. In 1858, at Drome in France, a lightning-flash killed a young girl in a farm-house, but left untouched a child in her arms. It is not yet known whether horses and other quadrupeds resist the effects of lightning less safely or more safely than human beings; for some recorded facts tell on the one side, some on the other. In 1785, lightning attacked a stable at Rambouillet: thirty-two horses were in a row; thirty were overturned, of which two at the extreme ends of the line were killed. In 1801, a miller near Chartres was walking between a horse and a mule; the two animals were struck dead by lightning, while the man escaped with slight injury. In 1781, three French gentlemen were out riding: a lightning-flash killed all three of the horses, but only one of the riders. In 1826, a boy was leading a mare on a road near Worcester: a thunder-storm came on, which killed the mare, but left the boy unhurt. In 1810, a gentleman was sitting with his dog by

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his side: a lightning-flash killed the dog, but only gave a slight shock to the gentleman. In 1858, while a clergyman near Leatherhead was riding in a fly with two members of his family, a lightning-flash struck the driver from his seat, without hurting the other persons or the horses. There is almost as much doubt whether the popular view is correct, that water is less attacked by lightning than land. Kaempfer stated that the emperors of Japan were wont to take refuge in a grotto containing a reservoir of water during a thunderstorm. Do the Tycoon and the Micado, of whom we hear so much now-a-days, practise the same cunning device? That fish are stunned in the water there is sufficient proof. In 1772, lightning attacked the river Doubs near Besançon, and stunned the fish, which were floated along by the stream. In 1670, a lightning-flash fell on the lake of Zirknitz in Austria; and 'such a quantity of fish almost immediately floated upon the surface, that the neighbouring inhabitants collected twenty-eight wagon-loads for manure.'

HOSPITAL-VISITING.

TO THE EDITOR OF 'CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL.'

SIR—You were good enough to insert a paper bearing the above title in last month's *Journal*, which has been the means of my receiving various sums of money and contributions of clothing and books for the patients of a London hospital.

I am now going to ask you to allow your *Journal* to be the medium of my acknowledgment of the *anonymous* contributions only—all others having been acknowledged by letter. For these, I need only repeat my thanks.

I wish to mention, for the information of those who sent sums *specially* for Mrs Dean, that I have not been able to find her since my return to town. I have, however, one clue to her, as her husband is on board a friend's ship, now nearly due. If I fail to discover her, or if I hear of her death, after a reasonable time, I shall either return the said money, or ask leave to apply it to some other case.

It has been suggested to me that in my former paper I did not allude to the Samaritan Fund, the object of which is to assist destitute patients on leaving. It is true that such funds exist in connection with more than one London hospital, and I know that the good they do cannot be over-rated; but I also know that the number of destitute patients is great, and the means of the fund are limited, *so* limited, that my own small experience has taught me that there is still ample room for individual exertion in the same direction. It is for the assistance of those whom the Samaritan and similar Funds cannot assist, that the appeal was written, which has been so generously responded to by the readers of your *Journal*.

Lastly, though, for obvious reasons, I do not name the hospital referred to, it might still be recognised by a few; and lest I should unwillingly have given any impression to the contrary, I would here gladly testify to the excellent management—the good order, cleanliness, and comfort of the arrangements, and the unvarying kindness and care shewn to the patients. My appeal was made, not because the hospital did not do enough, but because it was impossible it could do more.

The bag is still incomplete; but the first instalment will shortly be sent in.—With grateful acknowledgment of this and all other contributions from your readers, I remain, sir, faithfully yours,

S. D. H.

The contributions are those received up to September 25th inclusive.

	L.	s.	d.
M. E. T.	0	1	0
A Friend	0	2	6
Blessed are ye, &c.	0	1	0
K. W.	0	2	6
J. P. D.	0	2	6
G. S.	1	0	0
J. S.	0	1	0
C. C.	1	0	0
S——	0	1	0
H. F. C.	0	5	0
G. H.	0	2	6
A Reader	0	2	6
One towards 100	0	1	0
J. M.	0	1	0
Well-wisher	0	10	0
M.	1	0	0
Well-wisher	0	5	0
D. E. R.	0	2	0
W. F.	0	10	0
E. J. C.	0	1	10
Lawyer's Clerk	0	1	0
J. L.	0	4	0
A Reader	0	2	6
W. L.	3	0	0
'In due time'	0	1	0
J. E. C.	0	1	0
Cymro	0	1	0
'Many a little'	0	1	0
M. H.	0	2	0
N. E. R.	0	0	6
S. S.	0	1	0
From Bakewell	0	1	0
Widow's mite	0	1	0
A Small Farmer	0	2	6
A Village Blacksmith	0	2	6
P. E.	1	1	0
J. H. H.	0	3	6
A. O.	0	2	0
N. E. R.	0	0	8
F. J. S.	0	2	0
K.	0	1	0
A Clerk	0	2	6
A Reader	0	3	0
E. W.	1	0	6
A Reader	0	2	0
Half-pay Naval Officer	0	5	0
A.	0	1	0
M. C. G.	0	2	6
F. A. M.	0	1	0
L. L.	0	7	6
Widow's mite	1	0	0
H. D.	0	2	6
E. M.	1	0	0
K.	0	1	3
Widow's mite	0	2	0
Besides anonymous sums amounting to	6	11	8

A FAREWELL TO SUMMER.

See Winter's van, with blazoned banners flying,
Sweep o'er the forest, mountain, plain, and dell;
The drooping flowers and breezes sadly sighing,
To Summer bid farewell.

Blithe morns! that scattered joys, though oft repeated,
Still ever new as at creation's dawn;
By thousand glad harmonious voices greeted
From grove and dewy lawn.

Still noons! when e'en the aspen ceased to quiver,
And honey-sated lay the alumb'ring bee;
Amid whose silence faintly lisped the river,
Translucent to the sea.

Eves! when fond lovers paced the terraced alley—
Where, through the twilight, gleamed the lustrous flowers;
And birds, within the leaf-enshrouded valley,
Sang from dim violet bowers.

Nights! when the starry clusters slowly thickened
To the full structure of heav'n's golden maze;
Nights! whose cool breath the stretching landscape quickened,
Veiled in a moonlit haze.

Farewell! Amid your dimmed and scattered treasures,
Queen of the year, your lovers sigh adieu!
Farewell! till with your pure, health-giving pleasures,
Earth's pulse shall throb anew.

Re-issue of

CHAMBERS'S MISCELLANY

OF

Instructive and Entertaining Tracts.

Issued this day,

TALE OF NORFOLK ISLAND: AND TWO BEGGAR BOYS.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

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CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 305. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 30, 1869. PRICE 1½d.

'TIS EIGHTY YEARS SINCE.

BEFORE us lies a newspaper of a single sheet, which measures twenty inches by twelve. Its date is January 1, 1788, its price is threepence, and its title is THE TIMES. You would no more recognise in it the lineaments of that gigantic broadsheet which now emanates from Printing House Square, than you can trace in an infant of a day old any likeness to a grown-up man. The paper in question is the first-born and just-born *Times*, 'printed logographically' (of which the proprietor appears exceedingly proud), and issuing from the same locality as at present. Hitherto, the journal had been called the *Daily Universal Register* (of which there seem to have been nine hundred and thirty-nine issues); but that had led to much confusion, 'the word *Universal* being universally omitted, and the word *Register* only being retained. "Boy, bring me the *Register*." The waiter answers: "We have not a library, but you may see it at the *New Exchange Coffee-house*." "Then I'll see it there," answers the disappointed politician; and he goes to the *New Exchange*, and calls for the *Register;* upon which, the waiter tells him that he cannot have it, if he is not a subscriber—or presents him with the *Court and City Register*, or the *Old Annual Register*, or the *New Annual Register;* or if the coffee-house be within the Purlieus of Covent Garden, or the Hundreds of Drury, slips into the politician's hands *Harris' Register* of Ladies.'

For this weighty reason, then, the *Times* newspaper, so called, was, it seems, originally begotten; and a more melancholy specimen of journalism, as read by our present lights, it is not easy to imagine. Its jokes are very numerous, and very bad; so bad, indeed, that they are invariably printed in italics, in order that their humorous intention may not be overlooked. Moreover, they are sometimes exceedingly indecent, and almost always personal. The paragraphs which are meant to be severe remind one of the old *Satirist* or *John Bull* in their grossness, but without their wit. The cuckoo is a bird without which the newspaper writer of those days, who would be smart, could not have got on at all: Mr Tristram Shandy is also laid under frequent contribution; nor does their sex preserve the ladies from the lash of the cynic. Squibs such as are now confined to country journals at election-times, seem to have formed quite a usual ingredient of a newspaper in those days. In the Notice to Correspondents, we read: 'The *Critic* will do; so will other Squibs from the same hand.' Again: 'Though much has been said of Lord George Gordon's beard, yet, as the subject increases every day, the *Times* will not let it pass *unnoticed*. The Shandean *jeu d'esprit* will, of course, be attended to, though perhaps with a little clipping.' The editorial shears, however, seem to have been very merciful. We are informed, in immense capitals, that AMERICAN PHILOSOPHERS & PHILOSOPHY are entitled to the protection of THE TIMES. Also, 'with ARTS and SCIENCES it will ever be at *peace*.' Peace is printed in italics, so there must be a joke somewhere. In very small type, we learn that 'Parisian intelligence shall have insertion without fail.'

The *Times* seems to have been in hot water with the printing fraternity even before it was christened. In a few words 'To the Public,' Mr Walter tells us of 'the unjust and illiberal measures' which have been taken to impede the progress of his logographic press. 'The *Daily Advertiser* being generally read by the lower orders of people, I offered at its office an advertisement for several apprentices, which Mr Lenour, the printer, refused to insert, though he had received payment several days preceding.'

In the programme describing the future line of the new paper, there are some significant sentences. There is no boast of an impossible consistency. 'The *Times!* What a monstrous name! Granted; for the *Times is* a many-headed monster, that speaks with a hundred tongues, and displays a thousand characters, and in the course of *its* transformations in life assumes innumerable shapes and humours.' What the infant paper *did* promise in the following respect, its manhood has certainly nobly redeemed.

'On the *Parliamentary Head* every communication

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that ability and industry can produce may be expected. To this great *national object*, THE TIMES will be most sedulously attentive, most accurately correct, and strictly impartial in its reports.' In 'discussion, description, dissection, and illustration,' it also engages 'to employ the pens of the most celebrated of the *Literati*;' but it must be confessed that so far as this first number goes, there is very small evidence—if the proof of it lies in the reading—of literary talent. Cabinet ministers did not write 'leaders' in the *Times* in the last century; and even the penny-a-liners knew nothing of their business.

Imagine the *Times* of to-day, in its just indignation against medical quacks, threatening a particular transgressor after the following fashion. Whether the bad grammar of the paragraph is intended, we cannot say; perhaps it was considered to be facetious:

O QUACKERY! where wilt thou end? O PHYSIC, when are thy disgraces to terminate? There are at this time a practitioner in town, who says to his patients—'Use my *vegetable*, follow my *regiment*, and never fear it will *radicate* all your *pectril* complaints.' Such a character should not escape the animadversion of THE TIMES; but of *this here* Doctor more anon—when *The Times* have leisure.

Besides these small social hits, are a few political ones, the salt of which—if they ever had any—has long since lost its flavour.

The public events of Holland are known to every one who can and will read the newspapers, but they alone who are able to get a peep into private correspondence can be informed, though they will not all of them *believe*, that Lord Beauchamp is actually giving dinners—ay, and good dinners, too, at the Hague.

Was Lord Beauchamp sparing in his hospitalities? we wonder; and if so, was it worth while to twit him with it in the *Times*?

These or similar paragraphs are really all of a public or social nature to be found in the paper; while the news is meagre in the extreme. Among the Home Intelligence, we learn, at considerable length, how Ryan in his last 'set to' with Johnstone trod upon the latter's great toe, and lacerated the nail. Under *Mails Arrived*, with no particular date, are 'two Holland, one French, one Flanders, and one Irish.' *Mails Due*, one Irish.

'Yesterday, the purser of the *Dutton*, Captain Hunt, for Bombay and China, received his final dispatches from the India House.'

The foreign news seems to come almost exclusively from Warsaw, and is of the most unintelligible description—concerning 'the Waywodes of Volchinia and Podolia.'

From Frankfort, we hear that, on the 11th of December, 'the reformers established in that city have got permission to follow the duties of their religion in private houses, until their churches shall be finished.' From Constantinople, the Porte declares 'that the restoration of a durable peace must be impossible so long as Russia keeps possession of the Crimea,' and does not consent 'to the re-establishment of the new Chan in all the rights of sovereignty which that prince may claim upon Little Tartary, by virtue of his Highness' Proclamation.'

There are short notices of the drama at Drury Lane and Covent Garden, by which we learn that Kemble is acting Hamlet at the former to almost empty benches.

By way of literature, we have the entire Ode for the New Year, written by Mr Wharton, and set to music by Mr Parsons, 'which will be performed at St James's;' and sad stilted stuff it is. There is but one *Married:* 'Yesterday, at Walthamstowe, &c.;' and one *Died;* nobody seems to have been born except the *Times* itself.

Besides what we have mentioned, there is absolutely no news; but the advertisements, considering the size of the paper, are very numerous, and at least as interesting to us now as the rest of the contents. It is a strange reflection, to begin with, that in all probability not a single soul is now alive to whom any reference throughout the sheet is made, notwithstanding that, in many respects, it might have been printed this very morning. The *Times* of to-day has indeed given up 'the puff direct;' but in many of the less ambitious journals, we see exactly such a paragraph as the following, and, like it, without the depreciatory letters *Adv.*

The cheapness, elegance, and durability of the FASHIONABLE FURS sold at MELANSCHEG'S MANUFACTORY, No. 333 in the *Strand*, accounts for the number of nobility and gentry that daily honour him with their preference, and as he makes it his chief study to insure the most distinguished encouragement by the superiority of his goods, we hesitate not to declare that we should have been surprised had he failed of receiving the most flattering encouragement. In patronising works or articles of merit, the public most eminently display their taste, spirit, and liberality.

The above occupies the same prominent position in the paper that the last telegraphic news now holds.

The same arts, it seems, were employed then as now, by advertisers, in respect to warning the public against spurious imitations of their invaluable wares. The superiority of 'Sharp's Concave Razors' and 'Cyprian Wash Balls,' have induced (says Sharp) designing persons to offer less estimable articles as genuine. Clay and Cavendish were not to enlighten the whist world with their scientific news for threescore years and ten, but *Bob Short's Rules of the Game at Whist*, and *Every Man a good Card-player*, by 'a Member of the Jockey Club,' can be had for fourpence, or 'four for a shilling to give away;' which seems a generous enough deduction of price. Medical benefactors of their species are as unselfish and charitable as to-day: 'emolument not being so much the object' of each excellent invention 'as that of spreading relief.' The peculiarity of the drugs lies in their being so excessively dear. 'Opiate of Life, most sovereign for weak and decayed stomachs, and infallible to all consumptive patients, 7s. per pot; Golden Pill, a restorer of lost memory, and most wonderful for giving a beautiful complexion, 10s. 6d.' Also, among *Interesting Discoveries*, 'a liquid which will render all writings not legible at once distinctly visible' [which, in the case of the caligraphy of more than one of our correspondents, would be well worth the money], 'at 10s.,' and 'an ointment which destroys bugs so as never to return, at 2s. 6d.'

The literary advertisements are more various than select. There is a new edition of *Tomkin's Selection of Poems to enforce the Practice of Virtue*, which it seems a pity should not be reprinted; but also *Pæans of Pleasure* and *Memoirs of Kitty*

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Cut-a-dash, of which it is perhaps as well that there are no copies at the railway bookstalls. There is also a third edition of *Letters which passed between an* ILLUSTRIOUS PERSONAGE *and a* LADY OF HONOUR *at Brighton*; and another of the *Festival of Anacreon; or the Songs of Captain Morris and others, as sung at the Anacreont* (sic) *Society, and the Beefsteak and Humbug Clubs*. Poor Captain Morris, so well known then, and now but the shadow of a name! His last song has been sung, his last toast been given, these fifty years, and all those who stood up to applaud and drink are gone with him. Yet, those past days, of which this old paper speaks with such dumb pathos, were 'merry,' not only in the sense of bacchanal fun; the public amusements therein advertised are of a class which it is in vain to look for now. At the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, this night, Kemble and Mrs Siddons play in the tragedy, and Kelly in the afterpiece. At Covent Garden, there is Lewis as Ranger, and Mrs Abingdon as Clarinda. At the opera, among a host of forgotten names, stands out that of Vestris, the father of our late ancient evergreen of the same name. The institution of opera fans seems to have died out, but it here receives considerable prominence.

THE OPERA FANS.

To the Subscribers and Frequenters of the KING'S THEATRE.

Last Saturday were published, according to Act of Parliament.

THE Delivery, however, was put off till the Re-opening of the Opera House next week, for the purpose of presenting them in the best state of improvement.

These FANS, calculated to present at one view both the number of boxes, including the additional ones, names of Subscribers, &c., have been carefully compared, with the plan of the House as kept at the Office, and will be sold only by the Proprietor,

Mrs. H. M., No. 81 Haymarket,

Where she will receive with respectful gratitude any commands from the ladies, and wait on them if required.

Under the head of Anatomical Lectures, Mr John Abernethy, assistant-surgeon to St Bartholomew's Hospital, advertises a course to be held at No. 17 Bartholomew Close.

The cure of souls was not treated one whit more delicately, we may be sure, than at present; and the next presentations to livings are advertised with all particulars, and the extreme age of the present incumbents as a lure.

Sale by Auction heads a single advertisement, but *Sale by Candle* heads half a dozen, and at once reminds us that we are reading of the past. What a totally different state of things to the present, when even the betting-houses are being prosecuted by the police, do these long advertisements of the state lotteries suggest, of which there are several. Some lottery firms do not publish the good fortune which has attended their tickets, 'declining to adopt the parade and nonsense which renders some of their cotemporaries ridiculous;' but Messrs Richardson and Goodluck (Goodluck is surely an adopted title?) have no intention of concealing their light under a bushel in that respect.

ENGLISH STATE LOTTERY.

Begins Drawing FEBRUARY 11, 1788.

RICHARDSON and GOODLUCK respectfully inform the public that the TICKETS are SOLD and divided into Half Quarter, Eighth, and Sixteenth SHARES, at their licensed State Lottery Offices, in the Bank Buildings, Cornhill, and opposite the King's Mews, Charing Cross, where every business of the Lottery is transacted with correctness and fidelity.

N.B.—In the last and TWO preceding Lotteries the following CAPITAL PRIZES have been sold and shared at the above Office, viz.:

Sold in Shares.	Whole Tickets.
No. 48,577 a Prize of £20,000	No. 968 a Prize of £20,000
23,148.....20,000	4,196.....10,000
27,964.....10,000	5,473.....5,000
41,827.....5,000	18,179.....5,000
33,599.....5,000	3,605.....5,000
22,740.....5,000	

Besides many of Two Thousand, One Thousand, and Five Hundred Pounds.

Tickets registered at Sixpence each, and the earliest Intelligence sent of their success.

*** Money for the Prizes will be paid at the above Offices as soon as drawn.

Altogether, if this old newspaper may be supposed to mirror the Times after which it is named, we have indeed small reason to regret that we did not live three generations ago. At all events, if nothing else has improved, without doubt *Journalism* has. The halfpenny newspaper of this evening will not only contain ten times the amount of news—and that of the newest—that is found in this sheet of eighty years ago, but even in literature—in the mere talent of expression—will infinitely surpass it. If it has jokes, they may not be very good ones, but it will not be necessary to italicise their point: they will not be indecent; and they will not be offensively personal. Not the least curious part of this ancient paper, and one which probably illustrates the difficulty which Mr Walter found in getting it circulated, is the last line, wherein the places are indicated where the *Times* is to be procured. Of course, 'at the Logographic Press, Printing House Square, near Apothecaries Hall, Blackfriars, where advertisements, letters, essays, and articles of intelligence will be taken in;' but also 'at Mr Mettenius', *Confectioner*, Charing Cross; Mr Roos', *Silk Dyer*, Spring Gardens; and Mr Whiteare's, *Watchmaker*, Fleet Street.'

WAS SHE WORTH IT?

CHAPTER IV.—THE BARNCOTE BANK IN 1857.

THE announcement of the Barncote public ball for New-year's Eve had appeared for several weeks in the *Barncote Herald*, with a long list of stewards and lady patronesses, low down on which, as beseemed their mere local position, stood the names of Alderman Tom and Mrs Bellamy. Tom's thoughts were not, however, on balls, as he stood at the tall desk in the brewery counting-house, which looked out into the brewery yard. He held in his hand a sheet of figures. It was Tom's profit and loss account for the year just ending, and it wasn't an unsatisfactory one. It shewed in round numbers a profit of two thousand five hundred pounds; and Tom's drawing had only been one thousand two hundred pounds. Tom called his manager into the counting-house, and shewed him the balance-sheet. 'Very satisfactory indeed, sir,' said Mr Birks, who, from much poring over vats and inhalation of worty vapours, was rather husky in the throat.

'I'm greatly indebted to you, Birks, for the

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way you've worked for me. I've signed a cheque for your salary and the wages. I've great pleasure in giving you this cheque for fifty pounds, as a new-year's present. I shan't be here to-morrow, Birks, as I'm going to Luffhaven to collect, and can't be back till late at night. So I'll wish you a happy new year, Birks; and good-bye, and God bless you!'

Birks was embarrassed by the warmth of his master's manner and the largeness of his gift. A five-pound note was about the figure he usually had. Fifty pounds! Birks's salary was ten pounds a month, and when it came, it was usually forestalled; and there were also numerous little scores against him, which were troubling his mind, this festive Christmas tide. Indeed, Mr Parkins, the draper, had been very sharp with him about a small account which he owed for mourning, for a little boy who had died two years ago; and Parkins had threatened to complain to his master of his dishonesty in not paying his bills. Poor Birks had fancied that he had seen Parkins walking up with Mr Tom, and he imagined the summons to the counting-house was a prelude to instant dismissal.

Fifty pounds was to Birks salvation: it would pay off his old scores, it would start him afresh, it would make a man of him. But he couldn't thank his master for it—the words stuck in his throat: they couldn't struggle through the deposits of the vats. His master smiled and nodded, and passed out. Birks followed him to the door, and watched him down the street.

'He's just the kindest, thoughtfullest soul is the young master; but, dear me, how he be aged the last few years sure*ly*!'

Tom's face was not that of a youngster as he entered the private parlour of Birkin's bank. Arthur Birkin rose and shook him coldly by the hand, and then took his stand with his back to the fire. He was a short dark neat little man, excessively clean-looking, dressed quietly and plainly, as became a banker, but with a little touch of the country squire breaking out in his blue birds-eye scarf, his roomy shooting-coat, and well-shaped riding-trousers.

After a little chat about the weather, the last run with the East Wessex hounds, and the town drains, Arthur, without circumlocution, went to the purport of their interview.

'I sent for you, Bellamy, to tell you we must have our advances repaid. I gave you a hint of the sort a few days ago, and I find that it is now absolutely necessary.'

I don't suppose that the bird fairly caught and fluttering in the paws of the cat, its captor, suffers much terror and agony of mind: the thing is over; a sort of fatuous wonder as to how it will feel whilst its bones are being crunched, and a stupid amazement at being in such a plight, are in its mind; it recks not of its modest mate, the peaceful nest, the callow brood. So with Tom; he had discounted his troubles; he felt stupefied, that was all. The long, long while he had suffered, the trouble he had had, seemed to surge into his head, and prevented him from thinking. Only one thing could he hold on to, that he must shew no change to that black-whiskered face, with the dark-gray eyes, and wide mouth, and white teeth; he must hold on to that face, and not let himself go. He sat down on the banker's table, and taking up some pens, began sticking them, javelin fashion, into the leather cover. It was an old trick of his boyhood.

Arthur exclaimed angrily: 'Mr Bellamy, please not to damage my table.'

That woke Tom up; the whirl in his head stopped; he stood up, and confronted the banker. 'How can you expect me to reduce my debt more rapidly than I am now doing? Haven't I paid off twenty thousand in the last ten years? Haven't I worked like a nigger for you? Why, Birkin, when your uncle persuaded me to take over the concern in '47, you stood to lose thirty thousand pounds; and I put five thousand pounds of my own in it; and I believe I saved the bank by that. And your uncle was my trustee! Arthur, how can you be so wicked, knowing all you do, to talk to me of calling up that money?'

'My uncle was a very good sort of man, and was very forbearing with your uncle and yourself. I don't know anything more about the transactions you refer to. My uncle was not very sound upon banking, however. It's *our* principle, Mr Bellamy, not to make advances except upon convertible securities.'

'Haven't you got the deeds of the brewery and all the freehold houses?'

'Just so; and taking the brewery as a going concern, its value would no doubt cover our advances. But look here: in time of pressure, when *we* wanted to realise, such security would be practically worthless. A prudent mariner, dreading an approaching storm, takes in his canvas, and—and—— Well, you know he gets ready for it. *We* foresee a crisis in the money-market, and we are preparing for it. We don't want to inconvenience you; but really now the advance has been standing so long—— Mr Andrews,' whispered the banker through a speaking-tube, 'bring down Bellamy's note.'

'You damned serpent!' hissed Tom between his teeth.—'No; don't run away; I'm not going to hurt you, you little venomous beast!' And he stalked out of the private room before Arthur Birkin had recovered from his astonishment.

Tom was not altogether mad; he knew that the promissory-note which Birkin held was payable fourteen days after demand—that he had a good balance on his current account—and that Arthur Birkin would not be moved from his purpose were Tom, and his wife and his daughter, to grovel in the dust before him.

Arthur Birkin was a 'gentleman.' He was a little upset at being called a serpent and sworn at; but if there was one thing he prided himself upon, it was that he had a Christian and forgiving spirit. Nor was the accusation Tom hurled against him a just one. He only wanted his own. He was too clear-headed and sensible a man to be influenced in his line of conduct by the supposed wishes of a man who was dead. Certainly, he had often heard old Birkin promise Tom that he should never be unduly pressed about the advance so long as he kept reducing the principal. But what was that to him? The old banker had made many indiscreet and foolish advances out of the goodness of his heart. Arthur had no idea of setting up as a little providence, and rewarding virtue, and all that; and that his keen intelligence should be dominated by some old-fashioned notions which formerly animated a departed soul, was to him a

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thing inconceivable. Still, he was quite disposed to act fairly by Tom Bellamy; and if he'd asked him for a month, or even for two, and could have satisfied him that the money would be forthcoming, Tom might have had the time—yes, and might now, notwithstanding the serpent and the venom.

Tom went off to the joint-stock bank.—Yes, they'd take his account with much pleasure—discount for him with pleasure. As for a large advance, for a considerable period—Yes, with pleasure!—on sufficient security. Life policies?—No; the bank would *rather* not take that sort of security—was against the rules of banking. 'But bring your interests to us,' said the manager cheerily; 'we'll take care you don't suffer.'

Very satisfactory this, as far as it went. Tom knew, however, it wouldn't go very far. He must try and think of something. He'd go on to the pier, where he would be quiet. He turned through the pay-wicket, and went on to the pier. He hadn't been there for years. People who live near the sea rarely go down to the beach, or on to the pier, or out in a boat, or in anyway take notice of the sea. The fashionable visitors of Barncote didn't care about the pier. It was out of their beat; and a few children and nursemaids were generally the only visitors to the pier-head. The day was cold and raw, with an east wind, and nobody but Tom was about. He went out to the end, and sat down on a beam a little sheltered from the wind. From habit he took his pipe out of its case, and knocked it against the beam; but he didn't smoke. He couldn't think, either, connectedly of his business. He knew, he felt, it was useless. The blow that had fallen upon him was fatal. He pitied himself a little. He had worked so hard; he had been so near success; but he had failed; and his failure was final and irremediable. He felt inexpressibly sad. A wasted life!—Wasn't all life wasted? a causeless and purposeless ebbing and flowing? Wouldn't it be better to end it all, by dropping quietly into the swirling waters? And then he thought of his wife at her needlework at home, and of Gracie sitting by her knee—radiant figures in all the gloom. He could think and plot for them, though not for himself. He rose and left the pier. The shadow of overwhelming care had cleared away. A shadow there still was upon him, a shadow and a light.

'Gracious, Tom,' said Lucy as she kissed him on his return, 'how cold you are! You must stop at home to-night, and have your feet in hot water: you've got a chill.'

'Nonsense, child; it's nothing,' said Tom. 'Stay at home! why, it's the ball to-night; I wouldn't miss the new-year's ball on any account. Don't you remember ten years ago?'

CHAPTER V.—THE BARNCOTE BALL IN 1857.

The old Barncote assembly-rooms had been pulled down years ago. In their place was a town-hall, with a Grecian portico. Within, was a fine room, supported by polished granite columns; a large organ and an orchestra at one end; as well as numerous refreshment-rooms, committee-rooms, and law-courts—the last only used by the local justices in petty sessions, and the county court judge. But the Barncotians were living in hopes that, some day or other, the judges of assize would enter those courts with much blaring of trumpets, and rushing to and fro of policemen. Her Majesty's judges, however, and those minor judges who held her Majesty's commission of the peace, and ruled the destinies of the county in quarter-sessions assembled, were understood to set their faces against any alteration; so the assizes were still held in the little town of Lumpstone, some fifteen miles from Barncote. As three-fifths of the prisoners, and four-fifths of the civil cases, came from Barncote, there might seem to be some reason why the judges should come to the suitors, rather than the suitors should go to the judges. But legal wisdom had decided otherwise.

The damage also to the hotels of Lumpstone, which contrived to exist and pay their rents from the exorbitant profits they extorted from the visitors to the assizes, would have been great; and as these hotels were owned by county magnates, who served their Queen and county as magistrates, deputy-lieutenants, and high-sheriffs, law and order would have been indirectly damaged by their loss.

Tum te iddity, tum te iddity! away went the fiddles, cornet, and harp at the opening quadrille. The hall was three times as big as the old assembly-room, and infinitely more grand: the girls were better dressed, and the men were better got up; but it wasn't half so jolly as in the old times—at least, so Tom thought, as he opened the ball with the mayoress of Barncote, whilst the worthy mayor led out Mrs Alderman Tom. The hall felt cold and chill, in spite of the brilliant sunlights and the hot-water pipes; and Tom looked over his shoulder every now and then, and shuddered. He certainly had got a chill. He almost made up his mind to go home and take his wife's advice about the hot water. The thought of his comfortable dressing-room, and the cheery fire, and the steaming tub, and the glass of hot grog that his wife would administer to him, came so strongly into his mind, that the tears came into his foolish eyes, and he forgot to 'chassez' to his partner, who, spreading out her plum-coloured skirts, was going through her paces unaided, with much dissatisfaction.

No such visions could be realised that night. Tom must be at Luffhaven by five in the morning, to meet the steward of the Luffhaven mail-boat, who owed Tom a long account, which he had promised to settle; and after that, he had a heavy day's collecting from Luffhaven to Lumpstone. He expected to get in about five hundred pounds.

He was claimed after the quadrille by his old friend Winter, who wanted him to go and have a rubber in the mayor's little parlour, which had been reserved for the *cognoscenti;* and Tom went and played, but was absent and *distrait;* trumped his partner's trick, led a false card, and otherwise misconducted himself. The whist languished, and the table was broken up; and Tom and Archibald found themselves sitting together by the fire as they had been ten years before.

'Tom,' said Winter, 'aren't you glad you didn't take my advice ten years ago?'

'I don't know,' said Tom dreamily.

'Ah! *you* were right, Tom, and I was wrong. I was a shocking young prig ten years ago, I think. Don't you remember how I solemnly assured you that you were on your way to "misery, ruin, death?"'

'So you did,' said Tom with a start.

'Bad shot, wasn't it? Why, I think you are the

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luckiest fellow in the whole county of Wessex at this present moment.'

'Archie,' quoth Tom, after a pause, 'which do you think is the worst of the three?'

'Oh, Mr Bellamy,' said one of the waiters, putting his head into the room, 'I'm glad I've found you, sir; there's a young man from your office wishes to speak with you.'

'Send him in here, Williams.'

Enter Birks. He is dressed in decent black, which looks rusty and dull beside the sleek clothes of his master and friend. His red, bulbous nose shews all the more, that his cheeks are pale and tallowy. He is evidently suffering from strong fear.

'What is it, Birks?'

'O dear Mr Bellamy, you ain't going to drive all alone to Luffhaven to-night, be you, sir?'

'Yes, of course,' said Bellamy sharply.

'But, dear heart alive! there's been two farmers stopped on the Lumpstone Road this very night. Three men, with black maskesses on, and pistols.'

'Where did you get hold of that cock-and-bull story?'

'It's all the talk at the *White Hart* bar, sir.'

'Ah! I thought you'd been there. Well, don't come after me again, Birks, with these foolish stories.'

'But, master, if you must go, take me with you; I'm sure you'll be murdered if you don't: everybody knows as you carry bags full of money with you.'

Tom laughed. 'Much good you'd be in a scrimmage, Birks. If your friends in the black masks know so much about me, they'll also know that I carry a brace of double-barrelled pistols in my gig, and can use them too. Go home to bed, Birks.'

Birks shook his head in a melancholy way; but he couldn't say any more, and slunk out.

'I *would* be careful, Tom, though, if I were you,' said Winter. 'Let's go and get supper.'

Tom had a fancy to dance one dance with his wife that night. It was the Lancers. Ten years ago, the Lancers had decided Tom's fate. As he stood up once more to the well-known figure, and the band struck up the prelude, all the events of the last ten years crowded into Tom's mind. Such happy, peaceful years, but for the load he had been staggering under so long, and which was going to crush him at last!

Tum te iddity, tum te iddity! A playful poke in the back from his neighbour reminded him that he was stopping the way in the grand chain: away he hopped, getting many a pleasant squeeze of the hand and merry greeting. They were all townspeople in the set, and everybody liked Tom, especially the women-folk.

The music ceased, the figure ended, and still Tom stood for a moment with his wife in his arms, as they had finished the final galop. 'Good-bye, darling,' he whispered; 'enjoy yourself, dear: don't sit up for me to-morrow night.'

He was gone, and his wife looked after him wistfully for a moment.

Tom had ordered his dog-cart to take him up at his house. He walked home along the esplanade. Ten years ago, the moon was reflected gloriously in rippling waters: to-night, the sky was dark and overcast; the wind was rising; and while breakers were dashing eagerly in, Tom thought of the man who had gone down to the sea to ask a boon for his wife.

He opened the door of his house gently, and walked up-stairs on tiptoe into the room where Gracie was sleeping peacefully in her little cot.

There we will leave him, till the clatter of hoofs reminds him of the dog-cart and mare awaiting him.

The mare is fidgety, and will not stand; Tom was in his seat in a moment; and wrapping his rug round his knees as the mare darted forward with a plunge, and settling into a slinging trot, dashed into the gloomy night and gathering storm.

CHAPTER VI.—RELEASE IN FULL.

The morning was breaking coldly and cloudily on the day but one following the Barncote ball. No 1 Montgolfier Terrace was still without its lord. By the fire in her husband's dressing-room sat Lucy Bellamy, wrapped in a warm wrapper, sleeping quietly.

Rap-tap-a-tap-tap-dab-dab! Lucy woke in a moment, looking round bewildered for an instant, and then remembering her long vigil: 'Here's dear Tom at last,' she said, giving a vigorous stir to the fire, and running down-stairs to open the door. At the door stood Archibald Winter, grim and grimed, unkempt, unshaven: never before or since did Archibald Winter meet female eyes in such a plight.

Murdered—murdered—murdered! What use to break such news as this? The whole universe seemed to shout it in her ears, and yet he whispered it very gently. It was for her to weep and moan, for him to raise the county on the foul villains.

Ere an hour is past, in every homestead in Wessex, sturdy sons of Anak, unshorn and unwashed, are rousing up their hinds to beat the county for the murderers. One of their own flesh and blood! The stream of Saxon blood still runs strongly in the veins of the Wessex men. Had the Lord-lieutenant been murdered, it wouldn't have sent such a shock through the country-side, or roused so many eager hearts to the chase of blood, as did the death of Tom Bellamy the brewer. Mounted police were galloping furiously along the county roads, to draw a cordon round the scene of the deed; the county magistrates had already met in special session at the *White Hind* at Lumpstone; and the body of Tom Bellamy was lying at the *Eight Bells* at Snarfield, awaiting the coroner's inquest. It was just half-way between Lumpstone and Snarfield that poor Tom had been shot. The road, which winds in and out amongst the bluff downs, here reaches its highest point: thick and tall hedges hem it in on each side; the road takes a sudden turn; and just in the corner, among the grass and dead leaves, the mail-cart driver carrying the early mail from Lumpstone to Barncote saw the body lying. He gave the alarm at Snarfield, and carried the news on to Barncote. Tom's horse was found quietly grazing by the roadside, a little nearer Snarfield; the dog-cart was lying upset between. The mare had apparently kicked herself free from the cart; the traces were broken, and the breeching-straps; but otherwise there was not much damage done.

When Winter reached the *Eight Bells*, he met Mr Baker, the Snarfield surgeon, coming away. 'Dead for three or four hours, I should say. Shot

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through the heart. The villain who did it must have put the pistol to his breast, for the powder has burnt his waistcoat. I've been telling the people here to send somebody to search for the bullet; it might give a clue: it went right through him. Poor Tom; he was a decent fellow.'

'The superintendent has attended to that, I think, sir; he has posted men on each side of the place, and they've been examining the ground inch by inch for the last two hours,' said the landlord of the *Eight Bells*.

The police, however, couldn't make much of the trail: the ground was trampled about; Tom's pocket-book had been ransacked, and was lying open on the grass; his watch and chain and purse were gone. The murderers had made a good booty, and got clear off. Ere the evening, the whole country-side confessed that they were baffled. There was one comforting circumstance—the robbers had not made such a haul as they must have expected: Tom had paid five hundred pounds into the Lumpstone bank before he left.

Next morning, whilst the secretary of the Legal was unlocking his private drawer, and getting out his papers, Mr Jakes, the actuary, looked in at the office door: 'Seen the murder in Wessex, in this morning's paper?'

'Yes; what of it?'

'Why, it's one of our lives.'

'God bless my soul! is it?'

'Yes; and a devilish heavy life too! and the first year! Bellamy his name is.'

The secretary took down his index, and turned to the *Bs*. 'Bellamy, Bellamy. Ah! here he is. Three thousand, by Jove! And the Dubious, and the Highlands, and the Veritable, are in with us.' The secretary touched a spring-bell on the table: 'Oh, Mr Bowler, just write out a telegram for me: "Secretary Legal Life, to A. Winter, Esq., Barncote. —Bellamy's death, send full particulars: meet the Board to-day if possible."'

The secretary prided himself on his telegrams: he always managed to express his meaning in twenty words, thus saving miscellaneous charges to the society. Before he left the office, he received a telegram from Barncote: 'A. Winter, Barncote, to Secretary Legal Life, Lothbury.—Am solicitor to deceased's executors. Send special agent, if you think inquiries necessary. Will send particulars of claim to-morrow.'

The secretary shook his head. 'Mr Winter has not prepaid the telegram! Dear, dear! it might all have been said in less than twenty words. Two shillings—dear, dear! I don't know what the Board will say.—I think, by the way, Mr Bowler, I shall suggest to the Board that in such an important case I'd better go down to Barncote myself. A little sea-air will do me good, Bowler.'

Mr Cranby, the secretary of the Legal Life, when he arrived at Barncote next morning, was informed by Mr Winter that the inquest on Tom Bellamy had been held; that a verdict of 'Wilful murder against some person or persons unknown' had been returned by the coroner's jury; that two men had been apprehended on suspicion; and that the magistrates and police were busily engaged in investigating the circumstances of the dreadful deed. Mr Winter proposed to drive Mr Cranby over to Snarfield, to see the body and the scene of the murder. It was a bleak January day, and Mr Cranby didn't think it at all necessary.

'We don't want further proof of the death, Mr Winter; we are quite satisfied about that. The only question that struck our Board was this: do the circumstances of the death altogether preclude the idea of—eh?—um?—ah?'

'What do you mean?' said Winter sharply.

'Well, you know, it occurred to our Board that —well, in point of fact—*suicide!*'

'You haven't broached such an idea to anybody in Barncote, I hope, Mr Cranby?'

'Dear me, no!'

'Ah! that's right. Do you know, I think that if it were known you were down here for an insurance company, trying to save your company's pockets by casting a slur on poor Tom Bellamy's memory—on my soul, I think you'd be torn to pieces before you could get to the station.'

'God bless my soul! Surely, Mr Winter, such lawlessness in the nineteenth century isn't possible?'

'Ah! you don't know what our Barncote boys can do. But, apart from that, my dear Cranby, don't let such a very foolish suggestion escape you again. No man was more happy in all his social relations than Tom Bellamy—no man more respected in public life. A magistrate, an alderman, an ex-mayor, a man of blameless life and character —and you suggest suicide! Now, Mr Cranby, as solicitor to the estate of my dear deceased friend, I have been put into possession of the papers found on his body. You're quite at liberty to look over them, and amongst others you'll find our friend's profit and loss account for the year just ended. He was a remarkably energetic and careful man; it's made up to the last day of the year. You see the profit shewn; you see my friend's expenses. Why, he was at our ball the evening before he was murdered, danced with my wife, who never saw him more cheerful. Why, Cranby, he was the best friend I ever had, and you come to me whispering such vile suggestions—good God!' and Winter leaned his head on his arm, quite overcome.

Cranby got up, and patted him on the shoulder. 'There, there!—don't agitate yourself; I'll never mention it again. We had the mere vaguest doubt on the matter, and I assure you we're entirely satisfied now.'

'Then, look here, Cranby; you've a Board day to-morrow—waive all forms, and send me down a check for three thousand by to-morrow's post. I'll take care that it shall be known all over Wessex—ay, and all over England, for that matter. You couldn't do a better thing for the society's interest. I'll guarantee to double our business in this agency alone.'

'Well, but, Winter, you haven't administered yet, or anything.'

'Never mind that; I'll give you a receipt that will satisfy you. Bless you, *we* don't want the money; it's the society I'm thinking of. You see the funeral's on Friday—all the county will be there. Well, if I have that cheque in my pocket, and shew it to a few friends after the funeral, there isn't a man in Wessex who won't know of it before night; and if I don't have a hundred proposals in a week, call me a Dutchman.'

'I think you're right, Mr Winter; I'll advise the Board to do it.'

'That's right.—Now, let me take you to see Mrs

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Winter. You'll dine and have a bed at Rhino Square, and go back in the morning to the Board meeting.'

Mr Winter was right when he foretold that all Wessex would be at Tom Bellamy's funeral. When the hearse containing Tom's body left the *Eight Bells* at Snarfield for the churchyard of Snitterfield, which was Tom's parish, there followed some twenty private carriages of the county and town gentry, forty or fifty dog-carts and wagonettes belonging to the farmers of the county, several hundred horsemen, and hundreds of footmen. Never had such a funeral been seen in Wessex. It took ten minutes before the last man in the procession filed past the *Eight Bells* at Snarfield. There was plenty of beer for all the mourners at the *Wagon and Horses* at Snitterfield, and there was a substantial luncheon for the farmers laid out in a large barn near the churchyard. Birks had managed all the arrangements, and had been ordered to spare no expense. Barrels of ale and large stone jars of spirits had been sent up from Barncote; and the melancholy rite performed, the farmers laid themselves out for enjoyment.

Mr Winter made his appearance amongst them for a moment; and the clatter of knives and plates, and the calls for beer and grog, were hushed. 'My friends,' he said, 'the relatives of the departed desire me to thank you most gratefully for the mark of respect you have shewn his memory. Called suddenly away, our poor friend was not unprepared. I will leave your spiritual guides to draw a moral from his sudden death. I will only recommend you to follow his example, and prepare for it in a worldly point of view. I have in my hand a cheque for *three thousand pounds*, which has been sent to me, acting for the representatives of the deceased, in payment of a policy of life insurance which by my advice he effected with the Legal Office. One premium of ninety pounds only has produced this most considerable sum. Go and do likewise.'

From that day the Legal Life dates a period of largely increasing business; and I don't think it suffered any loss in the end from poor Tom's death.

Mr Winter's next business was with Birkin's bank; and the day after the funeral saw Arthur Birkin and Winter closeted together in the bank parlour.

'We won't acknowledge your claim at all, Mr Birkin; and we raise a claim for five thousand pounds and ten years' interest against you, as executor of your deceased uncle. A more heartless and flagrant breach of trust than that of your uncle, when he persuaded that poor young man to hand over his fortune to pay old Callum's debts to the bank, I never met with in the whole course of my legal experience.'

'I really can't go into the question of my uncle's motives or actions, Mr Winter,' said Arthur, calmly and loftily.

'But I'll *compel* you to go into them, sir!' cried Winter, bristling up. 'I'll file a bill against you, sir!—a bill in Chancery, sir! You shall account for every penny you've received from my poor ill-fated friend. There's such a thing as a Court of Equity, sir, thank God!'

'Well, Mr Winter, if you can shew me any legal obligation on my part'——

'I think one of the vice-chancellors had better enlighten you on the point.'

Arthur Birkin meditated. One of the principles of a bank should be to avoid litigation. He might lose more by a suit than he could estimate. To shake the good name of his late uncle would shake the credit of the bank. 'How can we settle the matter, Mr Winter?'

'Withdraw your claim, and we'll withdraw ours.'

'Really, now, that's very unreasonable.'

'That's my ultimatum.'

'You'll give me a few days to consider?'

'I'll instruct my agents to-night to file a bill.'

Arthur Birkin thought it over for a few moments. Ten thousand pounds was very dear to him, but the good name of the bank was dearer still.

'Your terms are very hard, but I'll accept them.'

'I think you're wise.'

When Mr Winter found himself in the sanctuary of his own office, he permitted a grin of intense self-satisfaction to irradiate his features.

'Just to think, now, what a little clearness of vision does for a man! Bellamy, poor fellow, went through life borne down by a load which a touch would have loosened. And he was a clear-headed, good man of business too; but he saw things through a mist of fancied generosity, trust, family pride, and what not. Dear, good old giant! you were everything that was honest, true, and faithful; if you could only have seen things as they are! You were an anachronism, that's all.'

After the first shock, Mrs Tom Bellamy took comfort. There are some women with faith so vivid and clear that they actually carry about with them the unseen world, which to others seems only the shadow of a dream. That she and Tom are only parted for a brief moment, is to her a certainty, and not a form of expression. She has not married again, although she is a rich woman, and has many suitors.

Some of the prosperity of the Barncote brewery is due to the untiring energy of Mr Birks. He is now installed as manager with a handsome salary. He only 'breaks out' now on New-year's Day; and as he then takes a week's holiday to have his 'spree' out, it doesn't interfere with business. Two years after Tom's death, Birks was finishing up a hard drinking-bout at the *Eight Bells* at Snarfield. He had come to the brandy and soda-water and penitence stage, and was sitting alone in the bar-parlour, trying to smoke. An old man in the costume of a hedger and ditcher put his head cautiously into the room, and finding Birks alone, came in and closed the door.

'I've been leuking along of you, sir,' said the old man.

'Well, what do you want?'

'Why, you see I've been clearing out the big pond close longside the road about arf a mile from Lumpstone; and as I was a-shovelling out the mud, I clap eyes on something as I thought were a bit of old rag; and I teuk it up jest to throw it away, and it was jest heavy; and look here!'

The old man brought out of his pocket a bundle of wet rag, and laid it on the table. Birks untied it with fingers trembling with the effect of his late potations. 'Why, it's my old master's handkerchief!' said Birks, as pale as death; 'and here's his watch and purse.'

'So it be,' said the old man.

'Those murdering villains were so hard pressed they had to throw 'em away.'

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'Sure*ly*!' said Giles.

'I'm sorry for you, though,' said Birks after a pause.

'Why, what *hev* I done, sir?'

'You don't think the police will believe your tale of your having found these things in a pond!'

'Dear, dear; I hope I shan't get into no trouble!'

'That you certainly will, if these things are found upon you: you'll be took up for the murder, as sure as a gun.'

'O lawks-a-massy! what shall I do, master?'

'You haven't told anybody else about finding these things?'

'Dear no, sir, not a soul!'

'Well, *I* won't say a word to bring you into trouble. Just you go back as hard as ever you can, and put them things back into the pond again.'

Old Giles hobbled off in mortal fear of being 'took up;' and in about an hour's time reappeared beaming. 'I've done that to rights now, master.'

'That's right, Giles. Now go and get a pint of beer. I shouldn't like to have anything brought up again about poor master; it would be like digging his corpse up again, poor man. I think I've done right.'

So, through Mr Birks's mistaken sense of delicacy, the clue that might have led to the tracing of Tom's murderers was lost.

Mr Winter often tells the story of his friend's murder, and the moral that he draws is, that to insure his life (especially in the Legal) is a paramount duty with every prudent man.

You, kind reader, may draw any moral you please. I was in Barncote in 1867, when I heard of the engagement of Miss Grace Bellamy, the beauty and heiress, to Adolphus Plumme, Captain 17th Plungers, and eldest son of Sir Damson Plumme, of Plumme Hall; and I trust that this piece of fashionable intelligence will be accepted as a happy ending to my tale. She has been promoted to a higher station in life, than her father, had he lived, could have hoped to see her attain. We trust, and indeed have reason to know, THAT SHE IS WORTH IT.

THE PRISONERS OF PRESIDENT LOPEZ.

BETWEEN the bewildering network of rivers radiating from the Paranà, and close to the empire of the Brazil, lies the state of Paraguay, concerning which little was known, and slight interest was felt, until the war between its President, and the Allied Republics and the Brazil, made it important, and its capital, Humaità—which has been aptly called the Sebastopol of South America—famous. The chief feature of the late Paraguayan revelations, and indeed the first quite dependable information which has reached us through the medium of books,* is the resolution of the whole of this prolonged and destructive strife into the individual pursuit of Lopez. The so-called republic of Paraguay is in reality a despotism, ruled by a tyrant who has no parallel in modern times but Ali Pasha; and the allies have addressed themselves to his destruction with a zeal and effect which are very likely to bring about the extermination of his subjects *en masse*. The last news from Paraguay is that the President, pursued by his enemies, has been driven from his retreat at Cerro Leon, and has fled, it is not yet known whither; and conjectures are afloat that he will try to reach one of the small outlying states, and there construct a kind of Elba for himself. That he should be shot in the attempt, is a consummation devoutly to be wished, for he is simply a monster, with the ferocious instincts of a wild beast, and with unbridled human passions and cultivated cunning in the devising and executing of evil.

When this man's rule began, Paraguay was a fertile country; the old Jesuit settlement, called the Missionés, in particular, was a rich and beautiful province, celebrated for its productiveness. Comfortable homesteads and innumerable herds of cattle were to be seen there, but now it is a desolate wilderness, without an inhabitant; and in the other parts of the country, where population still exists, the people are in the extremity of want and misery. The rivers of Paraguay present the flat and desolate appearance peculiar to the giant streams of the great continent of America. Waterfowl, vultures, and alligators have undisputed lodgings on the banks, and long lapses of distance lie between the towns; for instance, after leaving Corrientes, there is not a town for three hundred miles. Asuncion, the capital city, is picturesque, irregular, tawdry, and unfinished, the fine old Spanish houses having been replaced by buildings more to the taste of Lopez, a semi-barbarian in that as in everything else. Public buildings are falling into decay before they are half-built, and ruin is written on everything. There was a so-called Public Library, but Mr Masterman says the books were nearly all theological, and he never heard of any one reading there. Lopez, however, found a characteristic use for the books—he had them cut up for rocket and squib cases.

The Paraguayans are a handsome people, and the native costume of both sexes is beautiful, but it is abandoned almost entirely to the use of the lower classes. They are very ignorant, especially the women; and their lives are wretched, according to our ideas, though it is to be presumed they like them, or did like them, until they came to learn the unmitigated misery of prolonged and merciless war. The country has always been in the worst political condition possible to its institutions for the time being; so bad, that its probable extinction—a design with which 'people who know' credit the allies, and which Lopez has certainly done his best to forward—would really appear to be the best thing that could happen to it. Francia, the first President of the republic after the Spanish yoke had been thrown off, did much good, though he was a ruthless tyrant, who might have been the model monster, had there been no Lopez. Terribly severe and irritable, and, haunted by a constant fear of assassination and revolt, he became, in his later years, a moody, bitter, and cruel tyrant, absolutely without a friend, or a single joyous hour.' Francia ruled alone, and with irresponsible power, for twenty-six years, and died on Christmas-day 1840, at the age of seventy-eight. He was buried in the Iglesia de la Incarnacion, the oldest church in Asuncion, in a tomb built on the floor of the choir. The next morning, the bricks were found scattered around in all directions, and his body had disappeared.

* *Seven Eventful Years in Paraguay; a Narrative of Personal Experience among the Paraguayans.* By George Frederick Masterman. Sampson Low, Son, and Marston, London.

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What became of it, remains a secret: the trembling people believed the Evil One had carried it away during the night; but it is probable the alligators could have solved the mystery. The terrible dread his very name inspired did not die with him. 'A native,' says Mr Masterman, 'will never willingly speak of "el muerto," as they call him, and to this day will look round fearfully if Francia be mentioned, and only to intimate friends will tell tales of his cruel deeds and supernatural wisdom.' The implicit obedience to which he tamed the people, rendered them passive in the hands of his successors. They were perfectly submissive to Don Carlos Lopez, a man of very low birth and mixed blood, who was a tolerably good governor, for a Spanish American ruler not cruel, and though imperious, rude, and overbearing, tolerably just. He died in 1862, and his son Francisco was 'elected' as his successor. On this occasion he appears to have inaugurated his career of crime.

'The election was but a farce. The deputies from the ninety-two *partedos* of the republic met in the capital, and sat in the Cabildo, which was surrounded by a strong body of troops, commanded by the very man who asked their votes; and of course all free action, or even discussion, was out of the question. One member, it is true, had the temerity to say that the office of President was declared by the "organic law" of the country not to be hereditary, and that therefore Don Francisco was not eligible: he was listened to in ominous silence. Another suggested that the present was a good opportunity for modifying the laws of the country; when he was angrily told to hold his tongue by Lopez himself, who reminded the deputies that they had not met to consider the laws of the country, but to elect a new President. That same night both disappeared, and have not been heard of since. It is almost superfluous to add that the next day "the citizen Francisco Solano Lopez" was unanimously chosen "Gefe Supremo y Generál de los Exercitos de la Republica del Paraguay."'

There was much formal joy; and many forced festivals, which cost large sums of money, were held throughout the country; and the new President began immediately to increase the army, having already raised his own salary to a much larger sum than his father's. Mr Masterman is one of those who believe that Lopez inaugurated the war with deliberate personal motives from the first, and gives the following explanation, which introduces us to the inevitable female element in this strange story: 'From Paris, in 1857, Lopez returned, and imported two novelties—the French uniform for officers, and a mistress for himself; the latter a most fatal step in his life, as that lady occupied, eventually, a very prominent place in Paraguayan affairs, and was, I believe, by her evil counsels, the remote cause of the terrible war which has utterly depopulated the country. She is of Irish parentage, but was born in France, and was married to a surgeon in the French army, who still lives, so I will not give his real name; that by which his wife is known in Paraguay is Madame Eloisa Lynch. She is a tall, stout, and remarkably handsome woman; and I could well believe the story, that when she landed in Asuncion, the simple natives thought her charms were of more than earthly brilliancy, and her dress so sumptuous, that they had no words to express the admiration they both excited. She had received a showy education—spoke English, French, and Spanish with equal facility; gave capital dinner-parties, and could drink more champagne without being affected by it than any one I have ever met with. A clever, selfish, and most unscrupulous woman, the influence she exercised over a man so imperious, so weak, and so vain as Lopez was immense. With admirable tact, she treated him with the utmost respect and deference, whilst she could really do with him as she pleased, and virtually was the ruler of Paraguay. She had two ambitious projects—the first, to marry him; the second, to make him the "Napoleon of the New World." The first was a difficult one, for her husband, being a Frenchman, could not sue for a divorce; but should the second succeed, it would not be very hard, perhaps, to procure a dispensation, and her equivocal position would be changed for a secure one. Therefore, she gradually, but insidiously imbued Lopez with the idea that he was the greatest soldier of the age, and flattered the vain, credulous, and greedy savage into the belief that he was destined to raise Paraguay from obscurity, and make it the dominant power of South America.'

It was necessary for the realisation of this ambitious project that a war on a grand scale should be undertaken; and with neighbours so encroaching as Brazil, so turbulent as the Argentine Confederation, it was not difficult to find a pretext for hostilities. The opportunity soon arose; and in 1863, Lopez had made all his preparations, not without exciting much uneasiness, which he allayed by the simple expedient of causing every one who displayed that inconvenient sentiment to be arrested and severely punished. Many of these were secretly murdered, and the relatives of all were involved in their ruin. There was but one newspaper in Paraguay, the *Semenario*, and it was written under the personal direction of Lopez, and filled with glowing accounts of the advancing greatness of Paraguay, and the virtues and wisdom of the 'heaven-sent' ruler. We heard far-off echoes in England at that time of these triumphant strains. It would be useless and unprofitable for any English person to attempt to understand the principles and working of political parties in any of the republics of La Plata, whose normal condition is confusion and disturbance. And to pursue the origin, the pretext of the war, would be simply loss of time. Lopez had only to espouse the cause of one of the contending parties—of the Blancos or Coloradoes, the Crudos or the Cocidos (or raw and cooked), the Confederados or the Unitarios (whose disputes have no connection with theology, though they are as bitter and as unreasonable as though they had), and his quarrel would be immediately started and running alone. He availed himself of this state of things; and having offered to mediate in the contention between the Oriental government and Brazil, a proffer which was rejected with open ridicule, he commenced offensive operations by the seizure of the Brazilian ship the *Marques de Olnida;* and from that moment things went on bravely, though it was actually General Flores who proclaimed war against him in the name of the republic of Uruguay. On being refused permission—the Argentines being at peace with Brazil—to march his troops, of which he had one hundred thousand, in superb condition, across

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the province of Corrientes, he immediately proceeded to occupy the capital city, Corrientes, urged, it is said, to this step by Mrs Lynch, in revenge for a biography of her which had been written and printed in that town. Thus he had speedily secured three powerful enemies; and within three days the Argentines declared war; and on the 1st May 1865, the now famous *Triple Alianza* was signed by Brazil and the Argentine and Oriental republics. Mr Masterman supplies a translation of this document, in which—like the proclamation of the European allies, that they made war, not on France, but on Napoleon—the republican and imperial avengers ostensibly seek only the destruction of Lopez, and the free navigation of the river, guaranteeing at the same time perfect liberty and independence to the Paraguayans. There was a good deal of enthusiasm, presumably the product of fear; and the people were unmercifully taxed, and forced 'offerings' exacted. Hostilities commenced in June 1865; and the defeat of Lopez's forces at Biachuela gave the allies the command of the river. The incidents of the war are tolerably well known; the new sources of information now open to us are chiefly valuable as affording a knowledge of Lopez, and shewing us what have been the sufferings of our own countrymen who have been unfortunately concerned in it. From the first, there is the stamp of barbarism upon the entire conduct of the war. Defeated generals are accused of treason, imprisoned, put to the torture, and shot; the truth is suppressed, and lying reports are fabricated by authority; everything is made to depend on extreme audacity; there is no science, and no sagacity. A frightful system was maintained of punishing the relatives of all real or supposed deserters, which soon spread ruin and misery widely through the country. Hundreds of perfectly innocent people, principally women, suffered thus vicariously for the faults or the misfortunes of their sons, husbands, or brothers. The instances alleged of this barbarous and unmeaning cruelty are heartrending. But the expedients by which the sufferers were permitted to escape were incredibly disgraceful. The relatives of the culprits were allowed to shield themselves by publishing anathemas against them in the *Semenario*, and disowning all relationship with them. Mr Masterman possesses numbers of these letters—in one, a mother bitterly curses her son; in another, a man heaps imprecations on the head of his brother; a wife disclaims and vituperates her husband, who was not even a deserter, but died, a prisoner of war, at Corrientes. 'I saw this lady,' says the author, 'a few days after the letter appeared, and, as I knew her intimately, ventured to ask her how she could have written it. "To save my children," said she, the merriest little woman I have ever met with. "It is all false; you know I love my husband dearly, but, señor, what will you?" I do not know if I can present a more shocking picture of the state of affairs in Paraguay than one such letter reveals.'

Very early in the war, the absence of proper commissariat arrangements began to tell severely on the troops; and the condition of the hospitals was truly deplorable. Before his overturn came, Mr Masterman had had to witness, in his capacity as military surgeon, an appalling amount of human suffering. In the General Hospital at Asuncion, the wounded men lay in hundreds under the colonnades in the miserably wet and cold weather. The sick were sent to Cerro Leon, but generally only to die. There was no proper food for them; terrible epidemics were raging; before a battle was fought on the land, the army had lost fifty thousand men. 'They came up,' says the author, 'from the front in the half-crippled steamers, after a journey of three or four days, and, as a rule, did not get a morsel of food on the way: by "they" we understand a third of those who had been put on board; the rest had died and been thrown overboard. The condition in which they arrived was shocking beyond expression; and I saw their sufferings with an indignant pity, which frequently overpowered me completely. Almost or quite naked, with their wounds untended, dirty and famished, and so emaciated that when dead they dried up without decomposition, they were carried up from the pier to the hospital, and then had to lie, perhaps for a week, or until they died, on the ground; but one never heard a word of complaint: they bore all with a silent heroism which won them our heartiest sympathies.' Very touching and terrible was the author's task, and the gentleness and courage of the suffering made it much harder. When, after a brief rest, he would enter the hospital in the morning, he would be greeted, in a general chorus by such as could speak: 'Buenos dias, mi padre; we are all quite well this morning.' The rounds to be made by the surgeon included so many serious cases, that the less severe had to be passed over quickly. 'Here and there a man holds out his arm, and begs me to feel his pulse. They seemed to regard it as a sort of charm, and always thanked me gratefully, if I acceded. But they are very quiet and patient; a groan or cry is rarely heard, though I am making no idle rounds. If to the frequent question, "Shall I get better?" I could give no hopeful answer, they would but reply: "Esta bien" (It is well), in a tone of sad but uncomplaining resignation.' A brave, simple, loyal people, with all their ignorance and superstition, a people true to their domestic ties, and only too faithful to their rulers—it is pitiable to think of their being exterminated to feed the lawless lust of power, and the insatiable cruelty of such a man as Lopez.

The arrest of Dr Rhind and Mr Fox, some time after the invasion of Paraguay by the allies, left all the work of the General Hospital to be done by Mr Masterman—a task utterly beyond any one man's powers. But he was soon relieved from it. For carrying a packet of private letters to Dr Rhind, and, on failing to get admittance to him, refusing to give up the letters to the mayor, Mr Masterman was also arrested, and imprisoned. One dares not think of the increase of their already dreadful sufferings, inflicted upon the wretched patients in the hospital by the loss of their sole solace and medical attendant. The pretext for his imprisonment was, that he had attempted to deliver letters (they had been sent through the French consul under a flag of truce) which had not passed through the post-office. His prison was a room twelve feet by eight; the walls were rough *adobes;* the floor was of mud, full of hollows, cold and wet. The only furniture was a hide stretched on a wooden frame, and a broken chair. In the passage outside the threshold stood, day and night, a sentry armed with musket and bayonet, and relieved every two hours. He stood facing the prisoner; and from nine at night until the *réveillé* sounded the next morning, every quarter of an hour he

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shouted, 'Sentinela alerta!' at the top of his voice, to shew that he was not sleeping. This startling cry was taken up in succession by the others in the chain of sentries, within and without the prison; and by the time the last had finished, the first began again. Well may Mr Masterman describe this as a cruel torture, and say he will never be able to efface it from his memory. 'Often,' he says, 'have I passed the whole night pacing wearily up and down the short length of my prison, or lying with my fingers firmly pressed upon my ears, lest I should fall asleep but to be awakened by that dreaded cry. For months I slept only every third night.' The weary and monotonous life of a prisoner was in his case aggravated by the proximity of other captives, of whose sufferings he was a helpless spectator. Next to his prison there was an open corridor, where a great many *presos* were confined in chains, of whom he occasionally caught sight through a chink in the thick boards which covered the window. The isolation of his life from theirs, and yet their nearness, the almost seeing, the constant hearing, and yet the mere conjecture respecting these poor creatures, form a strange episode in this terrible experience. How the Englishman's heart must have burned and raged within him at the sights he saw and the sounds he heard. 'The prisoners were of all ages—some very old men, others but boys, but all reduced to the last stage of emaciation, mere brown skin and bone. All had one heavy pair of fetters riveted on their ankles, rough with callosities and old wounds; several two; and one man bore on his skeleton legs three heavy bars, which swung backwards and forwards as he shuffled along. Yet these sufferers were not so wretched as one would have thought; they used to laugh and sing, and have clattering, staggering races in their narrow den. One of them used to tell endless stories, which were received with bursts of laughter and a rattling of fetters which reminded me of that terrible scene in *Les Misérables* where the "chain," in their mad desperation, make the early morning hideous with shouts and clashing irons. They were allowed to do this by the sentries, who enjoyed the stories and jokes as much as they did, and gave them notice when an officer was coming. One day, however, they were all so interested in some story of great facetiousness, that they did not hear the usual *Charqué* (Look out!), and the grim old commandanté himself came upon them whilst they were all screaming with laughter at the climax. They were all silent in a moment! A hushed stillness succeeded to the uproar, and I could almost feel that they were pale with terror. My own heart stopped, and then beat violently, for I feared that they would be cruelly punished. The commandanté said not a word, but walked back, and soon returned with a squad of soldiers. The unfortunate story-teller was thrown on the ground, and flogged severely; his yells made the place ring again; and two or three of his most vehement applauders shared the same fate. They were as still as mice for a week afterwards. Every week or so, some of them would be taken out to the *pdtro* to be flogged. These were sad days for me.'

Outside, these devilries; inside, cold, darkness, physical and mental wretchedness, and the society of centipedes, scorpions, and toads, preternaturally large, cold, and hideous. But Mr Masterman did find one resource—the investigation of the manners and customs of spiders; and one solace—there were no fleas; the prison was too damp for them. All this time, and during his second imprisonment, Mr Masterman wondered vainly why he had been arrested. It was only when he returned to England he discovered the reason: the affair of the letters he had always known to be a pretext. The truth was, that strong suspicions were entertained that Mr Atherton had been poisoned, and Lopez gave Mr Masterman credit for having originated the rumour. His imprisonment became more and more dreadful, as did the atrocities perpetrated upon the captives near him. That he retained his senses is wonderful, under such hours of horror. It is not well to dwell upon such recitals; this one instance will suffice: 'One afternoon a poor fellow was horizontally crucified just beneath my window. Never shall I forget what I endured that day in listening to his moans, and constant frantic yells and prayers for mercy, and in picturing to myself what he was suffering.' His own sufferings were frightful; and at length he was released, though not permitted to go beyond the city, after eleven months passed in a damp den, in either dim twilight or total darkness, without ever seeing the sunshine; in a fetid atmosphere, surrounded by prisoners dying of Asiatic cholera; weak, emaciated, half-blind, and so changed that his friends did not recognise him.

After his release, Mr Masterman, who could not leave the country, and would not serve the republic, applied for leave to commence private practice, but was refused. He had plenty to do, however, for cholera broke out at Asuncion, and he worked among the sufferers manfully and successfully. All this time, and for many months later, our government was deceived by false accounts of the condition of Paraguay: English sympathy was got up for a little republic, said to be bullied by two big ones and an empire, and British subjects were supposed to be remaining contentedly in Paraguay, whereas they were suffering under a reign of terror, and the *soi-disant* letters and dispatches were all 'cooked' under the superintendence of Lopez. In Mr Masterman's work, the true story of the Washburn and Gould correspondence is to be found, and ample proof of the absurdity of the charge of conspiracy under which the unfortunate assistant-surgeon was again arrested, to undergo an imprisonment infinitely more rigorous than the first. Mr Washburn made the great mistake of replying *seriatim* to the charge that he was the chief of a secret revolutionary committee, having for their objects the destruction of Lopez, and the rendition of the country to the allies. Then no accusation was too absurd, and every one was involved. The *Wasp* steamboat from the United States arrived just in time to take Mr Washburn away from the danger of personal molestation; but Mr Masterman and Mr Bliss were ordered to remain 'to be tried by the tribunals of the country.' There was nothing for it but submission; so Mr Masterman parted with his friends and patients, and hid some opium and quinine in the seams of his coat, as a wise precaution against the future, and then was formally arrested in the presence of Mr Washburn. He was stripped, searched, everything was taken from him, fetters were riveted to his ankles, and he was thrust into a cell. A little later, fresh irons of such weight that he could hardly stagger to his feet for a moment under them were put on

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him, and he was placed sideways on a mule for a thirty-five mile journey to Villeta. The whole of that journey was a scene of ingenious agony, of hunger, thirst, blows, and such pain in every limb and muscle as hardly left life possible. It ended in—the torture. They took him into a hut in an orange-grove, where were Captain Falcón and a priest, his secretary. They commanded him to confess, and when he refused, they ordered him to the *potro*, or rack. The description is most dreadful; that such things can be done in our time seems almost incredible. He heard the shrieks of others under torture too. When he could bear no more, he made a false confession. It could harm no one. Mr Washburn was safe; the doom of the others, including Benigno Lopez, the President's brother, was already sealed. He blames himself severely, and pleads his previous sufferings, his exhausted state, and his dread, not of death, but of the preliminary tortures always inflicted in such cases. No one else is at all likely to blame him, or to think that the suffering of martyrdom in such a cause would have been anything but arrant folly. They gave him a little bread, and took him back to the *guardra*. There, in the open air, and under the scorching sun, the gangs of wretched prisoners were kept, suffering starvation, awful thirst, blows, curses, utter destitution of help in dreadful sickness and pain. The want of water was the worst of all; the weight of the irons prevented their being able to stagger to the pits to get it. The prisoners of war and the felons were better off, for they could not only drink, but carry back water. 'One day, as the long straggling line returned from the pits, a sick companion, his eyes glazed with fever, rose on his elbow as he heard the clink of the water-tins, and in feeble tones begged but for a drop, groping blindly for a steadying hand the while; the man he asked, himself tottering on the verge of the grave, repulsed him with a muttered imprecation, and the poor fellow fell back, half turned, and died. Day by day our ranks were thinned; by twos and threes they passed away, and were at rest.' In this state of misery, Mr Masterman remained four days; and then began the march to the camp at Pilrysyry, which surpasses in horror any facts which have transpired in modern times, and present such a spectacle as Dante might imagine as a scene in the lower Inferno, rather than the experience of a man who lived through it to tell the story—of which this is not the worst incident. In the horrible *mêlée*, in which twelve hundred men, women, and children were driven and goaded along, there came close to Mr Masterman an old man, thin and tall —a well-dressed foreigner. He stumbled and fell; he was instantly stripped; and two corporals were thrashing him unmercifully: he staggered to his feet, and blindly hurried forward as fast as his fetters would permit, and again fell; the same dreadful scene was repeated; and an officer, after striking him several times with a sword, stamped on his head till his white hair was dabbled in blood. An empty bullock-cart passed at this moment; he was taken up insensible, and thrown like a log into it. When this wretched rabble reached the camp, in which Lopez was living in sensual luxury, and enjoying the infliction of the utmost refinements of cruelty, especially upon his own near relations, Mrs Lynch drove past them in an open carriage, and smilingly returned their abject salutes. Surely this is the utmost limit of wickedness and degradation. Mr Masterman's physical and mental sufferings lasted eleven weeks longer, during which he had to reiterate many times his false confessions, and to witness the horrible deeds of Lopez.

The shooting of the helpless prisoners by scores a day, the torture and degradation of women, the inconceivable excesses of a despot gone mad with desperation and unresisted cruelty, are sufficiently awful; but Lopez has done more than these things. He shot his brother, he tortured the husband of one of his sisters to death, and shot the other. He imprisoned his sisters in covered carts for five months, and compelled them to witness the execution of their husbands. They dared to grieve, and he had them both brutally flogged by common soldiers, and sent back to their prisons, where he forced them, by more devilish threats, to depose falsely against their murdered husbands. He did not spare his mother, but, last December, he forced her to leave her house at La Trinidad, where she had been virtually a prisoner for two years, and to go to Luquè, the temporary capital, and there, before the altar of the church, to swear that she recognised Francisco Solano alone as her child, and cursed the rest as rebels and traitors. She piteously pleaded her advanced age and disease of the heart, as excuses for not complying; but the officer charged to see that her son's orders were carried out told her she must go, *or die;* and she went.

Lopez and his country have been mysteries to us hitherto; the clearing up is a revelation of individual wickedness and national suffering for which we can find no parallel.

TWO MINUTES OF SUSPENSE.

At no great distance from our station on the plains lay a forest of considerable extent. The ground was covered by a scrubby jungle, in which were found a few hares and jackals, while crowds of apes and monkeys gamboled and chattered among the dense foliage overhead. We were tired of the plains, infinitely weary of the heat, the dust, the incessant sight of the natives and their ways, and of the dull uniformity of our existence. Suffering from debility and nervous depression, the occasional languid attempts we made at getting up dinners, balls, or theatricals could scarcely be pronounced successful, except by the very few whose health and spirits seemed indestructible. To add to our annoyances, our native servants were causing us great anxiety. Their manner, usually so indifferent and apathetic, suddenly became restless and uneasy. When not on active duty, they loitered about in gloomy meditation, or fell to discussing in undertones some topic that absorbed their attention. They shewed, too, no desire to tell us the cause of their agitation. Much though we wished to clear up the mystery, it was agreed that we should appear to pay no attention to it, as there was little chance of our getting at the truth so long as they were disposed to conceal it, and to have betrayed our anxiety might have made matters worse if mischief was brewing. Many of us, on retiring for the night, took the precaution to place our revolvers

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and swords within easy reach of our bedsides, carefully removing them in the morning before the servants entered the rooms. The more robust, including some who had gone through the Mutiny, laughed at these preparations; but the nervous members of the community, who were in the majority, shook their heads and thought longingly of home.

A close attention for some days enabled us to perceive that the agitation among the servants increased as the sun went down, and that those whose duties detained them within doors at night were comparatively unaffected, while the others who had to pass to their homes after nightfall took their departure reluctantly, and delayed it till they could go in a body. As no one could give a plausible explanation of this conduct, our anxiety daily increased. At last it occurred to us to request the assistance of a retired subahdar, or native non-commissioned officer, the respectability of whose character was well known to some of our number, under whom he had served in the days of John Company, and through the Mutiny. He came at once, though the distance from his village was considerable, made inquiry among the natives, and the mystery was immediately solved. How we enjoyed the joke in the fulness of our relief, and rallied one another on our needless alarms! 'What stupidity these natives can be capable of; and, confound them, what a fright they have given us! The subahdar is a good fellow, but don't forget that he is a native. Send him home again with a few rupees in his pocket, to keep his tongue quiet, or we shall be laughed at most unmercifully, should the story get wind.' Yet the explanation was not without interest. The subahdar stated that the natives residing near the forest had lately observed what they considered an ominous change in the habits of the apes and monkeys: instead of going peaceably to sleep after their usual uproar at sunset, they often prolonged their concert far into the night, supplementing their monotonous barks and howls with sudden screams of rage or terror. This the timid and suspicious natives attributed to the presence of some roving animal, who had taken up his abode in the forest, and might steal beyond its limits after nightfall, and prove a formidable enemy for a solitary traveller to encounter. To our inquiry why the servants had not communicated this story sooner, the subahdar stated that they felt assured we would have ridiculed their fears as groundless, and therefore they resolved to hold their peace.

The subahdar was dismissed; and we hoped that the indifference with which we heard his explanation would have some effect in reassuring our servants. Anyhow, we knew it would be useless to argue with them, and so let them alone.

We slept once more in peace—that is to say, we took as much sleep as the prickly heat and the mosquitoes would allow. Revolvers were unloaded and laid aside; but unfortunately the servants refused to share the incredulity with which we treated their fears. To get a message delivered in the evening was impossible; the messenger would vanish for the remainder of the night, and do his errand next morning. Some of them went the length of tempting the punkahwallahs to overlook the irregularity of staying with them overnight, by offering to do part of their work, over which they would generally fall asleep, and nearly stifle us in our beds by the consequent stoppage of the punkahs. We got out of all patience at last, and determined to have the forest beaten up as the only way to convince the natives of the groundlessness of their fears. We resolved at the same time to mix pleasure with business by making a picnic of the thing, in which the ladies should join us. Our arrangements were soon completed, and we started—the gentlemen on horseback, and the ladies filling the howdah on the back of a very steady elephant belonging to the regiment. We had selected as the most suitable place for our purpose a hollow in the forest, within which stood several overgrown trees. In these we proposed to station ourselves, and blaze away at everything the beaters turned out above the size of a jackal. On reaching this spot, therefore, Chuny and the horses were dismissed, and a ladder placed against the largest of the trees, by which the ladies ascended into a cozy nook within its lofty shade. There they found a tablecloth spread, on which tiffin was laid for them. The gentlemen, however, finding none of the other trees large enough to hold them all, sought the shady side of the hollow, where, laying their guns aside, they set seriously to work on the tongue, cold roasted fowls, preserved meats, iced liquors, and fruit, which the careful forethought of Ali Khan, the major's khansamah, had also provided for them. Meanwhile, signals had been passed to the beaters, who had gone to their starting-point some time before, to begin their noisy operations.

We leisurely finished our tiffin, and felt so supremely comfortable, that we quite resented a reminder from Ali Khan that the beaters had been some time at work. We resolved, however, to delay taking up our guns, and perching ourselves in the trees, no further than after finishing the cigars then lighted, and a couple more of bottles of iced pale ale. These were opened, and we were chatting pleasantly over their contents, when our attention was suddenly called to the terrified looks of one of the servants, who, with outstretched arm, pointed unsteadily at some object behind us. We cast a hurried look in the same direction, and sprang to our feet as two immense-looking tigers met our view. They had emerged stealthily from the cover, and were standing with heads erect and fluttering ears, listening intently to the distant clamour of the beaters. Ere we could recover from the confusion into which we were thrown, the largest animal—from his size and deeper colour, evidently the male—disappeared among the long grass, and with breathless anxiety we heard his heavy tread approaching us. In a moment more we were face to face with him. He started back, rushed towards the tree within which the unfortunate ladies were seated, and, to our horror, scrambled quickly up the ladder. The next moment the tigress was upon us. She, too, started on seeing us, and retreated a few paces. Her courage, however, quickly rose, for she wheeled round with a short angry roar, and fixing her glowing eyes upon us, advanced steadily with tail erect, and her ears set viciously back. Suddenly she crouched within a few paces of us, with her head resting on her fore-paws, when, at that critical moment, the beaters combined to raise a louder and more discordant noise than usual. The tigress rose, turned

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her head, listened, and slunk away. Her mate had just then descended the ladder, and as she brushed past him he struck at her savagely, and rolled her over with a single blow. He then stood over her with averted head and closed eyes, but offering no further violence. In no way daunted, the tigress turned quickly upon her back, and clutching her mate tightly round the shoulder, attacked him with tooth and nail. Their united roaring was horrible. He received her assault for a few seconds with considerable firmness, but finding no symptom of mollification, shook himself free, and bounding lightly over her as she rose, galloped into the jungle in the direction away from the beaters. The tigress rose, shook herself, gave one malignant look at us, trotted sulkily after her mate, and all was over.

We lost no time in going to the assistance of the ladies. To our great relief, we found them unhurt, but only one of them fully conscious of what had passed. She had the presence of mind to remain perfectly still, and stated afterwards that on making his appearance, and before becoming aware of their presence, the tiger placed one of his fore-paws among their feet. He appeared more astonished than alarmed, scowled steadily round, and closed his survey with a prolonged stare at the solitary individual who had retained her senses. He then retired as quickly as he came. We, of course, had no time then to listen to this story, for Chuny was fetched in hot haste, and received the terrified ladies on his back. The gentlemen mounted their horses, and all started off at the elephant's best walking pace. Meanwhile, the beaters having heard the roaring in their front, had decamped, giving the scene of our discomfiture a wide berth.

I need not say how crestfallen we felt as we returned thus ingloriously home from an enterprise so confidently undertaken. For once Pandy was in the right; and from the difficulty with which for some time after he kept his composure in our presence, we knew that he enjoyed our defeat thoroughly. It was some time before we could endure without a qualm any reference to the subject, however delicately introduced. To conclude: the tigers were marked down and shot shortly afterwards. During the interval, the unanimity of opinion that prevailed among all classes of the community as to the propriety of remaining within doors after nightfall was marvellous. I fear I shall be scarcely credited when I state that both of these animals were killed by one gentleman on foot; but such is the fact. A few days after our misadventure, this hero arrived, just about daybreak, at the station, where he was anxiously expected, and was hurriedly informed by two frightened natives that the tigers had killed a heifer during the night, and dragged it into the wood. A start was immediately made; and on being shewn the spot where the tigers had been seen to enter the forest, he cocked his double rifle and followed. A few steps into the jungle brought him face to face with both animals, who started up not a dozen yards before him. The tigress fell dead at the first discharge, with the bullet through her head; and her mate shared the same fate immediately after. At nine o'clock in the morning both animals were brought into the station. I measured their wounds, and found them almost exactly in the same position—not half an inch between them. I also touched their terrible teeth, and in doing so felt devoutly thankful that no worse consequences than a good fright ensued from our two minutes' terrible suspense.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

In addition to the summing up of the results of the British Association meeting at Exeter, which has for some weeks occupied natural philosophers and scientific editors, the 'off season,' as it is called, has been taken up with discussions about our standard of value, the pound sterling—with acknowledgment of invitations to 'assist' at the opening of the Suez Canal—with talk about a tunnel under the Channel from England to France, or an iron tube which is to be laid on the sea-bottom, and so avoid the expense of excavation—about a canal across the Isthmus of Corinth, which will materially shorten the voyage between Marseille and Constantinople; and in Paris an enterprising few are again talking about a ship-canal which shall cross France from the Mediterranean to the English Channel. Besides all this, the Americans and Germans are again trying to reach the North Pole, or to make fresh discoveries within the arctic zone, in case they cannot achieve their main object.

As regards the pound sterling, some financiers are very desirous that a new sovereign should be coined somewhat lighter than at present, and of the exact value of twenty-five francs, whereby, they contend, both trade and travellers would derive much convenience and advantage, and without disturbance of our commercial relations. But this argument involves a fallacy. If a grain of gold is to be taken from the sovereign, it will be worth less, and purchase less, than at present; the whole community would be losers thereby, while exchange transactions between England and foreign countries would not be easier than at present. The question of the standards, whether of value or of weight and measure, is essentially a scientific one; and if ever a change is to be made in one or the other, the very best science of the country must be employed in the operation.

According to the annual Report just published by the School of Mines, 1012 ounces of gold were produced in the British Islands in 1868. In the same year, 4,970,206 tons of pig-iron were manufactured; of lead, 71,017 tons; and of silver, 835,542 ounces. The total value of the metals produced, including copper, tin, and others, was L.15,736,416. The quantity of coal raised in the same year was 103,141,197 tons, the value of which at the pit's mouth was L.25,785,289. Reckon unsmelted ores as worth two million pounds, and the grand total added to the wealth of the kingdom by the mining industry of 1868 amounts to more than L.43,000,000 sterling. Art and science are here presented in a very material form; but it is a very reproductive one, out of which new developments of art and science are always growing.

The quiet intimation given last spring about a new metal is now something to be talked about, for Sir Joseph Whitworth, after a long course of experiment, has succeeded in producing iron and steel, which, as he states, will resist any amount of shock or strain that may be put upon them. This 'Whitworth metal,' as it is called, is, while in a molten state, subjected to enormous pressure, by

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which all the air-bubbles—those sources of weakness—are got rid of, and the metal is rendered perfectly homogeneous. If Sir J. Whitworth is right in his conclusions, our iron trade is about to undergo another revolution, and we shall have guns of the largest size, which will send their bolt through anything and everything, and never burst: we shall have wheels for railway-carriages that will never crack, boilers that will never blow up, and wire for submarine cables that won't break in the laying. It is an encouraging prospect; and we hope that the ten young men who have just obtained the ten Whitworth scholarships of one hundred pounds each, will perpetuate the persevering skill, the ingenuity, and enterprise of their benefactor.

As if to be ready for the new demand that will grow out of these indestructible guns, a new kind of powder, nearly six hundred times stronger than gunpowder, has been invented and patented by an Austrian, resident in the United States. Further particulars may be expected ere long.

Sir Henry James, Director-general of the Ordnance Survey, has published a thin quarto, with plates, entitled *Notes on the Great Pyramid of Egypt, and the Cubits used in its Design*, in which he explains that he has put 'the simple geometrical problems involved in the question in the clearest possible light, in the hope that these *Notes* will be found useful for the instruction of the boys in our National and other schools.' There has been a good deal of speculation published about the Pyramids of late years, which perhaps may be tested by the results obtained by English Ordnance surveyors. For eighteenpence, any one interested in the subject may procure a statement of facts and measurements taken by authority, with determination of the Greek and Egyptian measures of length, with diagrams shewing how the plans of the Pyramids were first set out by the architects, and with a photozincograph of the Nilometer.

It may be regarded as a favourable sign of the times that the question of drainage of towns and utilisation of the sewage was brought on for consideration and discussion at such a meeting as that at Exeter. With so many able chemists and able engineers on the spot, the chemistry and mechanics of the question could of course be discussed from the scientific and the practical point of view. Some attempts were made to shew that a system of earth-closets or charcoal-closets would be the most feasible; but the general opinion was decidedly in favour of water as the best means of carrying away the waste from dwelling-houses. Noteworthy cases in point were cited: among which we take Banbury, a town of 11,000 inhabitants in North Oxfordshire. Forbidden to pollute the little river Cherwell with their daily superflux, the townsfolk rented a farm of 137 acres about a mile distant, over which they pumped their liquid waste—about 300,000 gallons in the twenty-four hours. The solid matter is intercepted by tanks, and being then mixed with street-sweepings and ashes, is sold as manure to the neighbouring farmers. The farm produces rye-grass, meadow-grass, and cabbages, which, in 1868, were sold to the amount of L.1300, the rent of the farm being L.616, 10s. This year, sixteen acres of mangold have been grown in addition; and at the time when the discussion took place at Exeter, most of the roots were twenty-four inches in circumference. Hence it may be said that irrigation with liquid sewage is a decided success at Banbury, especially as the water, purified by flowing across the farm, enters the river lower down so clean that it does no harm to the fish, and creates no unpleasant smell.

Another way of utilising sewage is beginning to be talked about, which seems important. The report thereof comes to us from India, where experiments have been made on the gases which, as every one knows, are given off by sewage: and the result of these experiments is that these gases can be concentrated, and used in the same way as coal-gas for the lighting of streets and houses. Hence our sanitary engineers may look forward to a twofold triumph—that of converting a nuisance into grass and root-crops, and into a brilliant illumination.

The Report of the Royal Agricultural Society, just published, announces that the annual meeting for 1870 will be held at Oxford, and gives particulars of a large number of implements and machines useful in connection with farming operations. Among them we notice an Earth-boring Machine, which will bore rapidly even through hard rock and gravel, and clear itself of the waste in a most surprising manner. On estates deficient in water, it should be appreciated, for it will sink a large-sized well through any kind of strata in a comparatively short time; and in seasons of drought, many a thirsty country village would rejoice to see one of these machines tapping their underground water. Another is a Patent Automatic Grain-weighing and Registering Machine, which, by an ingenious contrivance, weighs, counts or records, and discharges the grain by the sole effect of the weight thereof. There are many trades, besides farming, in which this machine would be of great utility.

AUTUMN EVENING.

Cross-barred with colouring hedgerows, hill and dale,
All variegated with white stubble-field
And emerald pasture turning slightly pale,
A beauteous, if a saddening prospect yield.
Herds homeward hie; the starlings valeward push;
And, settling in the warm heart of the wood,
Rooks dusk the embrowning trees. An ominous hush,
A deep, peculiar calm that bodes no good,
Reigns over all; and Nature, sore distressed
At earth's decaying glories, seems like one
Held in suspense. A while, and up the west,
White, jagged clouds ascend. The squall comes on;
And birds and leaves from gusty trees are hurled,
And through the evening sky together whirled.

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IN FIFTEEN CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.—THE WAY TO RETRENCH.

'ISABEL, this will never do,' said Mr Hesketh, handing his cup to his daughter for more coffee.

'What will never do, papa?' asked Isabel Hesketh, looking up from her letters.

But Mr Hesketh made no answer, and went on reading the long list of shareholders which he held.

They were breakfasting together, this father and daughter, in one of the dark handsome dining-rooms in Eaton Square, and were as dissimilar a couple as could well be seen. John Hesketh, Esq., M.P., was a tall gentleman, with white hair and moustache, but no whiskers; rather a fine-looking old man, with a benevolent expression of countenance, to which he was hardly entitled, or at least no particular line of conduct on his part had hitherto warranted it.

Isabel Hesketh was not a girl; she was at least thirty-five, but she could scarcely have been handsomer at any time of her life than now. She was a large, grand-looking woman, with a clear olive complexion, but no colour, regular features, beautiful silken black hair, and blue eyes.

'Hang it, Isabel, this will never do, I tell you,' repeated Mr Hesketh, pushing his papers impatiently from him; 'by George, they're trying to ruin me!'

'What will never do, papa?' reiterated his daughter. She was a patient woman, and by no means ruffled by the previous disregard of her question.

'Why, here's another call upon me from this confounded bank; they've already robbed me of a good slice of my yearly income, and here they coolly tell me I am to be called upon for eight hundred pounds more.'

'It is a large sum,' said Isabel.

'It *is* a large sum,' said Mr Hesketh hotly; 'and I tell you what it is, Isabel, we must retrench. I've been thinking it all over, and this morning's letter has decided me.—Where's Lalagé? How late that girl always is.'

'I hear her coming now, papa,' said Isabel.

The door opened, and a girl about eighteen entered; she was tall, and slight, and fair, bearing not the slightest resemblance to her half-sister. She came in quickly, with a little stir and bustle; she always moved in that way, so that people's heads turned to look at her, but this was an unconscious attraction, and it was easy to forgive her for it, for she was a very pleasant sight to behold. She bent down her fresh young face, and kissed her father.

'Good-morning, papa.'

'Good-morning, Lalagé; I'm glad you've come at last.'

'O papa, I know I'm so bad.'

'I don't say that, my dear; but I want to speak to Isabel and you. I've lost a great deal of money by this failure, and we must retrench.'

'Very well, papa,' said Lalagé brightly.

'Very well, papa!' repeated Mr Hesketh half ironically, half sadly—'as if you in the least know what that means. In the first place, Lalagé, I mean to cut down your allowance. It is nonsense a girl like you spending a hundred and thirty pounds a year on dress; you must try and make sixty pounds or eighty pounds do. I am sure Isabel never draws more than fifty pounds, and I don't know but that she doesn't always look better than you.' But Mr Hesketh's eyes, as they rested on his younger and favourite child, made a distinct contradictory statement.

'O dear, I am quite disappointed,' said Lalagé. 'I was in hopes we should be obliged to leave London.'

'We'll come to that presently,' said Mr Hesketh with a portentous nod. 'Isabel, my dear, you know I have an old house in Grimswold, on the Cotswold Hills?'

'Yes, papa,' said Isabel.

'Suppose we go and live there for a couple of years?'

'I thought it was almost an uninhabited place, papa; does any one live there?'

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'No, Isabel,' said Mr Hesketh in an aggrieved tone; 'I don't suppose I should be justified in saying that any one does live there: there are not more than two or three families worth calling on, and even those may be seven or eight miles from the Hill House, it is such a straggling place. But I thought you would perhaps put up with that for a short time. I 'm sorry to ask it, girls, indeed I am,' said Mr Hesketh, pushing back his chair, and walking up and down in a troubled way; 'but I don't know how else to get out of this blackguard mess, hang me if I do! One thing I won't do, that is, touch the money I 've put by for you two.'

'Why not?' said Lalagé eagerly. But her sister shook her head.

'Dear papa,' said Isabel, 'your plan is very nice, as far as I am concerned; I am only thinking of Lalagé, but I know she won't mind giving up her balls and gaieties to help you in any way.'

'Mind it!' cried Lalagé; 'why, Belle, you know I shall like it better than almost anything, I am so tired of London and the sea, London and the sea, year after year. I have never been anywhere else, you know, and I do so long to get into the real country, and see nobody but cowboys and milkmaids! And I will try to be economical; indeed I will, you dear old duck!' she said, turning to her father; 'and as we shall never see anybody but you, I shall only dress nicely when parliament isn't devouring you.'

'Very well, my dears,' said Mr Hesketh. 'I must say you 've both shewn a great deal of proper feeling in the matter. You see,' he added apologetically, 'it concerns you far more than it does me, for, to tell you the truth, I believe it is a place that no man can stand for long, so I daresay my bachelor rooms in town will see a good deal of me.'

'And I daresay,' said Lalagé saucily, 'that we shall see just as much of you there as we do here.'

'And now that it is settled,' said Mr Hesketh regretfully, standing with the bolt of the door in his hand, 'hadn't we better make a move quickly? The Hill House has already been vacant a month, and I know I can get this taken off my hands at once.'

'Very well, papa,' said Isabel.

So, a month later, they found themselves travelling down into Gloucestershire, with a diminished retinue of servants, and a great deal of luggage. The line ran eight miles short of Grimswold, which was too unimportant to be distinguished by a station, so they had a long drive before them, in addition to the journey. Lalagé jumped out of the railway carriage, and stood on the narrow boarded platform of the station, looking round. The under-groom—the only one of their menservants they had retained, and who had been previously sent down—came forward, touching his hat, and said that Mrs Harris, the housekeeper, had sent him down with the pony-carriage.

'She be mortal afraid as you 'll find it very 'illy, miss,' said the youth, who was a raw, uneducated lad.

And very hilly they did find it; even Belle was shaken out of her usual calm to the utterance of a faint occasional 'Oh!' and as for Lalagé, she was alternately in a state of ecstatic delight and abject terror.

'O Belle, what splendid scenery: look at those hills! But we shall never survive this journey—it 's awful,' she cried, as the carriage crawled up the almost perpendicular side of an unyielding little hill.

At last the Hill House was reached—reached by the driver's dashing into destruction, as it seemed, by turning a corner sharply, and precipitating the carriage down a hill so steep that they could scarcely see the bottom. Belle and Lalagé clung to the sides of the vehicle in terror too great to allow of utterance. Half-way down, another crisis arrived, for the carriage was turned again, and they drove at last through wide open gates to the door of their new abode. It was a large house, built of the gray stone in which Gloucestershire is so rich, standing in a large garden; the stables being kept from view by a tall fence of syringa. The drive itself was very pretty, bordered with shield ferns, and white lilies, and dark-leaved peony-bushes; only bushes, however, for it was but the beginning of May, and the peonies had not yet made their appearance.

Inside, the house fulfilled its fair outside promise; all the rooms were large and lofty, and there were plenty of them; the hall especially pleased Lalagé, accustomed as she was to the smaller dimensions of a London mansion. And the view from the windows was more beautiful than anything she had ever dreamed of: hills, and woods, and brooks, and verdant, irregularly shaped fields, were scattered around in splendid prodigality.

As she leaned from her bedroom window that night, she was more than content. Except in books, she had never before come across such beauty; the sight of it filled her eyes with tears, and a great yearning came into her heart.

'Oh,' said Lalagé, 'if I could only be good!'

The next day, she was up early (for her); and as soon as breakfast was over, put on her hat, and went out to make discoveries. The first she made was that, whichever way she went, to the right or to the left, must either be up or down a hill. To be sure, it could hardly be otherwise, for the house was built on the side of a hill, as indeed was every house in Grimswold, there being nowhere else to build them.

Lalagé chose uphill; and after skirting their own house and garden, came upon what she afterwards found to be the principal street of the village—or town, as the Grimswoldians called it. A quaint, straggling street it was, with irregularly built houses, looking like a large family of children, no two of which are of equal height. The greatest

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stillness reigned everywhere; the inhabitants of this part of Grimswold were respectable enough to keep themselves *to* themselves, and did not sit working at their doors, as people do in poor neighbourhoods. Here lived the 'better sort' of Grimswoldians—the chemist, the grocer, the draper, the clerk, the old woman who kept the post-office, and even the doctor. Yet shops there were none, at least none properly so called; plate-glass was unrepresented; only a few casual 'articles' in the windows of the respective tradesmen admitted that they were open to customers.

Lalagé gazed wonderingly at the strange, silent street; then stood still for a minute, amazed at the utter absence of human beings, little knowing that, as she stood there with her fair sweet face, floating muslin drapery, and fresh mauve ribbons, she had won the hearts of the Grimswoldians. People looked at her from the corners of windows, from under blinds, even through keyholes. A stranger was an event in Grimswold.

Of course, they knew who she was. 'The ladies coming to the Hill House,' had been talked of for the last three weeks; and the landlord of the *Raven* had laid a pot of beer against the chemist's five-shilling piece that they would be 'sharp and old, like the Misses Verey at the Lodge: he'd never seen a pretty face in Grimswold since his child, poor Susan, died.' But the landlord, although a great local authority, was wrong; and all unknowing of his mistake, and consequent defeat, Lalagé walked on.

An opening in the street gave a vision of fresh beauty, and turning down a green lane, she gave herself up to unmitigated enjoyment. The air was light and clear, and all summer-scented with the odour of the flowers, growing in such profusion on the banks. Lalagé did not even know their names; but she gathered a great bunch of them, and wandered on till she came to a brawling, noisy, gossiping brook. She sat down on a bank, and gave a deep breath of content, and staid there for a while, thinking and dreaming, and sending out soft little prayers into the blue summer sky.

Coming home, she found that people had waked up a little. It was twelve o'clock now, and the children of the National School—a pretty stone building near the church—had been released, and were capering about the churchyard, playing leap-frog over the tombs. It shocked her to see it that day; but before she had been many weeks at Grimswold, she had become quite accustomed to it, for the churchyard was public property, and did duty instead of the village green of old! Here came old men and maidens, young men and children, 'lovers and loveresses;' old quarrels were adjusted here; sometimes, alas, new ones made; marriages agreed upon; kindly offices promised. And it was not unpleasant to see the old people—those who were metaphorically standing on the brink of the grave—sitting contentedly on some friendly tombstone, and enjoying the rays of the sun. Lalagé watched many now doing so; saw an old man, feeble and worn to a degree, give his arm to his yet more feeble and worn wife; heard a child scream at being separated from its grandfather, saw it fling itself on the gravel path in a passion; and then went in.

What a funny old place it was! The church was gray and battered, bearing, as she afterwards found, the impress of Cromwell's bullets; and as for the churchyard, it was unlike every place of the sort she had ever seen before: two paths at right angles ran from end to end of it, thus forming a Maltese cross, and leaving four separate means of ingress or egress to or from the churchyard. Then, in close rank, bordering each path, and stretching out in straight ray-like lines, were yew-trees, clipped out of every resemblance to their original shape; clipped till they were short, and stout, and round; clipped till they reminded Lalagé of nothing but the little hard, dark-green trees she remembered in her German farmyards of old. She had the curiosity to count them, and found there were one hundred and ten.

'I have had such a charming walk,' she said, putting her head in at the drawing-room door when home was at last reached. 'O Belle, it is such a funny, beautiful place; and coming up the lane just now, I distinctly heard a little bird say: "I did it."'

CHAPTER II.—THE FIRST SUNDAY AT GRIMSWOLD.

The next day but one was Sunday. Mr Hesketh had not accompanied his daughters down to Grimswold; he satisfied himself with running down previously, to assure himself that everything was ready for them, and thanked his stars that Belle, or Isabel, as he invariably called her, was old enough to act as chaperon to Lalagé, and need none for herself.

He was a man who could get on very comfortably indeed without women-folk, though he was by no means wanting in love for his daughters; but that love was not the same, just as his affection for his two wives had been different. His first wife, Isabel's mother, had been a safe investment—a woman rather older than himself, with a large dowry, and very handsome. She had given more than she had received, in marrying him, as women so often do; but she was wiser than most women in that, having discovered this, she took good care not to shew it. She moved placidly through the world, seeming fully content with the respect and admiration her husband paid her, and if she yearned for more, she kept those longings to herself. So, when she died, Mr Hesketh mourned for her with a decent, creditable sorrow, never roused to the vehemence of grief by the memory of one passionate reproach, or one ungratified wish of the calm dead woman, who had demanded so little at his hands, though wanting so much. The comfortable thought that he had done his duty by her had been very gratifying to Mr Hesketh, and it was no fault of his if that duty had come to an end.

But with Lalagé's mother the case had been altogether different; at forty, the sober man of the world found himself, after many years of a comfortable widowhood, foolishly captivated by the fresh young face and violet eyes of the youngest girl of a 'daughterful house.' It was almost *infra dig.*, he thought, but he was rich enough to afford the whim at the time, and the girl was just sufficiently careless of his admiration to make her attainment a dearer wish than ever. She married him, and was very happy, though at first he had seemed too well off, and the step altogether too practicable a one for the imagination of seventeen.

When she died—a four years' wife only—for the first time in his life the man felt bereaved indeed, and all the best love of which he was capable

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poured itself out on the head of the one child she had left. All Lalagé's little failings and shortcomings, her wilfulnesses and waywardnesses, her need of some one to lean on, her childish love of beauty, were sanctified to him, as remembrances of the dead; still, he never hesitated to scold her heartily, when her misdeeds were brought before his notice.

And Lalagé had roused into active life her father's dormant love for his elder daughter. He had never much thought of or cared for Isabel till she came home in her early womanhood to look after the motherless baby. Her previous life had been passed at school, and afterwards with rich aunts, so that her father had known nothing of her as a child; but on hearing of his loss she went direct to him, and had never since left him for any length of time. And 'she had been very good to the child,' Mr Hesketh thought, and he admired, and respected, and loved her—in a certain way—just as he had admired, respected, and loved her mother before her.

He placed the utmost confidence in her, and was indeed proving it now, for he did not conceal from himself that he meant to leave the Grimswold household almost entirely in her hands. Grimswold was three hours' journey from London, and that is a consideration to an M.P.; but Mr Hesketh was anxious to know how his daughters were getting on; so, late on that Saturday evening, he made his appearance at the Hill House. Isabel greeted him with one of her rare, beautiful smiles; but Lalagé the privileged put her arms round his neck and choked him, he declared, besides creasing his collar.

'O papa, it 's such a charming place!'

'I 'm sure I 'm very glad you like it, my dear; it is certainly pretty enough for anything.'

But that very evening he got into one of his sudden little passions, at which Lalagé laughed, and to which Belle had long been resigned.

'Where is the evening paper?' he had asked.

'We don't take one now that we 're alone, papa,' said Belle.

Mr Hesketh rang the bell, and ordered one to be sent for.

'Please, sir,' was the answer, 'you can't get one, unless you bespeak it beforehand.'

'Confound it all!' said Mr Hesketh.

The next day they went to church. The Hill House pew was in the foremost row of the gallery, a straight-backed, high, uncompromising old seat, such as our forefathers delighted in. As Isabel and Lalagé swept to the pew, followed by Mr Hesketh, the people in the free seats stood up, some of the children even making that half-military salute which village children affect so extensively. Isabel was shocked, but silly Lalagé nearly laughed; it was so dreadful an idea, that she stretched beyond the horror of it, and could only feel its comicality.

But everything was strange; people seemed to think nothing of turning round for the purpose of staring at her—at her, it appeared, even more than at Belle, till she grew pink at the thought that perhaps there was some terrible mistake in her dress: had she put on her bonnet the wrong side in front? Or could it indeed be that the sight of fresh human faces was so unusual in Grimswold? Such was, in fact, the case; and she, sitting there in a pink mist of gauze, and ribbon, and lace, had unconsciously drawn on herself the eyes of half the congregation. Belle, dark and handsome, had fewer admirers, the taste of the people not being sufficiently educated to appreciate her; but Lalagé was bright and gay enough to please the youngest child present.

No town-people can tell what Sunday is to the inhabitants of a desolate little straggling place like Grimswold. Most of the congregation lived in lonely little cottages far up one of the hills, or on the other side of other hills, so that their human interests were very small, a strange face being unseen from week's end to week's end, and they learned to look upon Sunday as the grand day for a glimpse of the world. They would come early to church, these poor people, gladly walking their four or five miles at nine in the morning, having locked up their houses, and carrying their dinners in little white bundles. (Not often, however, did a whole household thus turn out; there were generally as many left at home as those who came.) These dinners were, after morning service, spread out on some tombstone, and eaten in a spirit of festive gaiety, accompanied by discussions on the parson, the prayers, and the people.

Sometimes one or the other would have a piece of news to communicate: 'Parson 'ud promised to come and see our Betsy, as is down with the fever;' or, 'Parson says it 's high time as baby was christened.'

Then would come the waiting for the afternoon service, the early getting of seats and taking of places in the church, the eager watching for the seldom-coming strangers. Sometimes, half a family would come only for this second service, and straggle in, flushed with heat and haste; or a 'coorting couple,' half an hour too late, would stand looking in at the open door whilst the prayers went on, or talk audibly in the churchyard, where they walked about till service was over. And when service *was* over, the day's work was done; the 'country-folk'—as those who lived far off were called—would gather themselves together, and tramp off home again, tired and contented, feeling they had done their duty to God and to their neighbour, and strengthened and refreshed for the next week's stolid working, eating, and sleeping.

So it went on, and goes on now; a part of the 'old times,' as it seems to us—the old times, which people are wont to call 'good,' not without a certain beauty of simplicity of its own, in which we, who have so much that is better, are perhaps wanting. But people dive deeper now-a-days; we root up flowers and plant trees.

But to go back to the church. A few minutes after eleven, the clergyman came in. He was a big man—measuring at least six feet three—and came striding up the church with uncanonical gracelessness. But his face—ruddy and bronzed as a ploughboy's—was kindly and good-natured, with twinkling brown eyes, far too small for his size. His tawny, leonine hair was so long that it completely hid his ears—a strange thing in these closely cropped days. He performed the service in a loose but not irreverent way; and his sermon on 'Length of Days'—peculiarly appropriate, as there were more old men present than Lalagé had ever seen together before—was all one could wish. But to Belle and Lalagé, accustomed to the rigid

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orthodoxy and cultivated rhetoric of a West-end clergyman, the whole service was almost painful.

'How terrible!' said Lalagé to her sister, as they walked home.

'Perhaps it is good for us,' said Belle softly.

'I'll be hanged if that fellow's a university man,' said their father.

They went to church again in the afternoon, no choice being left them, as there was no evening service. There was rather less staring, for the nearer neighbours—who had not exerted themselves to come in the morning—filled many of the previously vacant places, and were better behaved than the more artless rustics.

It was what the Grimswoldians called 'Christening Sunday;' so, after the second lesson, the big curate strode down to the font at the west end of the church. Lalagé liked him better then, principally because he handled the babies gently, which was touching in a man of his size and muscularity.

Bending forward for the purpose of joining in the baptismal service, Lalagé caught sight of a face which made her start. In a square pew below her sat a lady, a gentleman, and two children; the first named looked as unlike her surroundings as did the Hesketh's themselves—a calm-faced, self-contained girlish wife, emphatically 'nice-looking,' as the saying is. Her husband, a brown-bearded, handsome man, was whispering to her; he had an irritated, restless expression. 'A regular worry, I daresay,' thought Lalagé, wondering at such behaviour in church.

She was looking at them intently, for it seemed to her that she knew the lady's face quite well; and when the quiet eyes were lifted up for a moment, Lalagé instantly recognised, without possibility of further doubt, a certain Gertrude, who had been very dear to her in her younger days, but who had been lost to her by marriage five years before.

'How strange!' she thought; but then the prayers began again, and her thoughts drifted away into the old beautiful channels made by the Reformers long ago.

When the sermon came, the curate preached it in his surplice, evidently a new thing, for people nudged one another, and giggled, and frowned disapprobation, and Gertrude's husband was much excited on the subject.

'I shall hate that man,' thought Lalagé, looking down.

Not a very pleasant thought to come in church; but altogether it had not been a very pleasant Sunday, and this unlooked-for recognition had made her feel excited and unquiet.

As she and Belle walked through the churchyard after service, she said: 'Gertrude Cleather was in church, Belle.'

'Nonsense, Lalagé.'

'She was, though, and I'm watching for her now; don't walk so fast, Belle.'

Down a narrow pathway, leading to a private wicket-gate, came the little group Lalagé had noticed in church; Captain Cleather was gesticulating violently, and Gertrude talking softly: both were too much preoccupied to notice the Heskeths.

'I hate these infernal changes,' said Captain Cleather, and then they had passed on.

'We must find them out to-morrow,' said Belle; 'they evidently live in that quaint old house.'

'I am so glad,' said Lalagé; 'she's such a dear!'

As they lingered in the churchyard, they noticed little knots of men gathered together, evidently grumbling, and the murmurings grew louder as the curate swung out of church.

'Pawned the black gown,' said two or three of the malcontents, speaking together. 'Parson's pawned the black gown—pawned the black gown.'

Big Tom Mitchell walked past with utter nonchalance. He was a man who could better fight for his opinions than talk them into favour.

'O dear,' said Lalagé, 'what a strange Sunday it has been! Never mind; it will never seem so strange again.'

OUR IRON-CLAD NAVY.

I.—BROADSIDE VESSELS.

Now that the reconstruction of our navy is being pursued upon something like a definite plan, and the contest between guns and armour appears to have ceased for a moment by mutual consent, it may be interesting to take a glance at the iron-clad ships we already possess, and to notice the modifications that experience has suggested in our original models. The burning of the Turkish fleet at Sinope was sufficient to convince all persons conversant with naval matters of the necessity of adopting some means of protecting ships of war against the destructive effects of shells; and early in 1855, an eminent ship-builder submitted to the Admiralty the plans for a sea-going ship which was to be rendered impenetrable by means of thick iron plates. But this department, generally averse to adopting anything new or strange, was disinclined to listen to his proposals, and the distinguished ship-builder in question, knowing the people with whom he had to deal, and comprehending that argument was useless, forbore to press the matter. With a foresight, however, that did him credit, he remarked, on quitting the Surveyor of the Navy, that 'he might as well preserve the drawings, as such a vessel would certainly have to be built before many years would elapse.'

This prophecy was soon fulfilled; and it was M. Dupuy de Lôme, the chief-engineer of the French navy, who aroused our Admiralty from its apathy. About the year 1858, rumours, vague at first, but afterwards more definite, crossed the Channel, to the effect that the French were building, and had indeed nearly completed, an iron-clad frigate, absolutely impenetrable to shot and shell, and against which not one of our famous liners would be able to hold its own for a single half-hour. Early in 1859, the Secretary of the Admiralty, the Accountant-general of the Navy, and the Secretary, and Chief-clerk of the Treasury made a Report, which was immediately presented to parliament, to the effect that France was building four iron-sided ships, of which two were more than half completed. The Report went on to say: 'So convinced do naval men seem to be in France of the irresistible qualities of these ships, that they are of opinion no more ships of the line will be laid down.' The Admiralty, of which Sir John

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Pakington was then First Lord, perceiving that there was no time to be lost, at once instructed its naval architects to prepare the drawings for a first-class armour-plated frigate on a plan which had already been proposed by Mr John Scott Russell; and on the 13th September 1859, a contract was signed with the Thames Iron-works Company at Blackwall for the construction of the *Warrior*. About a month later, Messrs Napier, of Glasgow, received orders to commence a sister-ship, named the *Black Prince*. The designers of these vessels had a most obscure and difficult problem to solve, and it is doubtful if at that time it could have been solved with greater success. Since they were built, however, improvements in artillery have been so numerous, that these vessels are now very inefficient as ships of war. This is due not only to the thinness of the armour (4½ inches of iron upon 18 inches of wood-backing), which can be penetrated by the 9·22-inch gun at 2000 yards' range, but also to the fact, that although 380 feet long, they are only protected for some 200 feet amid-ships. In the original design, too, Mr Scott Russell had intended that the *Warrior* should be able to make a considerable voyage at full speed, without its being necessary for her to stop and re-coal; but this good intention was frustrated, through the official designers having made the hull considerably heavier than he had proposed, thereby necessitating the sacrifice of more than half her supply of fuel. Notwithstanding, however, this excess of weight, she is inferior in structural strength to some of the later ships of a lighter but more scientific form of construction.

After the lapse of several months, the *Achilles*, belonging to the same class as the *Warrior* and *Black Prince*, was laid down at Chatham Dockyard. She had an armour-belt added to her, and several other alterations made, which render her in many respects superior to her predecessors. All three behave well at sea, and have good speed, but, owing to their excessive length, steer with difficulty. After a further delay of some months, two smaller vessels, the *Defence* and *Resistance*, were commenced on the Thames and Tyne respectively. As they are only plated with 4½-inch iron over less than half their length, and have a speed of under 11½ knots, it is difficult to understand why they should have been built at all. They were, it is true, primarily intended for coast-defence purposes, but with their slight protection they are very unfitted to withstand that continual 'pounding' to which a low-speed coast-defence vessel would be exposed, to a much greater extent than a fast sea-going ship.

It soon became evident, however, that if we wished to maintain our position as the chief naval power of the globe, something further must be done to hasten the reconstruction of the navy. Owing to France being in a great measure dependent upon other nations for her supplies of iron and coal, iron ship-building had not acquired the development in that country which it had in England, so that the construction of iron armour-clads was almost out of her power. But she had large stores of timber in her arsenals, and numerous workers in wood in her service; and therefore every inducement to adopt the system of armour-plating wooden vessels. In England, on the other hand—on the Clyde and the Thames especially—iron ship-building had reached a high state of perfection; although in the government establishments it had been utterly neglected. So the dockyards being well supplied with timber which it was necessary to use up, and with men qualified to build wooden ships whom it was necessary to employ, the Admiralty determined to follow the lead of France, and issued orders for the timber which had been prepared for certain line-of-battle ships, to be utilised in the construction of wooden iron-clads, in opposition to the opinion of most private ship-builders, and of the more scientific officers of the navy, who contended that iron was the best material for vessels of war. But the necessity of using up some of our immense store of timber, the prejudice in favour of wooden hulls, and the desire to rapidly obtain an iron-clad fleet, prevailed; and the result was the production of the *Royal Oak*, *Caledonia*, *Prince Consort*, *Ocean*, and *Royal Alfred*. None of them, however, can be said to have proved a success; their armour is thin, their ports too near the water, and their speed low; while they are noted for being, as a rule, the deepest and quickest rollers of the whole iron-clad fleet.

About the same time that it was decided to armour-plate these wooden vessels, the Admiralty determined to give the country an improved *Defence* and *Resistance* class in the shape of the *Hector* and *Valiant;* and although not ships to be copied, they are, to a certain extent, improvements upon their prototypes, having a slightly higher speed, and a larger amount of armour. The next efforts of the Admiralty were directed towards the production of a vessel which should combine high speed with perfect protection from shot, and this led to the construction of the *Minotaur* class, consisting of the *Minotaur*, *Agincourt*, and *Northumberland*. In these ships, the armour is one inch thicker than in the *Warrior*, and the backing is decreased from eighteen to nine inches, leaving the strength of the side about the same as before. Their great length (four hundred feet) causes them to be anything but handy vessels; while the error committed by their designers, in giving them the long fine bow of the *Warrior*, and their overloading it with armour, has not tended to improve their sea-going qualities.

The public began to feel alarmed at the increase in the estimates caused by the construction of these armoured monsters, and of the enormous docks necessary to accommodate them, especially as, on the other hand, it became every day more apparent that the smaller and partially protected vessels were far from being satisfactory; and it was soon perceived that some great change must be made in the design of our ships of war. Of course, at such a period, there were numerous persons urging the adoption of more or less impracticable schemes, everybody at all conversant with the subject considering himself entitled to propose something; but, amongst many others of inferior capacity, there was one gentleman, Mr E. J. Reed, the present Chief-constructor of the Navy, who was known to possess considerable scientific attainments; and his solution of the difficulty was eventually accepted. He denied that, in order to completely protect a vessel, it was necessary to have her of the excessive dimensions adopted by the Admiralty, and maintained that even the smallest sloops of war could carry a very useful amount of armour. By means of papers read before various learned societies, and through a

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certain connection with the press, Mr Reed managed to get his views put before the public with a completeness and precision that left nothing to be desired. It resulted that a very strong feeling was aroused in favour of his plans being tried; and the Board of Admiralty, in its utter helplessness, was only too happy to place itself under his guidance, provided that the doing so would be agreeable to the public. There were many reasons for this. For years past, the Admiralty had been exposed to the most adverse criticism both in parliament and in the press. Its professional advisers, although scientifically trained men, were well stricken with years; they had lived to see one great revolution in the navy—the introduction of steam—but they had neither the energy nor the inventive talent necessary for coping with, or even properly appreciating the greater revolution which they saw themselves called upon to direct, and they consequently discouraged, even if they did not actually condemn, the trial of Mr Reed's plans. But in addition to the desire of the Admiralty to acquire popularity, the Duke of Somerset—who had succeeded Sir John Pakington as First Lord—had become a convert to Mr Reed's views; and in the summer of 1862, it was decided to allow that gentleman to make a trial on the *Enterprise*, a wooden sloop already in frame at Deptford. This vessel he plated with 4½-inch armour, arranged so as to form a central battery with a belt; and under the designation of the 'box system,' a similar plan has been followed in most of his later ships.

Shortly after the *Enterprise* was commenced, Mr Reed was requested to superintend the construction of the *Research* and *Favourite*, also built of wood. The plan of armour-plating adopted in the previous vessel has to a great extent been followed in these, and, as in all of his ships, extra strength has been thrown into the bows, so that they may be used as rams if required. The *Enterprise* and *Favourite* have proved tolerably successful vessels, and have served the country well in all parts of the world; but it must be admitted that the *Research* appears to have been protected with armour at the expense both of structural strength and of speed.

Mr Reed's plans had achieved a certain amount of success; and if he had not thoroughly demonstrated the advisability of armour-plating very small vessels, he had at least shewn the absurdity of building such ships as the *Minotaur* and her consorts. He next succeeded in inducing the Admiralty to allow him to design the *Bellerophon*, an iron ship of comparatively small dimensions, but plated with 6-inch armour, and carrying eight large guns in a midship battery, as well as 6½-ton guns at the bow and stern. Every endeavour was made to combine in this vessel the greatest structural strength with the least weight of material; and the encomiums which have been passed upon her by such authorities as Mr Laird and Dr Fairbairn seem to shew that these efforts have not been unsuccessful. The undoubted error of the *Bellerophon's* design is the extreme length of her ram, which, besides causing the sea to run up into the hawse-holes and ports, must have a very serious effect upon her speed. In spite of these drawbacks, however, the ship is fast under steam, and forms a very steady gun-platform. Thanks, too, to her balanced rudder, she is perfectly under control, even when going fourteen knots.

Meanwhile the Admiralty had derived much assistance from Mr Reed's services, and especially from his energetic defence of that department in the columns of the *Times*. So Mr Watts having resigned the Chief-constructorship of the Navy, Mr Reed succeeded to the post in January 1863. During the two years which had elapsed since the building of the *Royal Oak* class, enormous improvements had been made in artillery, and the Admiralty was therefore anxious to possess a new class of vessel, with armour of greater extent and thickness, and with the battery higher out of the water, but without increasing their length or draught, or decreasing their speed. Unfortunately, however, it was determined that this new class should be of wood; and in the latter part of 1863, orders were given for the construction of the *Lord Clyde*, *Lord Warden*, and *Pallas*, from the designs of the new Chief-constructor. The first two are of practically the same tonnage as the *Bellerophon*, although shorter, and are fine powerful frigates, comparing favourably with any similar vessels belonging to foreign powers. They are protected with 5½-inch and 6-inch armour, in two thicknesses, with wood between; and the experiments on a target representing their sides were so far successful that Captain Noble, in his Report, states it to be doubtful whether the 15-inch American gun would pierce them, even with the *muzzle touching the armour-plates*. The *Pallas* is rather larger than the *Favourite*, which she much resembles, and was designed as a fast and handy cruiser under sail and canvas. In this latter respect, she has quite realised the expectations of the Admiralty, having in more than one trial of sailing-powers beaten the entire fleet. She was the first vessel in the royal navy to which 'recessed' or indented broadside ports were fitted, enabling a very near approach to a line-ahead fire to be obtained. The class of wooden iron-clads contains two other vessels, the *Zealous* and the *Repulse*, which, although of slightly smaller dimensions, do not differ materially from the *Royal Oak* in construction.

The other broadside vessels at present afloat are the *Hercules*, *Penelope*, *Audacious*, and *Invincible*. Of these, the first is probably unequalled in power by any other ship in the world, except perhaps by the *König Wilhelm*, a frigate originally designed by Mr Reed for the Turkish government, but afterwards purchased by Prussia. She is, in many respects, an enlarged edition of the *Bellerophon*, the chief improvement being, besides the heavier armament and increased thickness of armour (9-inch at the water-line, 6-inch and 8-inch elsewhere), the recessed ports at the corners of the battery, similar to those fitted in the *Pallas*. The guns carried by this vessel are 400-pounders, mounted on Captain Scott's patent carriages; and the trials already made with them prove, contrary to what the advocates of the turret system have maintained for years, that it is possible to work these heavy guns at broadside ports. The *Penelope* was the first large twin-screw ship constructed for the royal navy, and her most notable feature is the large amount of steel introduced into her hull, which of course compares favourably in weight with those of vessels built entirely of iron. It would scarcely be fair to attempt to criticise the *Audacious* and *Invincible*, also twin-screw vessels, as they are not yet ready for sea, having indeed only recently been launched. They belong to what is known as the *Invincible* class, which also includes the *Iron Duke*

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and *Vanguard*, at present in course of construction. Their chief peculiarity consists in a portion of the upper-deck amidships being carried out over the side, so as to obtain a fore-and-aft fire from the broadside guns.

THE MYSTERY OF BELGRAVIA.

It was no use for me, bein' a poor man, to go on grumblin' at our governor, for he'd only have said what he said before. 'There's the keb,' he says, 'and there's the 'oss,' he says; 'and if you don't like 'em, you can leave 'em. I don't ast you,' he says, 'to bring in so much by two shillin' as I do your mates; and if you don't like to drive number three thousin' eight hundered and noughty-nine, there's plenty more as will be glad to; so no more bones about it.' Well, you see that's how it was; and from drivin' a shabby keb and a knacker of a 'oss, I got into the habit of goin' shabby myself, and always got all the shabby jobs as came to the Knightsbridge stand: takin' sarvants to the parly trains—boxy jobs, as I calls 'em; linendrapers' gals with boxes of things to shew at gentlefolkses houses; all the wust-paid fares there was, and too glad to get 'em.

For you see mine was a shabby turn-out, quite a reg'lar sight, you know: old yaller keb with a coat-of-arms on it, and bloo linins, 'cept the cushins, which is all odd uns, stuffed with all sorts; and allus, no matter how I smoke or air that 'ere inside, smellin' affle o' mushrooms, so as you might think some old woman had broke a bottle o' ketchup inside; when it ain't nothin', bless you, but the damp. The paint had got wery shabby, 'specially about the tires; and the spokes o' them wheels would rattle in dry weather most as bad as did the windys in wet. For you see the glasses used to be all up in wet weather, while people was glad enough to keep 'em down in dry, becos of the smell; and them windys was about the most aggrawatinest part about that keb, since you never had no control over them, for they shet up when they liked, and shet down when they liked; and them all the while of sech thin glass, as you didn't dare shew fight, for fear of their goin' all to smash, and your havin' to pay up.

I said as them windys was about the most aggrawatinest things about that keb; but they worn't, for all that: the 'oss was the wust by a long chalk. He was a disappynted sort of a 'oss as took everythin' contrairy; and though I drove him a matter o' ten year, I never once got anythin' like understandin' his charakter. You see he was a low-spereted animal, one as had seen better days, as you might know by the way he hugged the left 'and sharp, as if it had bin a pole—shewin' as he'd once run in pairs, p'raps alongside o' some lovely creetur of a mare as died, and so broke his 'art, makin' him to come down in the world, and take no pride in hisself. For though I did all man could do to make him look decent, he never would, not a bit of it. If I bore him up tight, to make him arch his neck, he only arched it wrong ways—pyntin' that nose of his at the sky, and goin' along like a camel as was in wants of water in a great desert. If I putt a couple o' bits o' laylock on each side of his blinkers, to cheer him up a bit, he'd do nothin' but shake his head, mournful like, jest as if he was a-sayin': 'This here's a wale of tears;' and then, ten to one if he didn't have a fit o' megrims—bad uns too. He'd got the roughest coat as ever a 'oss had, one as never shined any when it was wet; while, where his mane ought to have bin, was all a stubbly, scuffy ridge, like a worn-out brush. As for his tail—there, it worn't no wonder as he used to keep it tucked wery close in between his legs, for that was the only redeemin' pynt in his charakter: he were ashamed of that there tail. You never saw his old spavined hocks, nor his broken knees, nor his rough coat, nor nothin' else, when that tail was wisible; for it took up your whole attention, so as you couldn't see nothin' else. I believe I might have got on a bit better at first, same as I did towards the last, if it hadn't bin for that tail; for you see it was enough to ruin any turn-out, even if it had bin a Lord Mayor's carridge. You couldn't help that tail wherrittin' you, do what you would; for though it was all wery well so long as the 'oss—*Solomon* I called him, cos he was sech a long-headed un—was down in the mouth, and kep his tail outer sight, yet there was times as he'd stick it straight out, 'specially if he'd got a bearin'-rein on, and then, do all I would to keep my temper, I used to be obliged to hit that 'ere tail with the but-end of the whip, to make him keep it outer sight.

Now, I'll jest tell you what that tail was like. It was jest eighteen inches long; and, beginnin' at the top, there was jest twelve inches all smooth as smooth, and then there was seven 'airs; after which you travelled over six more smooth inches, right to the pynt, and then there was twenty-three more long uns. Now, jest let me ask anybody as knows anythin' about 'osses if that worn't a tail as would break any man's 'art. Thirty 'airs there was altogether in that there tail, for I counted 'em often, to see if any more was a-comin'; but, no; not a blessed 'air more would come, no matter how I coaxed 'em. Fancy a tail with only thirty 'airs in, flourished about in your face when you was a-drivin', and jest see if you was tied down to it, if you wouldn't soon get to look as shabby as your 'oss and keb. I took my missus into consultation about that tail, which I s'pose came bald from grief; and she says as stimmylusses was the best thing to make 'air grow; so I got a tin pot fitted in the bottom of *Solomon's* nose-bag; and many 's the half-pint of porter he 's sucked up; but never a 'air came of that. Then my missus explained as it was stimmylusses applied to the part itself, so I tried liquid blister and solid blister; but they never did nothin' but make the old 'oss kick; while as to rubbin' on Spanish-fly pomatum, it worn't no more use than nothin'.

'I can't stand that there tail no longer,' I says to my wife one night when I'd come home quite

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low-spereted; 'it 's enough to break a man's 'art, that it is. Here 's three days runnin' I 've ony took in twelve shillins.'

'Tain't the tail; it 's the whole turn-out,' says my wife.

But I knew better, and I'd made my mind up what I'd do. Next day, I makes-believe to be ill, and sends word to the yard as I worn't a-comin', knowin' as it would be a rest for the old 'oss, as nobody else wouldn't drive; and off I goes to the knacker's yard in Maiden Lane, King's Cross, outs with my money to Mr H——, and comes back with the skin and 'air of as pretty a tail as ever you see in all your born days.

It took me all that day to dress and do that bit o' leather into shape; but I did it, and fitted on straps; and next mornin' I fitted it on to *Solomon*, and drove out o' the yard with him holdin' it up for every one to see, and our chaps a-laughin' like mad. But I didn't care for that: the public wouldn't know, and they didn't neither; for though I never could expect to do much with such a turn-out, with that tail improved and set right, my takins rose a pound a week, and I says to the missus, quite triumphant-like: 'Now,' I says, 'worn't it the tail?'

Now, this here 's all introduction to explain why I had sech a shabby turn-out, and what followed. I told you that I allus got all the wust jobs; but I didn't tell you that time after time the others would be called off the stand two or three times over, while *Solomon* and me chewed our cuds, a-ruminatin' all alone with the waterman and his little flat pails—*Solomon's* cud bein' all chaff, and mine bein' a bit o' baccy. What was the good of talkin' about turns? Nobody decent wouldn't have my keb, as I'd found out long enough before, when I'd gammoned footmen and buttonses into takin' me. I only used to get sent back: people wouldn't go in me, and then there was ony a row, and one got one's feelins hurt.

It was one evenin' when I was all alone, and quite melancholy-like on the stand; old Muddy the waterman being fast asleep a-sittin' on a pail turned topsy-turvy, and his back leanin' up agin the water-post, when a swellish-lookin' fellow in one o' them long Inverness capes comes saunterin' by. He was a big, well-fed, tallish chap, with plenty of black whiskers, and a rollin' eye, and a way of stoppin' and lookin' up street and down street, and beatin' his gloves together. Well, he walks by me two or three times, examinin' the keb and *Solomon* all over; and at last he pulls out a penny cigar, and makes up to me, and asts quite civil for a light, which I gives him, and he begins smokin'.

'Drive me through the squeers,' he says then.

'All right, sir,' I says, and I opens the door; but he didn't like the smell, I thought, for 'No, thanky,' he says; 'I'll take a turn on the box with you.' So I bears up the 'oss, when up goes his tail—that bein' before the improvement time—and as I jumps up, I hits *Mr Sol.* a sly crack with the whip, to make him keep it down; but not he. What does he do but give it a whisk, and lay the twenty-three 'airs over the tail-board, and rest the end of his tail on the top, as if jest out of aggrawation, because I 'd a outside passenger!

However, we drives gently along, 'shig, shog—shig, shog,' which is *Solomon's* reg'lar pace; and my gentleman talks away quite affable-like about kebbin' payin', and the rest of it, till he pumped me quite dry; for I let go a good deal about bein' obliged to drive such a shabby turn-out; and ended by sayin' that it was quite starvation-work at times, and I was pounds now behind-hand with the governor; for my dooty was to take in fourteen shillins a day, and all over was for myself, when sometimes I couldn't make above six or eight, and always havin' to work what we call dead-horse.

'Ah,' says my gentleman at last, 'I've often noticed you standin' empty on the rank. Yours isn't a good turn-out; but I dessay it will do for me. I want a keb four or five nights a week.'

'You do, sir?' I says.

'Yes,' he says. 'Not reg'lar, but mostly for professional pupposes.'

'You don't look like a doctor,' I says to myself. 'But there; it 's no business of mine what you are, so long as you hire my keb, and pay me honestly.' And then I says aloud: 'I shall be wery happy to attend on you, sir.'

'Yes,' he says, 'I thought you would. I suppose, if you were well paid, you would hold your tongue, and not keep your eyes too wide open?'

'I say, governor,' I says, checking *Solomon*, so as he threw his head round, and looked me full in the face, as much as to say: 'What d'yer mean?'—'I say, governor,' I says, 'no burglaries, body-snatchin', or habductions?'

'Nonsense,' he says, laughin'. 'Don't you be alarmed; I shan't get you into any scrape. Mine 's professional business, as is quite honest and above board; and, between ourselves, a five-shillin' job every night for you isn't to be sneezed at.'

Now, I knew that well enough, and was precious glad I'd met him; and we parts quite pleasant at last over a pint of half-and-half at the *Coach and Horses*, in Knightsbridge, after he 'd pulled out a piece of tape and measured the width of my keb's doorway, and arranged for me to meet him next night at half arter eight, at the corner of Kinnerton Street, Wilton Place.

Five minutes before the time, I was at the appynted spot, which, perhaps you mayn't know, is a little back street, full of coachmen's wives and children, and people as takes in servants' washin', and two or three chimbley-sweeps, and a purweyor of hasses' milk to Her Majesty and the Ryal Family, as sends round his donkeys reg'lar every mornin' to be milked at people's doors in the squeers.

Well, punctooal to the moment, Black Whiskers comes, follered by a boy bearin' a basket lined with black oilskin—a big square one—jest the same as you see milliners' boys carry about.

'Oh, ho!' says I; 'cap and fancy work—eh? Rum time to begin business, though.'

Well, the basket was put on the back seat, which it jest fitted; and Black Whiskers gets in and sits down on the front seat, sendin' the boy off, and he says to me—Black Whiskers, you know, not the boy—'Lay hold of the check-string,' he says, 'and stop when I pulls.'

'Ain't none,' I says gruffly; for I thought he 'd have rode outside, so as I could have got to know what dodge he was on.

'Then I'll open the windy,' he says; and he tried to let down the glass, which, after a wonderful deal of shovin' about, came down; and then off we starts, goin' through Wilton Crescent, and down into Eaton Place, when 'Stop!' says he;

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and I pulls up close to the pavement, and out he gets, walks on a bit, whistlin' a Jim Crow sort of a chune; and then, when he'd got most out of sight, comin' slowly back a bit, when, if he didn't squat down all at once right in the middle of the pavement, with that cloak of his spread out all round him, just like a hen goin' to hatch chickens, and stopped like that a matter of five minutes, when he comes back and gets into the keb, and he says, says he: 'Drive to t'other end of the place;' and I drove there.

Well, if you'll believe me, if he didn't get out, walkin' away whistlin' the same Jim Crow sort of chune till he was most out of sight; then I saw him comin' back till he was two lamp-postes off, when down he goes agin, right in the middle of the pavement, with his cloak spread out; stops a minute or two, and comes back, and gets into the keb, sayin': 'Now to Eaton Squeer.'

It worn't my head as itched when I kep' on skratchin', but my curiosity; for I couldn't make it out nohow, not even when we'd stopped a good twenty times in Eaton Squeer, Belgrave Squeer, Chester Squeer, and all about there. Always the same dodge—walkin' away, whistlin', comin' back a short distance, squattin' down on the pavement, and then comin' back to the keb. Not that it was always right in the middle of the pavement, for sometimes it was right on the kerb-stones.

'He's a hinspector of noosances,' I says, 'and goes about smellin' the streets, that's what it is,' I says, after bein' out an hour; but when I'd set him down at the corner of Kinnerton Street, and seen him lift out the basket, set it on the ground, and then, because it was heavy, pull out half-a-dozen bits of macadam granite and shy 'em down: 'He's mad,' I says—'mad as a hatter!' But all the same he gives me five shillins, and he says, says he: 'I may depend on you for to-morrow night?'

'All right, sir,' I says; and then I drove off.

'It's a rummun!' I says that night when I got home.

'What's a rummun?' says my missus.

'Never you mind,' I says quite gruff. And after a bit of hot supper, we goes to bed, when I begins dreamin' about Black Whiskers, but only to be woke up by my missuses elber being dug into my ribs.

'Don't, Joe!' she says.

'Don't what?' I says.

'Don't keep on whistlin'!'

'Was I whistlin'?' I says.

'Yes,' she says, 'quite loud; and I've got to be up at four to do Winkby's washin'.'

'What chune was it?' I says.

'How should I know?' she says. 'Such stuff!'

'Easy there,' I says. 'Was it anythin' like this?' and I whistled a bit of the Jim Crow sort of chune, same as Black Whiskers had—a chune as would keep runnin' in my head, do all I could to get it out.

'That's it,' she says, quite cross; 'and that's quite enough for one night; for if you can't come to bed without whistlin', you'd better get up.'

Next night, things went on jest the same. Black Whiskers comes with his basket, gives me my orders, and off we goes agin; and so matters went on for a matter of six or eight times; when feelin' nat'rally anxious to get to the bottom of it all, I began to sham a little, and to make-believe that *Solomon* wouldn't stand—followin' my gentleman up a bit. But that was no go: he was down upon me directly, makin' me always afterwards to turn the keb round, so that if *Solomon* ever made a move on, it took him further away from the scene of operations.

I couldn't make it out nohow, try what I would; there was always the same dodge on—leave the keb, the whistled chune, the walk on, the walk back, the squat down, and then back to the keb. No one never spoke to him, and he never spoke to no one; and what he did it for, I couldn't make out, only that he'd sometimes make a run into the newly mended road, and pick up a few bits of stone and bring back with him, so that, besides takin' a lot away in his basket, he'd sometimes leave some on the floor of the keb.

Always the same fare—five shillins, five and six times a week; so you may guess I worn't well pleased when one night in August I goes to the reg'lar spot, and he worn't there. I waited an hour, and he didn't come; and so it was several more nights, when I took a look round, he worn't there; and that last night agin, I says, when I went home: 'It's a rummun!' took my wife up short, and got woke up in the night for whistlin' that there Jim Crow chune.

Well, a matter of nine months slipped by, and that there mystery was allus settin' me off whistlin' that Jim Crow chune; when one night I was drivin' back sharp to the Knightsbridge rank, when, runnin' through Chester Squeer, I turns on to a lot of tan fresh laid down, becos some one was ill. A wonderful deal there was of it, spreadin' right round the corner into the next street. I passes a keb standin' empty, and gives the driver the reg'lar whip-hand shoot, and then turns sharp round the corner, and comes upon Black Whiskers hisself, squatted down in the middle of the pavement.

We was so took by surprise that we both stopped short: me pulling up *Solomon*, and him shootin' upright, when blest if I didn't see through the whole dodge in an instant, and called myself a gumph for not seein' it sooner; for as Black Whiskers pops up, he'd got half a chickin' in one hand, and somethin' tied up in a basin and handkercher in the other; while at the same moment that there round iron thing as covers the holes where the coals are shot went down with a clatter, havin' evidently been held up with a broom-handle.

I never said nothin'; but I put that and that together, and then talked it over with two or three mates as had shabby kebs, to find that in the season when families was in town they'd all had a turn with Black Whiskers, who turned out afterwards to have bin a policeman on that beat—a gent whose black whiskers had won the 'arts of no end of cooks; so that when he got turned out of the force, he used to make a reg'lar trade of it, takin' his basket round of a night, whistlin' his chune, and then comin' back to give a tap on the iron in the pavement, which used to shoot up, and Mrs Cook in the coal-cellar would send her offerins up that safe passage, gettin' a squeeze of the hand for thanks; while a few stones were afterwards pulled up to blind the kebman.

It was a game that could not last for ever; but whether the cooks found him out, and tore up all them black whiskers by the roots—or whether he

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committed bigamee, and was transported, I never knew; but he disappeared all at once like; and that was the end of the Mystery o' Belgravy.

THE CENTRAL CAUCASUS.

NOBODY knows much about the Central Caucasus. The very name is associated with mystery, and the prevalent idea connected with Bashan, apart from the Scriptural association of that place with bulls, is that there are wonderful and very inaccessible traces of 'giant cities' there. Mr Freshfield* has 'been there,' and tells us most interesting particulars about the Caucasus, a range two thousand feet higher than the Alps in the average height of its peaks, and less known than the Andes and the Himalaya; and also about Bashan, where he did not meet either with bulls or with giant cities. His route lay by Egypt and the Nile, but he restricts himself to only one observation upon those over-'done' places—a useful hint to future tourists. 'Visit,' he says, 'the petrified forest, and make your donkey-boy bring you back by Djebel Mokattam, or you will lose one of the most wonderful views in the east. After riding for miles over the arid African desert, with a narrow horizon, and nothing to attract the attention save a distant train of camels or a troop of gazelles, the edge of an abrupt descent is reached, and the view of Cairo and the valley of the Nile bursts upon the eyes with an almost magical suddenness. The immediate foreground is formed by the quarried heights of Djebel Mokattam; in the centre of the picture rise the taper minarets of the mosque of the citadel; in a valley on its right are the tombs of the Memlooks, a deserted town of the dead, and the vast modern city spreads itself out in the plain below. In the centre of the broad bluish-green ribbon of fertile land, dotted with clusters of pyramids, the Nile itself can be traced to the commencement of the Delta; while beyond, on the west, the yellow sands of the desert mark the limits of its fertilising inundation.'

No more interesting, no more suggestive route than that pursued by the travellers could be traced out by untrammelled imagination; but to pass from Jerusalem to Damascus by the east side of the Jordan is not an easy achievement. No one has done it since Lord Lindsay achieved the feat in 1837; but Mr Freshfield and his companions made up their minds to try, and succeeded, by the simple expedient of having nothing whatever to do with the Arabs, and getting the Turkish protection, through the pacha. They were warned, advised, and pitied to any extent, while they remained in Jerusalem; awful examples were adduced from experience for their instruction and reproof, but in vain. They left Jerusalem, a small body, but strongly armed, and marched to the Jordan. Having crossed the river, the party diverged from the customary track of eastern travel, and continued to ascend by zigzag paths until they overlooked the whole Jordan valley, from the Lake of Tiberias to the Dead Sea; and then on through a country remarkably like North Wales, until they suddenly came upon the columns of Jerash, the ancient Gerasa, where not a single inhabitant is to be found, while the ruins are wonderfully preserved. Into what insignificance the impressions produced by Pompeii fade, before such a picture of antiquity as this: 'We went first to the magnificent Temple of the Sun, the columns of which, standing on elevated ground facing the east, are conspicuous in all distant views of the city. Near them, in the side of the hill, is the largest theatre. Returning to the great street, we stopped to admire the exquisite carving of a richly decorated gateway, and then proceeded to the "Forum," an oval space, surrounded with columns. On the brow above it stand another temple and theatre. The latter is wonderfully little injured by time; the stage is almost perfect, and very tastefully decorated.' When will some photographer carry his camera across the Jordan, and reap the rich, and as yet almost untouched field which awaits him amid the ruins of Amrâmn, Jerash, and the Hauran?

This journey supplied Mr Freshfield with some charming traits of Arab manners. While they were camped at Jerash, the sheik of a neighbouring village came to visit them, the identical sheik of Suf, of whose iniquities Mr Tristram gives a vivid account. They inspected his testimonials, which extend over thirty years, and are probably unique. One Englishman writes: 'On no account have anything to do with the bearer of this; he is a thorough villain and awful liar.' The others are in a similar strain. This gentleman tried to force an entrance into their tent; but the dragoman, a great character, stopped him by seizing his beard and waggling his head with one hand, while he soundly boxed his ears with the other. At Derat, Bozrah, Hebran, and Kufr, they found the ruins very perfect and most interesting, but certainly not carrying out the 'giant' theory. Here is an anecdote which one would like to be able to tell to Gay, as a pendent to his fable of 'The Travelled Monkey.' 'The headman of one of the villages gave a feast to our muleteers. One of them, a Christian of the Lebanon, ate with a fork. "Mashalla!" exclaimed his Bozran host, "what a brute; he has not yet learned to eat with his fingers!"' In the exploration of the Legah, they experienced so little difficulty, that they found it hard to realise the fact, that, with the exception of Burckhardt and Mr Cyril Graham, they were the only European travellers who had ever succeeded in penetrating the interior. Their progress was as unadventurous as it was interesting; and Mr Freshfield deliberately rejects the belief that the ruins now in existence are those of the cities conquered by Moses. He says: 'The Pentateuch tells us that Bashan was once inhabited by giants, and it has been argued that the size of the stone houses shews that they were built by a race of abnormal stature, and proves the date of their construction. In reality, the private dwellings are the reverse of gigantic, and the rooms they contain are to modern ideas small. If gates are sometimes found eight feet in height, they are always in positions where animals as well as men had to pass under them, and those found at the present day in similar situations are of the same dimensions. The stone doors guarding the entrances to the vineyards around Tabreez are larger and more massive than any we saw in Bashan. The extent and number of the ruined towns are used as an argument that they are the

* *Travels in the Central Caucasus and Bashan, including Visits to Ararat and Tabreez, and Ascents of Kazbek and Elburz.* By Douglas W. Freshfield. London: Longmans, Green, & Co.

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remains of the sixty fenced cities conquered and destroyed by Moses. Travellers are too apt to forget that Syria formed a portion of the Christian empire of Constantinople, and that in the fifth century there were thirty-three Christian bishops in the Hauran alone. The population which built the churches and the theatres was quite numerous enough to have filled the ruined houses which now remain. If any buildings older than our era still exist in the Hauran, they are, I believe, exceptions, and do not disprove our conclusion, that false impression is given by describing the ruins of Bozrah, Kernawat, Suweideh, and Shuhba—in fact, those of Roman provincial towns—as "giant cities." It is not of Og, but of the Antonines, not of the Israelitish but of the Saracenic conquest, that most modern travellers in the Hauran will be reminded.'

Having left Damascus and Baalbec for the Lebanon, the travellers determined to do another feat, which dragomans and dwellers in Damascus pronounced to be impossible—that was, to reach the famous Cedars, in spite of the snow. They divided the party into three sections, and they all succeeded, though Mr Freshfield acknowledges that getting up to the grove and down again was as heavy a three hours' task as he has ever done. It took one hour and forty minutes' sharp climbing up a steep snow-gully to reach the ridge (7624 feet), whence they looked down on the Mediterranean. The splendid view well repaid the exertion, and they found the immemorial trees in very good condition, with the snow resting on their wide-spreading branches, the only green thing visible on the great white slopes.

They visited the Isles of Greece and Smyrna, and went to Ephesus. It sounds oddly to talk of Aisalook, the nearest station to Ephesus, and how they were entertained by Mr Wood, who is excavating with a view to the discovery of the Temple of Diana. He had already done a great deal. The theatre, the scene of the goldsmiths' riot, is uncovered, the stage is cleared, many inscriptions have been found. Some of the recently excavated marbles are as white as on the day they were cut. Mr Wood has also discovered a small building, which, on the strength of some Christian symbols, he rather boldly calls the Tomb of St Luke, a marble basin of noble dimensions, and a sort of 'Via Sacra,' outside the walls, lined with sarcophagi and funeral inscriptions. When his visitors were there, he believed himself to have settled within a square mile the site of the Temple of Diana, and seemed quite confident of turning it up sooner or later. At Constantinople they received aid and instructions from the Russian government, and on a fine May day they sailed, in a small Russian steamer, for the Caucasian shores. Then began the absolute novelty, the strangeness of the journey, the successive revelations of mountain grandeur and beauty, the recognition in a huge dome of ice of mysterious, untrodden Elbruz. The exploration of the Georgian plains brought many objects of interest and historical association to light, and then they reached Tiflis, a city of which little is known in Western Europe, but which is rather 'cracked up' in the east. Mr Freshfield has no opinion of it, and disposes of it briefly as a place wherein one may expend a great deal of money and get very little value for it. Tiflis was to be the base of operations, of which the most interesting was the ascent of Mount Ararat. The march along the valley of the Kur was indeed a weird and wild one, passing through the borderland of the steppe country, which is inhabited only by the wandering tribes of Turkomans and Kurds. They passed several underground villages, whose existence is indicated, at a distance, only by a brown blotch on the surface of the plain; on a nearer approach, a low mound of earth, with a thin column of smoke issuing from it, shews the position of each house. Here is a strange picture in a few lines: 'The men wear great sheepskin coats and conical fur-hats; the women, dresses of crimson-lake hue, which lit up wonderfully the dull green landscape. Every half-hour we came to a weird group of ruddy tomb-stones, averaging six feet high, and often delicately carved: they resemble upright sarcophagi in shape. These strange graveyards make much more show than the villages. Companies of camels, their day's work done, and their heavy cotton-bales ranged in a circle, sauntered lazily about in search of herbage. Gaily feathered birds perched on the telegraph wires, which were our constant companions and guides, scarcely cared to fly away as we passed. It was hard to realise that it was scarcely twelve hours since we had left a town supplied with every European luxury.'

Through this romantic land, in which the natural features of the east and the west are strangely blended, and the inhabitants are merry, harmless people, quite uncivilised, the travellers journeyed towards the Russo-Persian frontier—to follow the route on the map is to get bewildered with unknown distances and strange names—and suddenly they beheld the giant mountain of Armenia. They had been traversing uplands since the dawn, and had come to a rise in the ground, which shut out all beyond. 'As we overtopped the brow,' says Mr Freshfield, 'Ararat burst suddenly into view—a huge, but gracefully shaped mass, rising to a height of 16,916 feet, from a base of about 3000 feet. It stands perfectly isolated from all the other ranges, with the still more perfect cone of Little Ararat (12,840 feet) at its side. No single mountain within my knowledge presents so magnificent and impressive an appearance. I can only compare it to the popular idea of Atlas—a huge head and shoulders supporting the sky.'

The ascent of the mountain was not to be attempted until the return of the travellers from Persia; so, after an inspection of it, they started on their journey over the seemingly boundless grassy steppe, whose surface is interrupted only by groups of Turkoman huts, formed of canvas and wicker-work, and hung with gay carpets, woven by the women—probably exactly a similar scene to that which existed there in the earliest ages of the world.

The travellers had formed lively anticipations of finding in Tabreez a Persian city quite beyond the reach of European influences, and their expectations were fully realised. Here is the very core and centre of the East, in buildings, in costumes, in bazaars, in manners, in walled gardens, in fantastic and brilliant ornamentation, with open shops—displaying a confusion of goods of utterly unfamiliar aspect—surmounted by offices, or rather dens, where the traders sit in grave contemplation, and the wooden roofs are studies in the picturesque. The poetry of trade and of labour comes out strongly at Tabreez. 'Here are the grocer's stalls, tastefully decorated with devices in tinfoil; and the provision-shops, set out with nosegays of

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buttercups, poppies, and clover, are a perfect blaze of colour. In one of the brightest and liveliest alleys of the whole bazaar you watch the shoemakers all stitching as if the pair of shoes in hand must be sent home in five minutes; close by are the forges, where eight men, standing in a circle, hammer out, with alternate strokes, a mass of iron; how each hammer keeps clear of the next being a mystery to the uninitiated. Then there is the carpenters' row, the bookbinders' row, the old clothes row, the knickknack row, where you may buy anything from revolvers to Persian ink-trays, and the saddlers' row. The roof is bright with saddle-cloths, some covered with the most beautiful Resht embroidery; while in the stores you find gay girths and tasselled bridles, carpet saddle-bags and leather salt-pouches heaped together in picturesque confusion. The crowd which fills the streets of Tabreez is purely European. You do not meet two men in eastern dress during the day, nor do you see the red fez, which lends such life to the cities of the Levant.'

From this fine, quaint civilisation to the splendid wildness of the Caucasus, was a transition indeed. The names of the places, the forest passes, the scattered villages through which the travellers passed, hardly make any impression, all is so new and strange. Every variety of natural beauty, from the most savage forest scenery to great plains of dazzling flowers, presented itself upon the way to the great glaciers of the Caucasus, through Suanotia; and the tribes are interesting, in their complete isolation. Their language is Tartar, their religion is Mohammedan. The imperial sway of Russia does not press hardly on these mountaineers, who pay only a light house-tax, are exempt from conscription, and too remote to be exposed to the petty restraints which a once free people often find the hardest to bear. Their local government is generally described as feudal, but Mr Freshfield thinks it is rather patriarchal. The princes are the recognised head of the community; they live in a house four times the size of any other in the village, they are richest in flocks and herds, and on them falls the duty of entertaining strangers; but their word is not law, and they can only persuade, not compel, their poorer neighbours to carry out their wishes. The notion one gains of the life of these Caucasian peasants is not an unattractive one, by any means, to the tired and cramped fancy of Western Europe.

A tramp over the snow-fields of Elbruz, rewarded by the sight of sunrise from a height equal to that of the top of Mont Blanc, is worth while, though the suffering from cold was great, and it was doubtful whether the climbers could go on. They persevered, however, and reached the summit of the mighty mountain, where, owing to the shelter of a small tower of rock, the temperature was endurable, and they sat down to examine the panorama. Thus simply Mr Freshfield gives the result: 'I never saw any group of mountains which bore so well being looked down upon as the great peaks that stand over the sources of the Tcherek and Tchegem. The Pennines from Mont Blanc look puny in comparison with Koschtantan and his neighbours from Elbruz. The Caucasian groups are finer, and the peaks sharper; and there was a suggestion of unseen depth in the trenches separating them, that I never noticed so forcibly in any Alpine view.'

The ascent was regarded as a wonderful undertaking, and its achievement rendered the English travellers very popular at the village of Urnspick, whither they returned, bearing evident traces of the severe cold and fatigue they had undergone. They occasioned some disappointment, however, by having to acknowledge that they had not seen the gigantic cock who lives up aloft on the mountain, and prevents the approach of men to the treasure which he guards, by attacking intruders with his beak and talons. The legend of treasure buried on a mountain-peak seems to be common to every mountainous country. The variety of natural beauty in this remote part of the world prevents travel from becoming monotonous, even though the scattered villages are pretty much alike, and there is not much difference between one group of sheepskin-clothed, hardy, frugal, ignorant peasants, and another. But woodland and mountain, plain and ravine, rich stretches of garden-like land, and rapid rivers, present themselves in rapid succession; and the traveller emerges from luxuriantly wooded hills into a portion of the Tcherek valley, for instance, which is a dreary swamp, uninhabited except by wild boars, and then looks down upon a Tcherkess hamlet, exactly resembling a South African kraal; after which he sees no human dwelling for a day's journey. Then he gets into the hill-country again, and crossing the eastern Tcherek, where it flows in a cleft so narrow that a man might almost leap across it, has a ten hours' ride through woodland scenery so exquisitely beautiful as to fill the mind with fresh delight, even after all the previous experience of the beauty of the Caucasian country. They were bound for Balkar, which was to be reached through the tremendous gorges of the Tcherek. Nothing can be finer than that journey, on the brink of awful precipices, whose magnitude they could only appreciate when a bend in the hillside enabled them to look back. 'The gorge of the Tcherek,' says Mr Freshfield, 'is no mere crack in the lower slopes of the mountains, like those of Pfeffers and the Via Mala. It is rather a huge trench, dug down from their very summits to a depth of more than five thousand feet. Behind us, forest trees clung to every available inch of ground. Looking upward, the character of the defile was more savage. The foaming waters of the Tcherek, crossed three times by bridges, filled the bottom of the trench, the sides of which were perpendicular walls, succeeded by shelves, capped in their turn by a loftier tier of precipices. The path, a mere ladder of broken stones, brought us, by a rapid series of zigzags, to a most extraordinary spot, where the overhanging cliffs meet, and form a natural bridge over the river, which can barely be seen at the bottom of its deep bed. As we looked from this spot, at which the savage grandeur of the scenery attains its height, the torrent, to all appearance, plunged directly into the bowels of the mountains, and it was impossible to discover how it found a way out of them.' This ascent achieved, and a wide upland basin traversed, where the careful cultivation and intelligent industry of the Moslem population manifests itself in marked contrast to the thriftless waste and indolence, and the consequent poverty of their Christian neighbours, the travellers approached Muchol, and so entered Balkar, the first Western Europeans who had ever been seen there. Their arrival created a

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great sensation, and they were treated with effusive hospitality. They had received equal kindness, but there the princes were imbued with Russian manners, in contrast to which the patriarchal simplicity of Balkar was very striking.

Then began the climbing of Dychtan and Koschtantan, after a march over their great glaciers; but to ascend to the peaks was impossible. The difficulties were such as would have required a strong party of step-cutters. No help was to be expected from the natives, and the travellers wisely resolved to abandon the attempt. 'The second and third summits in the Caucasus and Europe are therefore not only unscaled, but unattempted peaks.' Notwithstanding this disappointment, the journey was very pleasurable, and camp-life in the Caucasus has the combined charm of being excessively romantic and perfectly safe.

The Uruch Valley is even more beautiful than that of the Tcherek, and, being the 'Gate of the Mountains,' it has an almost mystical interest, as though it were enchanted ground, beyond which lay the real, actual, work-a-day world. Mr Freshfield describes it, as he gazed at it from a height of three thousand feet. The immense extent of undulating woodland stretching to the horizon, and the rivers, which, unbridged and unconfined, converting their immediate banks into swampy jungles, wander like bright flashes of light across the green landscape, convey to the traveller's mind the impression of a rich virgin country, such as he would rather expect to meet with in the New World than in the Caucasus, the supposed cradle of his race. Nothing within their experience of more civilised countries was to be compared with its rich yet melancholy effect. In this extraordinary spot they bade farewell to the mountain fastnesses of the Central Caucasus, an exit which left upon their minds imperishable recollections of its sublimity.

Mr Freshfield's narrative has more than the ordinary effect of entire novelty in travel. Any mountaineers whom his account of the journey may set 'thinking on the frosty Caucasus,' may be assured that the difficulties of a journey through the whole of that beautiful and mysterious land are quite surmountable by the aid of perseverance and good temper, and that two of the most famous peaks of the Caucasian chain, Elbruz and Kazbek, are within the reach of all who possess the physical endurance necessary for an ascent of Mont Blanc.

A BOOK OF REFERENCE.

NEWSPAPER readers cannot have failed to notice that during the month of November there appear long advertisements, each headed by the name of some railway company, followed by some such sentence as this in brackets [Branch Lines to A and B, Further Powers, Additional Capital, Amendment of Acts], after which comes the body of the advertisement, containing a fuller statement of the objects for which an act of parliament is desired, in language which will prevent any but those whom it may concern from wading through it. Should any unfortunate shareholder, moved by his anxiety to know what his company are about to do, succeed in reading through one of these advertisements, he will probably rise from the perusal with a hazy notion that a great deal is to be done, and a large amount of money is to be spent. A few weeks later, the papers contain a list of railway bills before parliament; and towards the end of January or the beginning of February there will appear paragraphs to the effect that compliance with standing orders has or has not been proved in the case of the X Y Z Railway Company.

To many readers these statements must appear as unintelligible as the terms made use of in a law report intended for professional use; and even those who are aware that railway bills, although so greatly affecting the public, are technically termed private bills, and that both Houses of Parliament have certain rules, called 'standing orders,' a compliance with which is necessary before a private bill can be introduced, have much to learn before they know the whole process of obtaining an act of parliament.

The standing orders require that 'plans, sections, and book of reference' for any proposed line shall be deposited in certain offices before the end of November. There are other requirements, a compliance with which is necessary, but this is the principal one; that which involves the greatest amount of labour. Every one, of course, knows what a plan is, and a section, but a great many people do not know what a 'book of reference' is, and as the writer has had considerable experience in the preparation of such books, he will endeavour to add a mite to the stock of general knowledge, and make shareholders acquainted with one way in which their money goes.

When the directors have determined upon the application to parliament for power to construct a line of railway, the first operation is for their engineer to prepare a plan. This plan is usually a copy from the six-inch Ordnance Survey. A thick black line is drawn to represent the intended railway, and on each side of this centre line, at a distance representing about one hundred yards, are drawn dotted lines, called the limits of deviation. These limits are of great importance, because in constructing a railway it is often found necessary to alter the direction, to avoid some natural obstacle, and power is therefore given to vary the line as originally laid down to any part within the limits of deviation. The plan shews every object—field, house, garden, stable, pond, shed, or even waterbutt—within these limits, but scarcely anything beyond them but the continuation of a few hedges. When the plan is completed, a copy of it is handed over to the solicitor for the bill, in order that he may prepare the book of reference. Everything marked on the plan is distinguished by a number; and the object of the book is to shew, by reference to this number, what it is, where it is, and who are the owner and occupier. All this information has to be collected by the solicitor; and as the plans are very seldom in his hands before the middle of November, he has plenty to do. The course adopted is to send out a party, or, if the line be of any length, several parties, whose work it is to inspect all the property within the limits of deviation, so as to get an accurate description, and to obtain, by seeing or writing to all persons interested, a correct list of the owners and occupiers. The importance of this will be seen when it is considered that if any opponent of the line can detect an error in the book of reference, such as the omission of the name of any person interested in the property to be taken, he can oppose the bill before the examiner for standing orders; and if he

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make good his objection, the bill will be thrown out, and all the money spent in the preliminary steps wasted.

Each party sent out 'referencing' (as the preparation of the book of reference is termed) usually consists of three—one to follow the plan, another to write down the descriptions and names, and the third to make inquiries in the immediate neighbourhood. The writer is generally considered the chief of the party, as most of the responsibility devolves upon him. Sometimes only two are sent, and occasionally one will go alone.

To talk of being in the country every day and all day long sounds pleasant enough; and many will perhaps envy those who are employed in referencing. It may be, on the whole, healthy work, but I can assert, from experience, it is not always so very pleasant. In the first place, it is not always country work. There was a time when railways avoided large towns, but those days are passed; and any one who, in leaving London by train, will look out upon the district through which he passes, and will remember that the book of reference often has to contain a description of a similar mass of tumble-down houses, dirty streets, and filthy yards, can form some idea of what occasionally falls to the lot of a referencing clerk. Even the open country too has its disadvantages. November is not the pleasantest month in the year; on rare occasions it is bright and fine, but far more frequently rain, or fog, or frost prevail. In referencing, it is out of all question to stick carefully to roads and footpaths; you must follow the plan over hedges and ditches, ploughed fields and gardens, or how could you be sure that your description is correct; and it is really difficult to say what kind of weather is the best, or the worst. If there is a frost, either you are bitterly cold and numb, or the sun thawing the surface, makes it almost impossible to get along. A fog necessitates your going round and across each field, lest some pond, path, or shed should escape you; and if it rain, you must carry an umbrella, to protect the book in which you write, and the plan. Add a high wind, and you have about as uncomfortable a position as any one could be in. But the catalogue of unpleasant incidents does not end here. In addition to getting wet to the skin, or nearly frozen, you are also liable to be half-starved. On one occasion, after a hard day's work, about half-past five o'clock, my companion and I came to the conclusion we must have some food. A brisk walk of about two miles brought us to the nearest public-house, where we ordered dinner. Our horror when we found there was nothing to be had but bread, cheese parings, and pickled cabbage, may be imagined. There was not another inn within four miles, so that we had no choice but to be thankful for what we got. Another day, I had to dine upon jam tarts, with the consolation that if I came the next day, I might fare sumptuously, as they were going to kill a pig in the morning.

After all, however, there is a certain charm about referencing which is attractive to many. In the first place, you are invested with a considerable amount of importance in the eyes of the inhabitants of the district; a railway is a great thing to them, and from it you receive a reflected greatness. Then, again, signboards, warnings to trespassers, and notices of spring-guns and man-traps, lose all their terror—you become a sort of privileged person. If a man sees you climb over the wall into his garden, and jump down upon his pet cucumber-bed, he is naturally angry; but in nine cases out of ten, when he learns you are come about a railway, his anger will disappear, and if you want to go back the same way, he will give you a leg up. The true reason was once forcibly expressed to me. I was engaged upon a long line through an agricultural district. I had finished my part, and as time was pressing, and I was regarded as careful and experienced, I was sent off alone to check the reference of another portion. Towards the close of the day, having got over about five miles of country, I came upon an inn, where I decided to get something to eat. Upon entering the bar, the first thing I saw was a large bill headed 'Society for the Prosecution of Trespassers,' which stated that a large reward would be given for information which should lead to the conviction of any one damaging hedges or walls, or trespassing on the lands of any of the undersigned. I had just finished the list, when the landlord entered. 'Look here, landlord,' I said; 'here's a chance for you. I've this very day broken through hedges, and trespassed on the lands of nearly every member of your society. If you like to inform, you may get a reward.'

'You're here about the railway, are you not, sir?'

'Yes.'

'Then we shall be paid well enough for our hedges,' he said, with a meaning smile.

The soothing influence of future profit has unfortunately no weight with dogs and bulls. It is decidedly unpleasant, when you wish to visit a farm-house, and to reach it have to cross some three or four fields, to be met at the first stile by a big dog, who will insist upon constituting himself your escort, and enlivens the way by making furious charges at your legs every dozen yards or so. Nor is it pleasant to find yourself face to face with a fine young bull. The latter is a case when the bravest man may run away, and I have never hesitated to give a bull as wide a berth as possible. I once had to run for it, and managed to escape in a manner which would please Captain Mayne Reid. I was making my way alone across country, when, upon getting over a difficult hedge, I found myself closer to a bull than I liked. At first I thought I might cross the field without being observed; but just as I was in the middle, the brute caught sight of me, and advanced to the charge. Behind me was the hedge I had come over; before me was another rather worse; to the left was the bull; I had nothing for it but to make to the right, where there appeared to be a wide ditch or stream. I tried to go as unconcernedly as possible; and the bull followed, not very fast, but still gaining on me. I reached the ditch. It was quite dry, and about seven feet deep, and rather more in width. The sides were broken, and looked nasty for a jump, but a projecting branch of a thorn-tree offered a good firm foothold for a spring. The bull evidently guessed my intention, for, as I reached this branch, he came on with a rush. I sprang as he got uncomfortably near; but the branch broke off, and I fell to the bottom of the ditch. There is a picture by Paul Potter which depicts a bull, who, from his face, appears about to burst into tears. I always thought the expression greatly exaggerated; but since the time when I climbed up the far side of the ditch and saw the face of the bull that had

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pursued me, I can understand the power of expression of which bovine features are capable, for never, even upon human countenance, have I seen such a look of astonishment as that which my sudden disappearance had caused.

Another time, I was referencing for a line near London. My book was complete, as I thought, except in one case, where I was not quite satisfied with the description of some property laid out for building. It wanted only a few days to the end of November, and having nothing particular to do that afternoon, I took the train to the nearest station, and walked over to complete my description. Having done so, I was just leaving, when I saw a man at work on a small piece of ground included in the limits; it was only about half an acre, and was used for growing vegetables, and, as I had been told, belonged to a Mr D. To make assurance doubly sure, I went up to the man and asked: 'This piece belongs to Mr D., does it not?'

'No, sir; he only uses it because nobody knows who it belongs to.'

'How so?'

'Why, you see, sir, some ten years ago it belonged to a building society: I don't know whether they ever divided it, but about nine years ago they were dissolved, and no one has been near here since.'

Beyond this he could tell me nothing, but that the society, the name of which he did not remember, had met in Chelsea, and he believed there were some fifty or sixty members. Here was a nice mess; some fifty or sixty people to find out in the course of two or three days, with the prospect of the number being greatly increased by the representatives of those who were dead. A detail of what I had to do would only weary the reader as much as the doing of it wearied me. I visited nearly all the building societies in Chelsea, and at last discovered one in whose possession were the books of the defunct society. Thus I got the names; and by an unlimited employment of Hansoms, I eventually succeeded in making up the list of owners just in time. Many of the people had not the faintest idea that they were interested in any such property.

These are specimens of the kind of work that falls to the lot of those employed in making up the book of reference. Of course it cannot be done without expense; but the cost is very much increased by the pressure of time, in consequence of the solicitor not having the plans till nearly the middle of November. The reference must be completed by the end of the month, cost what it may, or all the survey is useless; and, with regard to this cost, there is one point worthy of notice: it is incurred without the knowledge or sanction of the shareholders. The directors determine to apply for powers to make a branch, either for the benefit of their company, or by way of opposition to some other company. The consent of the shareholders is not asked until the bill has reached a certain stage, and even then they are not informed, and many, I believe, have no idea of what the preliminary expenses have been. In these days of small dividends, when in many of our large companies retrenchment and economy are so much to be desired, would it not be well that the consent of the shareholders should be obtained before a step which involves an outlay often very considerable is undertaken?

A BALLAD OF THE PERIOD.

PART I.

The auld wife sat at her ivied door
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*),
A thing she had frequently done before;
And her knitting reposed on her aproned knees.

The piper he piped on the hill-top high
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*),
Till the cow said, 'I die,' and the goose asked 'Why?'
And the dog said nothing, but searched for fleas.

The farmer he strode through the dim farm-yard
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*);
His last brew of cider had turned out hard—
The connection of which with the plot one sees.

The farmer's daughter hath frank blue eyes
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*);
She hears the rook caw in the windy skies,
As she sits at her lattice and shells her peas.

The farmer's daughter hath ripe red lips
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*);
If you try to approach her, away she skips
Over tables and chairs with apparent ease.

The farmer's daughter hath soft brown hair
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*);
And I met with a ballad, I can't tell where,
Which mainly consisted of lines like these.

PART II.

She sat with her hands 'neath her dimpled cheeks
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*),
And spake not a word. While a lady speaks
There is hope—but *she* didn't even sneeze.

She sat, with her hands 'neath her crimson cheeks
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*);
She gave up mending her father's breeks,
And let the cat roll in her best chemise.

She sat, with her hands 'neath her burning cheeks
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*),
And gazed at the piper for thirteen weeks;
Then she followed him out o'er the misty leas.

Her sheep followed her, as their tails did them
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*);
And this song is considered a perfect gem;
And as to the meaning, it's what you please.

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WALTER SCOTT AT WORK.

IN the autumn of 1796, a firm of publishers in Edinburgh, of very little note in the trade, issued a thin octavo volume of translations from the ballads of Bürger, which were then on the lips of every one who made any pretension to taste or sentiment. The volume bore no author's name; and with the exception of a terse and vigorous line here and there, a striking metaphor, or a bold and picturesque expression, the work contained nothing to distinguish it from the host of translations from the German which were then issuing from half the presses of London and Edinburgh. The author's own friends, of course, were in high glee about it; but out of their circle it was hardly seen. It fell dead from the press; and most of the edition was condemned to the service of the trunk-maker.

This was Sir Walter Scott's *début* in literature. The failure, however, hardly touched his spirits. 'I was coolly received by strangers,' he said, recalling the incident many years afterwards, when he stood at the head of English literature, the Ariosto of the North; 'but my reputation began rather to increase among my own friends, and on the whole I was more bent to shew the world that it had neglected something worth notice, than to be affronted by its indifference.'

The history of the translation itself is not without its interest, giving us, as it does, our first glimpse of Walter Scott at work. Till Scott took up these German ballads, he had been known, I need hardly say, principally as a harum-scarum sort of youth, of awkward and bashful manners, possessing a fund of queer stories and old Border ballads, little scholarship, and less law, but with a turn for versification and story-telling; and one evening, when the conversation at his father's table happened to turn upon the ballads of Bürger, Scott promised one of the guests, Miss Cranstoun, a rhymed version of the most popular of them, *Lenore*, from his own pen. He began his task after supper, and sat up till he had finished it, working himself up into such a state of excitement in reproducing the vivid imagery of the original as to set sleep at defiance. He presented his translation to Miss Cranstoun at breakfast the next morning, and she seems to have been particularly struck by its point and finish. 'Upon my word,' she said, writing to a friend, 'Walter Scott is going to turn out a poet—something of a cross, I think, between Burns and Gray.'

Acting upon his determination to realise this friend's conception of the powers of his genius, Scott set vigorously to work, with the assistance of an old German dictionary, which he borrowed from the original Jonathan Oldbuck, and that of his clever and accomplished cousin of Harden, to translate everything that struck him in his reading of the literature of Germany—lyrics from Goethe, ballads from Bürger, and dramas wherever he found them; and in 1799 a selection of these were, through the assistance of Monk Lewis, 'a martinet in rhyme and numbers,' published under Scott's name by Mr Bell. This was the first of Sir Walter Scott's acknowledged publications; and it was the first, too, that brought him a penny in the form of what he calls 'copy-money.' Its price was twenty-five pounds.

Concurrently with the translation of these scraps of German poetry, Scott had been collecting the Border minstrels, and making his 'first serious attempts in verse' by writing in imitation of these ballads the trifles by which he won his spurs as an original writer—the *Fire King*, the *Grey Brother*, *Glenfinlas*, and the *Eve of St John*. It was not, however, till he was preparing the third volume of the *Minstrelsy* for the press that the idea of trying his 'prentice hand at anything more ambitious struck him, and in its original form even the *Lay of the Last Minstrel* was, to use his own words, nothing more than 'a romance of Border chivalry in a light-horseman sort of stanza.' Like his translation of *Lenore*, too, this *Lay* owed its origin to the suggestion of a lady, the Countess of Dalkeith. Scott was in the habit, when living at Ashestiel, of riding out with his lovely chieftainess and her husband

When Summer smiled on sweet Bowhill;

and in the course of one of these pleasant rides,

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Lady Dalkeith happened to repeat the grotesque story of Gilpin Horner, which she had recently heard from an old gentleman on a visit to the castle, as an o'er true tale. She insisted that Scott should 'turn it into a Border ballad.' 'Had she asked me to write a ballad on a broomstick,' said Scott, 'I must have attempted it.' He therefore took up his pen and sketched out 'a few verses, to be called the *Goblin Page*.' These he read over to his friends Erskine and Cranstoun one evening after dinner. They do not seem to have thought much of what they heard; and Scott, taking his cue from their criticism, threw his stanzas aside in a fit of disgust. 'They lay long by me,' says Scott, in a letter to Miss Seward, 'till the applause of some friends whose judgment I valued induced me to resume the poem; so, on I wrote, knowing no more than the man in the moon how I was to end. At length, the story appeared so uncouth that I was fain to put it into the mouth of my old minstrel, lest the nature of it should be misunderstood, and I should be suspected of setting up a new school of poetry, instead of a feeble attempt to imitate the old. In the process of the romance, the page, intended to be a principal person in the work, contrived (from the baseness of his natural propensities, I suppose) to slink down-stairs into the kitchen; and now he must e'en abide there.'

The scene and date of this resumption Lockhart traced years after in the recollections of a cornet in the Edinburgh Light Horse. 'While the troop were on permanent duty at Musselburgh, in the autumnal recess of 1802, the quarter-master (Scott), during a charge on Portobello sands, received a kick of a horse, which confined him for three days to his lodgings. Mr Skene found him busy with his pen; and he produced before these three days expired the first canto of the *Lay*—very nearly, if his friend's memory may be trusted, in the state in which it was ultimately published. That the whole poem was sketched and filled in with extraordinary rapidity, there can be no difficulty in believing. He himself says (in the Introduction of 1830), 'that after he had once got fairly into the vein, it proceeded at the rate of about a canto in a week.' Visiting London shortly afterwards, Scott read the manuscript to his friend Mr Ellis under a tree in Windsor Forest; and afterwards 'partly read and partly recited, sometimes in an enthusiastic style of chant,' the first three or four cantos to Wordsworth when on a visit to Ashestiel. Of its success when published, I need say nothing: it was prodigious; and, under cover of this success, Scott at once made up his mind to make literature the profession of his life.

This point once settled, and the law abandoned except as a crutch, Scott set to work with characteristic energy, entered into partnership with Ballantyne, stocked a printing-office in the Canongate with types and presses, and drew up a plan of work sufficient to keep them and himself well at work for three or four years by the republication of a costly series of standard works. To be the editor of Dryden and Swift, and the annotator of old ballads, was at this time the highest ambition of the most brilliant and fertile author of the age. Poetry was the last thing in his thoughts. 'As for riding on Pegasus,' he said, in a note to Mr Ellis, when at work on the proofs of Dryden, 'depend upon it I will never again cross him in a serious way, unless I should, by some strange accident, reside so long in the Highlands, and make myself master of their ancient manners, so as to paint them with some degree of accuracy in a kind of companion to the *Minstrel Lay*.' To vary the monotony of hunting up original readings and scribbling foot-notes, Scott threw off an article now and then for Jeffrey's *Review;* and in the summer vacation of 1805 we find him trying his hand at 'a companion to the *Lay*,' by throwing together, in the form of an historical novel, some of his recollections of Highland scenery and customs. This was the origin of *Waverley*. Like the *Lay*, however, it was no sooner taken up than it was thrown aside. 'When I had proceeded as far, I think, as the seventh chapter, I shewed my work to a critical friend, whose opinion was unfavourable; and having then some poetical reputation, I was unwilling to risk the loss of it by attempting a new style of composition. I therefore then threw aside the work I had commenced, without either reluctance or remonstrance.' It was not till some months after this that the idea of writing *Marmion* seems to have suggested itself; and the necessity of raising one thousand pounds to pay off some debts of his brother Thomas was the motive of this magnificent poem. Constable offered the sum in question for the copyright before a line of it had been written; and it was on the spur of making it all that Scott thought it ought to be for this handsome sum, that he put his whole soul into it, and gave up to its composition all the time that he could spare from the proof-sheets of Dryden. Most of it seems to have been composed on horseback, either on the banks of the Yarrow or the sands of Portobello. Mr Skene, his mess-companion, tells us 'that in the intervals of drilling, when out with the Edinburgh Light Horse, Scott used to delight in walking his powerful black steed up and down by himself upon the Portobello sands, within the beating of the surge; and now and then you would see him plunge in his spurs and go off as if at the charge, with the spray dashing about him. As we rode back to Musselburgh, he often came and placed himself beside me to repeat the verses that he had been composing during these pauses of our exercise.' The description of Flodden field was struck out in this way; and we know from Scott's conversations with Lockhart years after, that most of the rest of his descriptive pieces were put together in the saddle when out for 'a grand gallop among the braes of the Yarrow.'

Of the conception of the *Lady of the Lake*, I can find no account beyond this, that Scott, in the summer of 1809, undertook to have a third poem ready to keep Ballantyne's press in action at the end of the year. What that was to be, Scott probably knew no more than Ballantyne, for about this time he began what I may perhaps call the system of drawing bills at three, six, and nine months upon his genius, to raise cash to pay for his purchases at Abbotsford, or to guard against the presses and types in the Canongate lying idle for a day; but in reading or conversation, his imagination had been set on fire by the story of the *Lady of the Lake*, and upon the rising of the Court of Session in July, we find him starting off with Mrs Scott and his eldest daughter to visit the scenes which he had apparently chosen for the framework of his fable. Not a little of the poem was, I believe, written in the course of the trip. The description of the Stag Chase certainly was;

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and I do not think one needs the gift of second-sight, knowing what we do of Scott's habits, to pick out at least one passage which was worked out in the course of the gallop from the shore of Loch Vennachar to the rock of Stirling, which Scott tells us in one of his letters that he undertook, to anticipate his critics by testing the practicability of a good horseman, well mounted, riding within the space allowed to Fitzjames after his duel with Roderick Dhu. Except bits of description, however, here and there, the greater part of the *Lady of the Lake* was confessedly written at Ashestiel during the winter of 1809; and we have from his own pen a very characteristic conversation which took place with his cousin, Miss Christian Rutherford, upon the poem and its composition. 'A lady to whom I was nearly related, and with whom I lived during her whole life on the most brotherly terms of affection, was residing with me when the work was in progress, and used to ask me what I could possibly do to rise so early in the morning. At last I told her the subject of my meditations; and I can never forget the anxiety and affection expressed in her reply. "Do not be so rash," she said, "my dearest cousin. You are already popular—more so, perhaps, than you yourself will believe, or than even I or other partial friends can fairly allow to your merit. You stand high—do not rashly attempt to climb higher, and incur the risk of a fall; for, depend upon it, a favourite will not be permitted even to stumble with impunity." I replied to this affectionate expostulation in the words of Montrose:

"He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
Who dares not put it to the touch,
To win or lose it all.

If I fail," I said, for the dialogue is strong in my recollection, "it is a sign that I ought never to have succeeded, and *I will write prose for life:* you shall see no change in my temper, nor will I eat a single meal the worse. But if I succeed—

Up wi' the bonnie blue bonnet,
The dirk and the feather an' a'!"'

This was one of the busiest periods of Scott's life, and it is not one of the least striking illustrations of the strength and elasticity of Scott's mind, that a poem like the *Lady of the Lake* should have been thrown off, as this was, in the two or three hours of leisure which he stole in the early morning from the manifold duties of the day.

The two or three hours which Scott thus stole in the morning were to him the golden hours of the day; and it was during these hours that the greater part of his poems and his novels were thrown off. Till he took up his abode at Ashestiel, and settled down to his task as a man of letters by profession, Scott, like Byron and Moore, and most men of their class, had been in the habit of

Lengthening the day
By stealing a few hours from the night;

but upon a suggestion from his physician that this habit was likely to aggravate his nervous headaches, he at once reversed his plan, and adopted those habits of early rising and of early work which characterised him from this period till the pen dropped from his cramped fingers on the closing pages of *Count Robert of Paris*. He was out of bed by five o'clock all the year round, at his desk by six; and by the time that his family and visitors assembled at breakfast between nine and ten, he had 'broken the neck of his day's work.' These were his hours of inspiration, and generally his best work. Observing how Scott was harassed by lion-hunters at Ashestiel, and what a number of hours he spent either in shooting or coursing with his visitors, or in looking after his workpeople, Mr Cadell, Constable's partner, once expressed his wonder that Scott should ever be able to write books at all in the country. 'I know that you contrive to get a few hours in your own room, and that may do for the mere pen-work; but when is it that you think?'

'Oh,' said Scott, 'I lie *simmering* over things for an hour or so before I get up—and there's the time I am dressing to overhaul my half-sleeping, half-waking *projet de chapitre;* and when I get the paper before me, it commonly runs off pretty easily. Besides, I often take a doze in the plantations; and while Tom marks out a dike or a drain as I have directed, one's fancy may be running its ain riggs in some other world.'

He attests the same facts in his diary eight or ten years afterwards. 'The half-hour between waking and rising has all my life proved propitious to any task which was exercising my invention. When I got over any knotty difficulty in a story, or have had in former times to fill up a passage in a poem, it was always when I first opened my eyes that the desired ideas thronged upon me. This is so much the case, that I am in the habit of relying upon it, and saying to myself, when I am at a loss: "Never mind; we shall have it at seven o'clock to-morrow morning."' Scott, in fact, thought so much of these morning hours as the hours when his thoughts were fresh, that he generally lingered over his toilet longer than he did over anything else; 'shaving and dressing,' as his son-in-law tells us, 'with great deliberation; for he was a very martinet as to all but the mere coxcombries of the toilet, not abhorring effeminate dandyism itself so cordially as the slightest approach to personal slovenliness, or even those "bedgown and slipper tricks," as he called them, in which literary men are so apt to indulge.' I know no brighter picture in the history of genius than this of Sir Walter Scott sitting down to his morning task dressed in the green velvet shooting-jacket of a Scottish laird, with his books and papers around him on the desk and on the floor, his favourite hound eyeing him from the rug, a couple of spaniels gamboling with his children in the garden, and the songs of the birds pouring in through his half-open window. Scott knew nothing of those feelings of irritation that make composition a torment to so many men. His study was always open to his children no less than to his greyhound. 'He never considered their tattle as any disturbance; they went and came as pleased their fancy; he was always ready to answer their questions; and when they, unconscious how he was engaged, entreated him to lay down his pen and tell them a story, he would take them on his knee, repeat a ballad or a legend, kiss them, and set them down again to their marbles or ninepins, and resume his labour as if refreshed by the interruption.' Of course, when at Edinburgh, two or three hours after breakfast were spent at the clerk's table in the Court of Session; but when at Ashestiel or Abbotsford, these hours were devoted to the *Lady of the Lake*, *Rokeby*, or one of his novels. He

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generally, however, laid down his pen about one o'clock, and devoted the afternoon to sport or exercise. When he had visitors staying with him, he would even say: 'Out, damned spot, and be a gentleman,' at ten o'clock; and he was in fine weather so complaisant in this respect, that most of them, like Washington Irving and Sir David Wilkie, left him with the impression that, by whatever magic he might contrive to keep Ballantyne's press at work, he was a man of leisure, who had nothing to do but to bask in the sunshine, and repeat legends and ballads for the diversion of himself and his friends.

Of course the explanation of this apparent leisure of Scott, in comparison with the vast amount of manuscripts which he turned out, was to be found partly in the regularity of his habits, the steadiness with which, day after day, and week after week, and year after year, he adhered to this plan, and setting apart four or five hours of every morning to his task; and partly in the ease and fluency with which he used his pen when he did sit down to his desk. When Scott took up his pen, it was not to think, but to write. He never knew, I believe, what it was to cast about for either a thought or an expression; and he never wasted a second with the file. Possessing a prodigious memory—a memory that lost nothing—a powerful and vivid imagination, a fluent pen, and a spirit that courted difficulties instead of craning at them, Sir Walter Scott never needed anything more than an incident or a tradition to start with in any of his novels; and when he had once laid down the 'keel of a story,' it grew under his hands, chapter by chapter, and volume by volume; and a stroll in the woods, or the half-hour's quiet between waking and sleeping, or dressing, was enough to supply him with his chapters for the day's work. 'I sometimes think,' he says, speaking of *Harold the Dauntless*, 'my fingers set up for themselves, independent of my head; for twenty times I have begun a thing on a certain plan, and never in my life adhered to it (in a work of imagination, that is) for half an hour together.' 'The action of composition,' as he goes on to say, after noting down a similar confession in his diary years after, when, writing *Woodstock*, he found himself at the end of the second volume without the slightest idea how the story was to be wound up to a catastrophe in the third volume—'the action of composition always extended some passages, and abridged or omitted others; and personages were rendered important or insignificant, not according to their agency in the original conception of the piece, but according to the success, or otherwise, with which I was able to bring them out. I only tried to make that which I was actually writing diverting and interesting, leaving the rest to fate. I have,' he adds, been often amused with the critics distinguishing some passages as particularly laboured, when the pen passed over the whole as fast as it could move, and the eye never again saw them, except in proof.' These sort of confessions turn up again and again in his diary and his correspondence with Ballantyne and his brothers and sisters of the quill. Referring to the *Maid of Perth*, for instance, he makes a note in his diary that he has 'sent off ten more pages this morning with a murrain. But how to get my catastrophe packed into the compass allotted for it?

It sticks like a pistol half out of its holster,
Or rather, indeed, like an obstinate bolster,
Which I think I have seen you attempting, my dear,
In vain to cram into a small pillow-bier.

There is no help for it—I must make a *tour de force*, and annihilate both time and space.' Of the *Antiquary*, again, he says in a note to Mr Morritt: 'I have only a very general sketch at present; but when once I get my pen to the paper, it will walk fast enough. I am sometimes tempted to leave it alone, and try whether it will not write as well without the assistance of my head as with it.' The *Lord of the Isles* and *Guy Mannering* grew under his hands in exactly the same manner. Like them, and like all his works, they were written without either plan or premeditation. 'The ideas rise as I write;' and the faster he wrote, Ballantyne used to say, the freer the ideas rose, and the better the story developed itself. This was Scott's opinion also. 'I cannot pull well in long traces,' he used to say, 'when the draught is too far behind me. I love to have the press thumping, clattering, and banging in my rear; it creates the necessity which almost always makes me work best.' When he was ahead of the press—when the printer's devil was not at his door waiting for copy—Scott's spirits drooped and his pen flagged, he dallied with what he was about, and lost the threads of his story. His poetry, of course, stands in a different category—that he frequently laboured, and wrote over two or three times; but all his novels were printed as they left his desk, with nothing more than a little revision at the hands of James Ballantyne, and a hasty glance at the proofs by Scott in odd half-hours.

But with all this tendency to slipslop in his style, with all this haste and carelessness, all this want of preparation, allowing his pen to take its own course, and his plots to construct themselves, perhaps no great writer ever took more trouble about the substratum of his fiction and poetry. Even when building with rubble, his foundations were of adamant. His imagination was vivid and powerful, and the amplitude and accuracy of his memory were the marvel of all his friends. But he trusted nothing, either to memory or imagination, when he could trace out the facts themselves by paying a visit to a scene, or by hunting up an old ballad or a tradition in a library. Refusing to give ten minutes of his leisure to lay down the plot of a novel, he never hesitated a moment to give up the leisure of a week to settle a point of history, or to gather the details of a bit of scenery, which he was thinking of working into a poem or a novel. Upon points like these, he was almost finical. When at work upon *Quentin Durward*, Lockhart frequently found him in the Advocates' Library at Edinburgh, poring over maps and gazetteers with care and anxiety; and his own letters to Ballantyne attest the scrupulous nicety with which he hunted up his facts, even for the description of a village like Plessis les Tours, consulting Malte Brun's geographical works, Wraxall's *History of France* and his *Travels*, and even Philip de Comines. Most of his descriptions, too, like Byron's, are photographs; and with the *Lady of the Lake* or the *Lord of the Isles* in your hand, you may trace out every view that Scott had in his eye when penning them, with his dogs and his children at his knee, in the morning-room at Ashestiel. He visited his friend Mr Morritt, when

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he was at work upon *Rokeby*, to refresh his recollections of the scene; and Mr Morritt gives us a striking conversation that took place the morning after Scott's arrival upon this characteristic of his compositions.

'You have often given me materials for a romance,' said Scott; 'now I want a good robbers' cave, and an old church of the right sort.'

'We rode out,' says Mr Morritt, 'in quest of these; and he found what we wanted in the ancient slate-quarries of Brignal and the ruined abbey of Egglestone. I observed him noting down even the peculiar little wild-flowers and herbs that accidentally grew round and on the side of a bold crag near his intended cave of Guy Denzil; and could not help saying, that as he was not to be upon oath in his work, daisies, violets, and primroses would be as poetical as any of the humble plants he was examining. I laughed, in short, at his scrupulousness; but I understood him when he replied, "that in nature herself no two scenes are exactly alike, and that whoever copied truly what was before his eyes, would possess the same variety in his descriptions, and exhibit apparently an imagination as boundless as the range of nature in the scenes he recorded; whereas, whoever trusted to imagination, would soon find his own mind circumscribed, and contracted to a few favourite images; and the repetition of these would sooner or later produce that very monotony and barrenness which had always haunted descriptive poetry in the hands of any but the patient worshippers of truth. Besides which," he said, "local names and peculiarities make a fictitious story look so much better in the face!"' And that was the principle upon which Scott worked in all his poems and his novels. It is the source of half their charms. Most of his characters, too, are flesh and blood. Margaret Branksome, for instance, in the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, is a photograph of Scott's first love; and Alan Fairford in *Redgauntlet* is obviously intended as a portrait of himself. Under the thin disguise of Saunders Fairford we have a sketch of Scott's father, even down to the minutest details of his dress, his suit of snuff-coloured brown, his silk stockings, his silver buckles, and his bob-wig and cocked-hat; and in Darsie Latimer we have one of the dearest of Scott's companions in his youth, Mr William Clerk. George Constable, a friend of Scott's father, sat for Jonathan Oldbuck; but as the original conception was developed, Scott 'embroidered' Constable's character with many traits from his old friend, John Clerk of Eldin. Dominie Sampson, again, was a cross between Launcelot Whale, the master of the Grammar-school at Kelso, an absent grotesque being, between six and seven feet high, and an old blue-gown, who used to stand bleaching his head in the wind at the corner of one of the streets of Edinburgh, in order to raise enough to pay for his son's education for the ministry. Most of Scott's sketches of the heroes of '15 and '45 are reproductions of his own personal recollections and those of his friends; and characters like those of the Black Dwarf and Tod Gabbie were all characters that Scott had met with in his ballad-hunting rambles. Those who knew Scott, too, before he thought fit to avow the authorship of the Scotch novels, frequently tracked him in the snow of his own dialogue; for Scott's ear was as quick as his eye; and anything particularly striking or characteristic that happened to turn up in conversation, generally found its way in one form or another into his works.

Reinforcing his imagination and his wit with recollections like these, and possessing wider and more diversified experience than probably any writer of fiction except Fielding, Scott dashed off his novels when he had once got into the thread of his narrative with astonishing fluency. Even when his eyes were failing, and his fingers gouty, he frequently threw off thirty or forty pages of print before dinner—that, in fact, was his task when he was at work upon *Woodstock* and the *Life of Napoleon;* and till he had accomplished that, he did not think himself at liberty to take his axe and stroll out into the wood for an hour's sharp exercise. In his prime, he thought nothing of throwing off a novel in a month. *Guy Mannering* was written in six weeks about Christmas, and that he thought easy work. Very frequently, however, Sir Walter had a brace of novels on hand together, or a novel and a poem, or two or three reviews for the *Edinburgh* and the *Quarterly*. *Ivanhoe* and the *Monastery* were written together like this; and he took up the story of *Woodstock* as a diversion to kill time when he was ahead of the press with his *Life of Napoleon*. Hasty work in literature is not generally the highest kind of work; and of course there is in all Sir Walter Scott's works much that is thin, and rambling, and vapid. But with Sir Walter Scott literature was not an art, but a trade. What was good enough for the public, was good enough for him; and his cardinal test of the value of his work was the price of its copyright and its sale. In poetry, he wrote by inspiration; taking up his pen, like Byron, only when the fit was upon him; but when at work upon a novel or a history, all he thought of was to get through his task; and if he was not in the vein when he took up his pen, he simply wrote on, as he said, till he 'wrote himself into good humour.' This was not generally a very hard task; and when he had got into a good humour with his work, he wrote on as freely and as gaily as he talked. His manuscripts testify sufficiently to this. In his poems you meet with stanzas that are hardly legible with blots and interlineations; but the manuscripts of his novels are as free from everything of this description as his correspondence. You may turn over page after page without finding a single correction. He never boggled over a sentence, or cast about for an expression. 'His thoughts,' as his amanuensis said, 'flowed easily and felicitously, without any difficulty to lay hold of them, or to find appropriate language. He sat in his chair (when dictating), from which he rose now and then, took a volume from the bookcase, consulted it, and restored it to the shelf—all without intermission in the current of ideas, which continued to be delivered with no less readiness than if his mind had been wholly occupied with the words he was uttering.' When dialogue of peculiar animation was in progress, James Ballantyne says Scott walked up and down the room, raising and lowering his voice, and, as it were, acting the parts. The file-work Scott left to the printer; and of several of his stories he did not even see the proofs till they were in the hands of the public. With the exception of the *Lay*, I doubt whether he ever read any of his poems after they were published. He liked that better than he anticipated; but I do not think the perusal

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increased his opinion of the critical discernment of the public. He was 'never fond of his own poetry;' and when Ballantyne told him that the *Lord of the Isles* and *Rokeby* were paling in the glare and glitter of *Childe Harold* and the *Giaour*, he abandoned the laurel wreath to Byron without a struggle, and almost without a sigh. 'Since one line has failed,' he said, 'we must strike out something else.'

This was the spur under which he took up the abandoned manuscript of *Waverley*, which had been lying among the fishing-tackle of an old drawer for seven or eight years, and threw off the second and third volumes in three weeks. When, in turn, the novels of the 'Author of *Waverley*' began to pall upon a taste which likes its fiction fresh and fresh, Scott left the field to his imitators, and turned to history. 'There is but one way,' he said, 'if you wish to be read—you must strike out something novel to suit the humour of the hour;' and that was the principle by which he was governed all through his career. It was not a very lofty principle to act upon; with a weaker man it might have been a dangerous principle, ending, as in the case of Byron, in the complete demoralisation of his genius. In Scott, however, it led to nothing more than a variation of style. The most voluminous author of an age not particularly distinguished by the purity of its literature or morals, the contemporary of Byron and Moore, and the personal friend of George IV., an author, too, who avowedly set his sails to catch the popular breeze, Sir Walter Scott never allowed his genius to pollute itself by anything that, as a man, he could blush for. Talking over his writings at the close of his career with a friend, and contrasting their tone with that of Goethe's, Sir Walter said, with a flush of pride: 'It is a comfort to me to think that I have tried to unsettle no man's faith, to corrupt no man's principle, and that I have written nothing which on my death-bed I should wish blotted.' And his boast was true.

LIFE IN A LOG-HUT.

'Now for a lot of backwoods adventures,' thinks, doubtless, the reader who may honour me by glancing at this heading: 'a little shanty in the heart of some Western forest; a man dressed in deerskins, carrying a long rifle; a whole day up in a tree, with a mad buffalo underneath, a lot of ants crawling all over the trunk, and the thermometer at 120 degrees; and a hand-to-hand fight with the hopping frog, or the long-nosed musk-rat, or the energetic rattlesnake, or some other eminent godson of Mr J. Fenimore Cooper; and all the rest of it, in the style of Captain Mayne Reid or Gustave Aimard.'

Worthy reader, I am sorry to disappoint thee; but I have no such dainty fare to offer. I am not one of those genial beings who, when any one settles within ten miles of them, remark with an injured air: 'Guess I'm gettin' crowded,' and move three days' journey farther west. *My* log-hut is a Russian one, and built in genuine Russian style, with no tools but a short axe; the cross-beams fitting into each other like the corners of a slate-frame, and the whole structure being shaped very like the end of a blunt pencil. My furniture is of the simplest kind, consisting merely of a bed, a table, two chairs, and a clumsy chest of drawers, or 'komod,' as it is called here. The plank door and quaint little windows (which open like the door of a bird-cage) are secured on the inside with strong hooks—no unnecessary precaution in this land of boisterous winds and instantaneous changes of weather; while, in front of the hut, firmly fixed in the ground, stand a round table and low bench, for my convenience in fine weather. As I sit there about 7 A.M. on a glorious summer morning, with my primitive little teapot steaming in front of me, a fresh roll on one side, a brace of new-laid eggs on the other—and the soft, dreamy, sunny uplands of Central Russia stretching before me for miles, edged here and there with dark patches of forest, like fur-trimmings on a velvet robe—I inwardly acknowledge that one may be comfortable in Russia as well as anywhere else, and that life in the land of the Czar is, after all, something better than the marvellous phantasmagoria of sledges, wolves, caviare, prisons, fur-coats, flogging to death, perpetual winter, an omniscient police, and a passionate love of eating candles, which the word 'Russia' seems to call up quite naturally in the mind of every Englishman.

This village which I have chosen for my summer residence is one of those quaint little clusters of log-huts, clinging like limpets to either side of the highway, which are nowhere seen to such perfection as in Sweden or Russia. Some few of the houses actually reach two stories, and attain the dignity of a painted roof* and whitewashed verandah; but the majority are nothing more than little one-storied hovels of the traditional type, surmounted by the invariable cocked-hat-shaped 'tcherdak' or garret, wherein the Russian peasant stocks his hay, piles his wood, stores his provisions, hangs his clean linen (when he has any), and, in short, bestows everything that he cannot cram into the little box below stairs, in which he, his wife, his children, and very often likewise his ox and his ass, his sheep and his poultry, and everything that is his, eat, drink, sleep, and vegetate.

'A native acquaintance,' says Mr G. A. Sala in his amusing *Journey due North*, 'lately gave me the following succinct description of a peasant's hut: "The roof is gray, the walls are gray, the floor is gray; you may cut the smell of cabbage-soup with a hatchet, and at night you can hear the bugs bark."' Without exactly endorsing these vivid details, we are compelled to admit that the 'creeping things innumerable' so much dreaded by Western travellers form rather too conspicuous a feature of the Russian mujik's ménage; that his roof is an ingenious mixture of saplings and spiders; his walls a compound of wood, earth, and earwigs;† and his floor a paste of trampled straw and clay, dotted with black beetles like plums in a Christmas pudding. My cabin, however, being newly built, is as yet free from these unwelcome tenants; and I have nothing worse to fear than an occasional

* The love of the Russians for bright colouring is almost as strong and universal as that of the negroes. Their churches are perfect harlequins; their streets exhibit all the hues of the rainbow; while the gaudy kerchiefs of the peasant women, the scarlet cloaks of the city nurses, the crimson girdles of the cabmen, all tell the same tale. It is worthy of remark that the Russian word for 'beautiful' (prekrasni) means literally 'very red.'

† Earwigs in Russia are called 'Prusaki' (Prussians), a curious mark of national enmity.

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foray of black ants from the cracks in my window-sill, or a Balaklava charge of mosquitoes, with a sound like that of a small church organ, through the open window.

To the north of our village the country is tolerably open; but to the south stretches a wide extent of richly wooded park, behind which lies outspread for many a mile the fantastic splendour of mighty Moscow. In fine weather, three-quarters of an hour suffice to carry an average pedestrian over the four miles of almost level ground which separate him from the capital; but should a strong wind overtake him beyond the shelter of the over-arching trees, woe to the adventurer! For along every street of Moscow, and throughout all its environs, lie strewn vast sheets of fine powdery sand, such as might lead one to imagine that not merely the dust of the czars, but that of all their subjects from time immemorial, had been garnered into the soil of the Holy City. Under the guidance of one of Mr Kingsley's favourite north-easters, this inexhaustible store of ammunition becomes a formidable weapon. The whole atmosphere is blurred and indistinct, as if beneath the sweep of a simoom; foot-passengers flit by like ghosts, applying shadowy hands to half-seen faces; heavy-laden wagons, plodding their way through the driving storm, appear and vanish like a train of phantoms; men trudge onward with heads bent, and handkerchiefs pressed to their eyes; ladies hold down their veils with the grasp of desperation; while here, and there, and everywhere, the tormenting wind leaps and dances like an airy Robin Goodfellow. There is no escaping from this relentless persecutor; he buffets you from behind, he strikes at you in front, he meets you round corners with a rapid, scientific, round-hand whirl, sending the hot prickly dust tingling through every crevice of your clothing, with an ingenious and malignant persistency which seems almost like the intelligent malice of a human enemy. With such phenomena before one's eyes, it is not difficult to put faith in the caustic popular saying, that 'the streets of Moscow are watered only when it rains.'

During the heat of the day, our villagers are not very locomotive. A few of them may be seen creeping along the high-road, or straggling about the fields, like stray ants in a garden; but, as a rule, the bulk of the population is invisible till evening. Then, as if by magic, the whole scene becomes alive with flitting forms; bearded labourers in greasy striped shirts, with baggy trousers thrust into their high boots; shouting children, shaggy as bears, and brown as hazel-nuts, simply attired in a pancake-coloured night-gown warmly lined with dirt; short-skirted women with gaudy kerchiefs round their heads, and round, flat, wide-mouthed faces, that look like a penny with a hole through it; sallow students, with straggling black hair, and an earthy unwashed look about them, ogling the brown-faced, barefooted lasses, who trip past with their pails of spring-water; and trim-looking village policemen, surveying everything with an air of fatherly superiority. It is beside the great wooden pump, however, in front of the village 'possible' shop, that the great parliament is held. There the 'rude forefathers of the hamlet' discuss things in general, to a running accompaniment of black bread and salted cucumber; there the matrons meet to talk over family affairs, and drive shrewd little bargains among themselves; and there the juvenile population of every age recreate themselves with the national diversions of rolling in the gutter and throwing dirt in each other's eyes (varied by an occasional bout at knuckle-bones), without fear and without reproach.

But it is on the morning of a summer holiday—one of the long-established days of bright faces and best clothes, of boisterous cordiality and unlimited tea-drinking—that the little colony is seen at its best; and of all the summer holidays, there is none like the Festival of the Holy Trinity, with its profusion of picturesque national observances, and open-hearted rustic merrymaking. In this far border-land of Europe, the traveller might imagine himself transported back to the days of medieval romance, as he watches the long procession of strangely attired forms, women turbaned with scarlet kerchiefs, children crowned with tiaras of gilt pasteboard, men with red shirts over their clothes—who, bearing green boughs or garlands of flowers, and chanting one of those weird rippling melodies which must have been taught to the ancient Russian by his flowing rivers and breezy forests, circle the village in their measured march; ending at last by planting freshly-cut saplings around every door, and then (of course) getting helplessly drunk, and lying sprawling in the mire in all the splendour of their brilliant garments, like fragments of coloured glass on a dust-heap. In spite of railways and telegraphs, of foreign travel and foreign literature, the national life of Russia—that quaint, striking, grotesque, indescribable life of which the passing tourist sees so little—is as yet but slightly altered; and within hearing of the railway whistle, many a rite is still celebrated which was practised in Russia while the wild grass of the steppe grew high over the cradle of Moscow, and the still unconverted Prince Vladimir was hanging his shield of defiance at the gates of Constantinople.

My landlord (whom, by-the-bye, I have hitherto forgotten to mention) occupies another log-hut of somewhat larger dimensions, so near my own, that, as he leans out of his side-window, I can almost shake hands with him from my own doorway; his garrison consisting of his wife, sister, and mother-in-law, for children he has none. He is a carpenter by trade, but doubtless owes as much of his worldly wealth to the sleek comfortable-looking poultry that cluck around his door, and to the huge substantial wash-tub into which his industrious helpmate has just plunged a vast pyramid of linen, as to his own handicraft; for in this land of forests every man is his own carpenter, and Jack (I should say Ivân) is as good as his master. In appearance and manners, my host forms an admirable specimen of the better class of Muscovite peasantry. He is a slender, trimly-built fellow of thirty-five or thereabouts, remarkably lithe and active for a country-bred Russian, with a brown handsome face, bright restless eyes not unlike those of a squirrel, and one of those magnificent beards which are seldom seen west of the Niemen or the Lower Danube. In marked contradistinction to the majority of his class, he is able to read fluently, write tolerably, and claim acquaintance with the works of several famous native authors, whose names sound very strangely in the mouth of a labouring-man. In temper he is frank and sociable,

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as fond as any child of picture-books and new stories, and enjoying nothing so much as a chat with any one from foreign parts—a *penchant* which my advent has enabled him to gratify *ad libitum*.

Here he comes even while I speak of him, with his white holiday smock-frock thrown over his rough working-dress, moving slowly along the front of the low two-railed fence behind which I am sitting at my al-fresco tea, with a huge roll of brown bread on one side, a tumbler of strong, fragrant, amber-coloured tea* (such as one finds only in China or Central Russia) on the other, and a book of Slavonic legends, in the racy mother-tongue of the ancient nation, propped against the tea-urn in front of me. He halts before my table, under the slanting radiance of the glorious July sunset, and plants himself in the attitude of a man who has made up his mind for a good long talk.

'Good-evening, Barin' (that is, master); 'see what splendid weather God has sent us to-day!'

'Splendid indeed, brother. There will be plenty of folks about the park this evening. But come, sit down a minute; I've hardly had a word with you all day.'

My companion takes off his cap, and seats himself on the extreme end of the bench with a dubious air, as if he did so under protest; one characteristic feature of the Russian peasant being the marked deference and submissiveness ingrained in his nature by the yoke that has pressed his neck for two hundred and fifty years.† Indeed, it is no easy matter to wean the lower-class Russian from this habitual obsequiousness, as Peter the Great discovered to his cost, when, finding that even his imperial ukase forbidding prostrations and genuflexions‡ on the part of his subjects toward himself, proved ineffectual to restrain them, he at length seized upon one of the most pertinacious of his worshippers, and cudgelled him soundly, *coram populo*, with his own august hands.

'I hear, Barin, that you have been a great traveller, and seen many lands; but tell me, did you ever, in any of the places where you have been, see finer sunsets than ours?' and he looks admiringly at the green waving woods that girdle the base of the hill on which we stand, now all ablaze with the glow of the western sunlight.

'Well, brother, to tell the truth, I haven't seen many to beat them, although there are fine ones in Switzerland and Italy too.—But you are mistaken in thinking me a great traveller, for I've seen very little as yet; the only thing is, I can go where I like, which not every traveller can do.'

'Well, that's just what I said to my wife the other day. "Dunâsha," said I, "it seems to me the English Barin goes about as he pleases, without anything to stop him."—Permit me to ask of what occupation are you? I see they've put down "Tourist" in your passport; but I don't know what that means.'

'It means a traveller, brother—nothing more; and it's pretty nearly all the occupation I have. After all, you know, one sees more by travelling than by sitting still.'

'Well, yes, that's true. Just as our proverb says: "Water runs not under the stone that lies still." For all that, though, one can be very comfortable in one place; in this little village of ours, for instance, one may live very snugly, without ever wanting to travel. I've been at Moscow once or twice, but I didn't like it: what with the dust, and the noise, and the crowd, I felt as if I hardly knew where I was; whereas out here, where everything's so fresh and green, and quiet and still, it seems more like the world that God created.'

'But don't you find it rather dull sometimes in winter, when you can't go about?'

'Well, perhaps it is so, a little, now and then; but there's always plenty of work that can be done in-doors—that piece of carving,* for instance, which you saw yesterday morning, was done in the long evenings last winter—and every now and then you drop in upon some one for a visit, or a neighbour looks in upon you; and you put on the tea-urn, and have a glass or two together, and talk, and sing songs, and are merry enough.'

'Sing songs, eh? Suppose you sing me one now? I'm very fond of Russian songs.'

'Why, I'm not much of a singer; but if you wish it, I'll try.' And in a clear mellow voice he strikes up the bold, characteristic, ungallant song put by Lermontoff into the mouth of his Circassian marauder—the best character of the best novel in Russia:

THE CHIEF'S COUNSEL TO HIS SON.

Maidens throng our hills, I wot—
Starry night is in their eyes;
Life with them, an envied lot—
But our freedom more we prize!
Wed not, wed thee not, good youth;
Well my counsel heed;
Here is gold for thee, good youth—
Buy thyself a steed!

He who seeks himself a wife,
Ill hath chosen, wretch forlorn!
Never rides he to the strife—
Why? Because his spouse will mourn!
Wed not, wed thee not, &c.

He betrays not—thy good steed!
Flood nor fire with *him* we fear;
Like the desert blast, his speed
Makes the farthest distance near.
Wed not, wed thee not, &c.

'Where did you learn that song?' ask I, astonished at this new proof of his extensive acquirements.

'I heard it first from a soldier, who was billeted upon us when part of the Semionnovski regiment was quartered here. He knew plenty of songs, but that was always his favourite, because he said it reminded him of what he had seen when he served in the Caucasus. The tune pleased me, and so I got him to teach me the words as well; and after that, I fell in with it in Lermontoff's book,

* The Russians drink tea in tumblers, and flavour it with sliced lemon instead of milk.

† Serfdom was established by Boris Godunoff in the early part of the seventeenth century, and abolished by the present emperor, on the 19th February 1861.

‡ This ukase was issued on the 30th December 1701, previous to which time the person of the sovereign was approached with all the most abject forms of Asiatic servility.

* This man's skill in carving can hardly be taken as a fair specimen of Russian handicraft, although the ability of the Muscovite in this respect, like that of the Swiss or Chinese, is almost innate; but he had certainly executed, with very ordinary tools, works which no London wood-carver could have surpassed. One piece in particular, representing a sleeping greyhound, might have taken a prize at the Great Exhibition.

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and read it over again.—But come now, Barin, now that I've sung you a song, will you tell me some more about what you've seen in your travels? You can't think how pleased my wife was with that story of your living on the mountain-top all winter, in the midst of the snow, and going over the ice-fields all by yourself, when I told it her over again last night.'

And the seeker after truth rests his chin on his clasped hands, and 'listens like a three-years' child' while I unroll before him some fresh leaves from my journal of adventure: how trees never grow in the islands of the Arctic Sea, and rain never falls (except on special occasions) in Egypt; of the countless leafy islets that guard the approach to Stockholm, and the green waving woods that girdle the broad white streets of Copenhagen; what strange old castles there are along the Rhine, and what quaint old cities amid the flats of Holland; how the Turks always leave their slippers at the door of a church, and how the Chinese make tea without a tea-urn (the most astounding fact of all to a Russian!)—till at length the purple shadows of evening begin to deepen around us, and the sharp 'ping' of the mosquitoes warns us to retire indoors, and close our windows against these winged archers of the twilight.

Such a man, however, is no more a fair sample of the common Muscovite peasant, than Socrates was of the ordinary Athenian workman, or John Bunyan of the English villager. To the Western reader, a faithful description of the every-day life of a Russian mujik would appear as incredible as the first accounts of M. du Chaillu's gorilla. Imagine a creature ignorant as an Australian savage, superstitious as an ancient Roman, inured to hardships from which a medieval anchorite would have shrunk; at once a glutton and an ascetic; peaceful even to sluggishness, yet capable of the most frightful revenge; able to sustain life on a pittance of food which would starve a British seaman, and to pass whole nights, in the depth of winter, wrapped in a sheepskin, outside his master's door; intensely susceptible of kindness, yet ungovernable save by the extreme of severity—such is the mujik, an anomaly which even Pope or Dryden might have despaired of delineating. Yet in this incongruous mass lies the future of the great empire—the *peut-être* of the Slavonic race—the moiety of Napoleon's rash prediction, that within fifty years all Europe would be either Cossack or Republican.

Space would fail me, were I to linger over all the other features of our village life: the old red-shuttered shop—*the* shop *par excellence*, being the only one—where, as Jonathan says, 'yew kin buy airy thing in creation, from champagne to chicory;' the rudely-built watch-house, where two brown-faced, good-natured, do-nothing soldiers eat, drink, and sleep, in a space about the size of an ordinary dining-table; the cool sparkling spring welling out of the smooth green hill-side, whither troop at even-tide the whole feminine population, with a pail at either end of the yoke that crosses their shoulders; the quaint little cookshop, with its peaked roof and shady balcony, on which assemble daily a crowd of hungry and loquacious customers. The peasant fare, which I have tasted in all its native integrity, is rough but abundant. Black bread and cabbage-soup can be had for next to nothing; bacon and mutton are surprisingly cheap; and almost every man possesses a kitchen-garden, which supplies him *ad libitum* with the salted cucumbers and sliced onions so dear to the common Russian. Upon this coarse but substantial fare are reared many remarkably fine and powerful men—a fresh proof of the soundness of Mat Prior's gastronomical philosophy:

> Observe the several operations
> Of food and drink in various nations.
> Was ever Tartar fierce and cruel
> Upon the strength of water-gruel?
> But who can stand his rage and force,
> If first he rides, then eats, his horse?
> Salads and eggs, and lighter fare,
> Tune the Italian spark's guitar;
> And (if I take Dan Congreve right)
> Pudding and beef make Britons fight.

Suffice it to say, then, that for those who can appreciate it, the east of Europe has charms as well as the west; and that tourist-ridden France and exhausted Switzerland may be advantageously exchanged, by such as have once seen them, for a short summer taste of village life in the interior of Russia.

OUR IRON-CLAD NAVY.

II.—TURRET-SHIPS.

In 1859, Captain Cowper Phipps Coles, of the Royal Navy, took out a patent for protecting guns by means of 'a large convex shield, covered all over its exposed portion with thick iron or other metal, and mounted upon a platform or frame, capable of revolving after the manner of a turn-table;' and it was a modification of this invention that, in 1862, under the name of the *Monitor*, saved the fleet of the United States from destruction. The exploits of the *Merrimac*, and her defeat by her formidable antagonist, formed a valuable lesson for naval men; for the whole of the action, from the time that the Confederate vessel first attacked the fleet of the North till she was driven off by the *Monitor*, went to shew the advantages of armour-plating, the terrible use to which the ram might be put, and the immense amount of protection afforded by the turret system of armament.

Between 1859 and 1861, Captain Coles had been in communication with the War Office on the subject of his invention; but some difference having arisen, he applied to the Admiralty, who, at the instance of Admiral Robinson, tried one of his turrets on board the *Trusty*. This was in the latter half of 1861; and the trials having been pronounced satisfactory, tenders were invited early next year for the construction of the *Prince Albert*, for harbour defence. She was originally designed to carry six cupolas, each containing two 110-pounders; but after the action between the *Monitor* and *Merrimac*, four turrets of increased weight were ordered to be substituted for them. Captain Coles was, however, anxious for a sea-going turret-ship to be built; while the Admiralty, on the other hand, naturally preferred to test this novel invention on a vessel for harbour defence. Although it cannot be denied that the *Monitor* is probably the most perfect engine of war ever devised for attacking forts, or defending an extended coast-line, and although its practical invulnerability, its great steadiness, and the facility which its turret affords of working very heavy guns, all conduce to these

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objects, many of its advantages are sacrificed directly it is attempted to convert it into a sea-going turret-ship. In this case, we get a vessel with a very small armament for its size, and with a large portion of its side unprotected, a vessel in which the steadiness of the *Monitor* is lost, and in which the all-round fire of the turret is sacrificed to the necessity of carrying masts and sails. Still, the action in Hampton Roads was sufficient to shew the advisability of adding turret-ships of some description to the English navy; and shortly afterwards, the Admiralty issued orders for the conversion of the *Royal Sovereign*, a new three-decker, into a second cupola-ship, to carry five cupolas. Between March 1862 and June 1863, many changes in her were proposed by Captain Coles; and after considerable discussion, four turrets were substituted for the five cupolas, one being made large enough for two guns. But in spite of the exploits of the American Monitors, the Admiralty was for a long time averse to adding to the number of turret-ships in the navy, for it seemed probable that, useful as the Monitors might be upon the rivers of the United States, they would not be at all able to cope with the stormy seas that surround our island; and the loss of the *Monitor* during weather in which the boats of another ship could live, and later, the foundering of the *Weehawken* in harbour, tended considerably to confirm this opinion. Moreover, the exaggerated pretensions of the advocates of the turret system, and their unwillingness to admit the many difficulties attending its application to sea-going vessels, caused it to be looked upon with disfavour by the professional advisers of the Admiralty, and did much to retard the progress of the invention.

After the completion of the *Prince Albert* and *Royal Sovereign*, Captain Coles contrived to involve himself in disputes with the Admiralty, as he had previously done with the War Office, and no progress was made with the construction of turret-ships till 1865, when a committee which had been appointed to consider the subject recommended the building of a vessel with two turrets. Before preparing the design, some important points had to be settled, such as height out of water, amount of armour, speed, and, above all, whether a forecastle should be built at a sacrifice of the direct fire ahead. After full consideration, these points were decided by the Admiralty; a design was prepared, and the result was the *Monarch*, recently launched at Chatham. This vessel was repudiated by Captain Coles as not representing his principle; and in 1866 he was authorised to employ a private firm to design a ship that should represent it. He chose Messrs Laird of Birkenhead, who prepared the drawings for the *Captain*, which is now nearly ready for sea. In both ships, forecastles have been added, and the all-round fire sacrificed, in order to obtain better sea-going qualities; indeed, as a writer in the *Pall Mall Gazette* has observed, it is difficult to say how the two ships differ in principle, and a trial at sea can alone decide whether the Admiralty ship *Monarch* or Captain Coles's ship *Captain* is the more efficient.* The only other turret-ships in the navy are the *Wivern* and *Scorpion*, built originally for the Confederate States of America, but purchased by the Admiralty from Messrs Laird for political reasons. As sea-going ships, they are unsafe, and whatever may be their merits for coast-defence purposes, they are undoubtedly most inadequately protected against heavy projectiles. It is therefore without regret that we hear the former is to be sold out of the service, while the latter is to be consigned to that limbo of nautical failures, the West Indies.

We now come to three vessels which belong neither to the broadside nor to the turret system; we refer to the *Waterwitch*, *Viper*, and *Vixen*, which are constructed to fight end-on, being furnished for this purpose with an armour-plated belt, and a bulkhead to protect the guns. They are gun-boats of about the same size as the *Enterprise*—Mr Reed's first contribution, it will be remembered, towards the reconstruction of the navy. The *Waterwitch* was adapted from the Admiralty designs for the purpose of trying Ruthven's system of jet propulsion, which consists in expelling, through movable nozzles, water previously admitted into the ship, the reaction causing her to be propelled, and the speed depending, *cæteris paribus*, upon the velocity given to the water by the machinery. Such a plan would prove of immense service in the event of a leak, and can also be applied to steer the ship without the aid of a rudder; but owing to the necessity of protecting the nozzles from shot, and to the amount of power lost through friction, it has not, in the present instance, proved very successful. The *Vixen* and *Viper* are propelled by twin-screws; the former being built on the composite system of construction—that is to say, with iron frames and wooden planking—and the latter, of iron throughout. For sea-going purposes, these little boats are practically useless, and although they have managed to reach the West Indies, they remain there without a chance of being utilised, save in the event of a war with the United States, when they might possibly be employed for coast-defence purposes.

It may perhaps be permitted, in concluding these remarks on our iron-clad navy, to refer for a moment to the qualifications of the gentleman who is primarily responsible for the designs of the later vessels built under Admiralty auspices. Mr Reed has met with much hostile criticism—indeed, with more, probably, than has ever fallen to the lot of any previous occupier of his post; but although in the earlier part of his career he may have been too much given to following French models, and have enunciated theories which have not stood the test of experience, he has always shewn himself ready to correct any errors into which he may have fallen. As a proof of the improvements which he has introduced in the construction of ships of war, it may be remarked that the iron ship-building of the Admiralty establishments, instead of being a servile imitation of that in private yards, has, under his direction, become the model adopted for this class of vessel, not only by private builders,

* Since the above was written, the recent cruise of the Lords of the Admiralty with an experimental squadron, in which the *Monarch* was included, has shewn that this vessel possesses good sea-going qualities, but these have been obtained at the sacrifice of all the leading characteristics of the turret, or rather, of the Monitor system. The only class of vessel in which these characteristics are likely to be preserved in combination with sea-worthiness, is that of which the *Glutton* and the *Cerberus*, now fitting for sea at Chatham, are types; and in this instance they are due to the novel idea of mounting the turrets upon an armour-plated breastwork which protects their machinery.

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but by foreign governments throughout the world. It is certainly a matter for regret, after the expenditure of such vast sums of public money, that the English navy should include so many useless vessels, but it must be remembered that in the *Bellerophon*, *Hercules*, and some others, we possess ships which years hence will still be capable of upholding the dignity of our country in all parts of the globe, no matter what forces nature or man may bring to bear against them.

A LIMITED HORIZON.

IN FIFTEEN CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER III.—MEETING AN OLD FRIEND.

THE 'King's House,' as Lalagé found the abode of the Cleathers was called, was a strange gabled old building, bearing date 1600. That poor wrong-headed Charles I. had once inhabited it for a short time, whence its name. It stood in its own grounds, small, certainly, but completely walling it in on three sides from the vulgar gaze (had there been anything of the sort at Grimswold). It was built on a sort of flat terrace of land, on a level with the churchyard which it adjoined, and through which a private pathway led the family to church.

Standing as it did on a slab of elevated ground, the view from the King's House was unusually extensive. Lalagé's delighted eyes found it, like everything else in Grimswold, very charming, as she stood on Monday morning waiting to be admitted to her friend's presence.

Mrs Cleather was 'at home,' so she was shewn into a drawing-room where sat the Gertrude of old.

'O Lalagé!' 'O Gertrude!' that was all; but the two women looked at each other with heartfelt pleasure.

'What brings you into this part of the world?' asked Gertrude.

'Oh, we've come to economise,' said Lalagé gaily: 'papa lost so much by the failure the other day. I was so charmed to see you in church, yesterday afternoon, Gertrude.'

'I did not see you,' said Mrs Cleather; 'the children take up so much attention; but I had heard a Mr Hesketh had taken the Hill House, so I was not quite startled when you came in. But what could have made you choose so desolate a part of the world?'

'The house is papa's own,' said Lalagé; 'and as for its being desolate, I think it is so beautiful that no one could feel lonely here. O Gertrude, isn't the scenery lovely? It makes me so long to be good; all my heart stretches out every time I look out of my window!'

'Yes, of course, it is very beautiful,' said Gertrude. 'I remember how struck I was when first I came; but I must confess to a great weakness for human beings, and they are very scarce here.'

'But I think it will be nice to do without human beings,' said Lalagé; 'I did get so tired of London. But what brought you here, if you don't like it?'

'My husband found out the place when we were staying at Cheltenham last year; so we made up our minds to come here for a while. He is fond of travelling, so I daresay we shall not stay here very long. O Lalagé, since last we met, I have been half over England!'

'And you are just the same dear old G. as ever,' said Lalagé, sitting down on the floor by her friend, and taking her hand.

'Am I?' said Gertrude Cleather with a wistful look in her brown eyes. 'I know that I am more glad than ever to see you. You must tell me all about my old friends. How is George Wriothesley?'

'Oh, I don't know,' said Lalagé. 'Well, I suppose, he never has anything the matter with him. I don't like him; he is so *dolce far niente*, with his long yellow whiskers and his white hands.'

'I don't see that he can help good health, yellow whiskers, or white hands. I like him very much; I think he is so good.'

'Yes, I know; and I think it is that which provokes me. His goodness seems to come so easily to him; for half that amount, I should have to battle a lifetime; and I always fancy he would be so hard on others who do not come up to his standard.'

'That he certainly would not,' said Gertrude; 'and I know him to have been disappointed, and to have borne that disappointment better than most of us would do.'

Lalagé flushed up. Did Gertrude know that she had refused this man of whom they were speaking, only three months before?

'I know you always liked him better than most people,' answered she, almost pettishly. 'I hope you teach your children "G for George, the Good Guardsman."—But I want to see your children so much, Gertrude. May they not come in?'

Gertrude rang the bell.

'How dreadfully the service is performed here,' said Lalagé; 'Belle and I were quite shocked yesterday.'

'Is it?' said Gertrude. 'Well, I suppose I don't notice it, for when we came it seemed a great boon to have a church at all. We were in a wild part of Ireland just before, the nearest church being fifteen miles off, and the road to it so wretched. Besides, I like Mr Mitchell so much.'

'Is that the curate?'

'Yes. Such a hard-working man! This parish is so large, that it is difficult to keep up a connection with all the people of the outlying hamlets, yet he manages to do it. The rector is abroad in ill health; so everything falls on his shoulders.'

'Well, they are broad enough for anything,' said Lalagé. 'Is he a gentleman? And oh, why doesn't he cut his hair?'

'He is quite a gentleman,' said Gertrude; 'and as for his hair—it is a pity, but I don't look upon things of that sort as vital now, though I did when I was your age, Lalagé.'

'Well, you are only four years older,' said Lalagé. 'To think of you with three babies, Gertrude, and only twenty-two!'

'Yes; I was married when I was a year younger than you are now.'

'What an awful warning! But are not the children very young to go to church?'

'Their father wishes it,' said Gertrude.

'Oh, I don't know Captain Cleather in the least.'

'You must make friends with him now; not this morning, though, for he is out driving.'

By this time the children had made their appearance, and took up all Lalagé's attention. One

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was a fine little boy of four; the other, a girl, a year younger. The baby, being asleep, was not brought in. Lalagé was an ardent child-lover, and her bright beauty never failed to attract them—children are such fervent worshippers of loveliness; so she and they were soon on the most friendly terms.

Presently she asked: 'Who lives in the large white stone house not a quarter of a mile from this, Gertrude?'

'The Vereys,' was the answer. 'Oh, my dear, they are the funniest people possible, without at all meaning to be so. Mrs Verey actually told me the other day she considered the present bonnets positively indecent! I think that is the opinion they have of every prevailing fashion; at least they in no way conform to any. They have lived here from generation to generation, and their thoughts never reach beyond Grimswold. There's an example of the harm done by a limited horizon!'

'But people need not get so narrow-minded unless they choose,' said Lalagé.

'I don't know,' said Gertrude; 'I should not like to try the effect of half a century of Grimswold upon me.'

'I should not mind a whole century,' said Lalagé. 'I think you are quite prejudiced against the place, Gertrude.'

Just then they heard a knock at the door.

'Dear me,' said Gertrude, glancing in dismay at the huge pile of linen beside her, 'it must be one of the Misses Verey; and they will be so scandalised at finding me busy in this way, though it *is* Monday morning. They have great ideas of what a lady should or should not do.'

'Give me the work,' said Lalagé promptly. 'I'll open this cupboard, and put it all in: shall I?'

'Do, please,' said Gertrude; 'but I don't know what that cupboard is used for.'

Lalagé pulled vehemently at the door, but it would not open; then a little push made it shake and creak in a more promising way; then a harder push sent it flying wide open, and discovered to her amazed eyes a narrow, well-like staircase. The impetus she had given to the door carried her along with it; so she was fairly inside, and conscious of a painfully twisted ankle, before she had time to be surprised.

She had the presence of mind to throw the bundle behind the door, and then sat down on the steps, unable to move, and with real tears of vexation and actual pain gathering in her eyes.

Gertrude gave one quick look of amazement and sympathy, and then turned to receive her visitor; but when the door opened, not 'Miss Verey,' but 'Mr Mitchell' was announced; and the big curate swung in.

'We have made the strangest discovery,' said Gertrude, as she shook hands with her visitor, thinking it best to face the unlucky *contre-temps* boldly. 'Had you any idea that we had a private staircase here?' She led the way to the cupboard door. 'My friend, Miss Hesketh, has just found it out.'

'Yes, and I've hurt my foot horribly,' said Lalagé, looking up; 'and I can't get up, and it's so stupid.'

The big curate looked in, and saw a sight which he never afterwards forgot—a sight which came to him again and again through all his years—a sight which followed him when his hair was gray and his eyes dim, and the bare memory of which, even to the last, filled his heart with the longing which beauty always creates. And yet it was only a girl he beheld on that bright spring day—a girl with crisp golden hair, with a fair, pale, oval face, violet eyes swimming in limpid self-pity, a small sensitive mouth, and straight, thin nose. But the slight, lithe figure, the far-spreading muslin dress, the cool mauve ribbons, the carefully outlined throat, wrists, and waist, all had their charm too, and all helped to make up that vision of refined loveliness, the like of which he had never before beheld in such close contiguity to himself. Sitting there in the dusty shadow, she almost shone out, and some such line as 'making a sunshine in a shady place' came into his dazed, unpoetical head. He stood staring a full minute; the girl looked up angrily, and a faint pink flush lighted the face of the curate's divinity.

'I wish you would not stand there,' she said; 'I can talk to you quite well if you will only go and sit down, Gertrude.'

Then Mrs Cleather introduced them, glad that the awkward pause was over.

'I am afraid you've hurt your foot very much,' said the curate, still gazing into the recess.

'Yes, I have,' said Lalagé; 'of course it is nothing of consequence, nothing that hurts one dreadfully ever is. I wish I were a man. Papa could say "Hang it!" or "Confound it!" or "By Jove!" and so jerk out a little of the pain; but I'm only a girl, so I can do nothing but sit here and cry.' This was said to excuse the two big tears which would come rolling down.

'So much the better,' said the curate, longing to say something to cover her confusion; but not a bit knowing how to do it: 'strong words are "idle words," and the fewer we say of them the better.'

'I daresay you use them, though,' said Lalagé.

'No, I don't, 'pon my honour; I use very little words for a man of my size; don't I, Mrs Cleather?'

By this time Gertrude had seated herself on the lowest step of the stairs, at Lalagé's feet, and the curate had taken a chair within gazing-distance, so conversation was easier.

'My poor Lalagé,' said Gertrude, 'can't I do anything for you?'

'O no, thank you,' said Lalagé; 'the pain is going off at last.'

Then Gertrude and the curate talked about district-work and poor people, and Lalagé could not help noticing that he did seem very much in earnest; and her heart quite came round to him, when Gertrude's two children—hitherto taken up by blankly gazing at Lalagé—clung round him. 'Dinner Bell,' as the little girl always called herself, climbed up to his big shoulder, and seating herself thereon with much satisfaction, stroked his brown forehead, and told him she 'did 'ove his pretty face.'

This exceedingly incongruous remark sent Lalagé and Gertrude into fits of uncontrollable laughter, and broke down the barriers of any remaining reserve, till at last the genial curate had so far won his way, that Lalagé really thought him 'very nice.' His manner to Gertrude especially pleased her. Mrs Cleather had that faculty, which some few happy women possess, of winning men's respect rather than regard, deference rather than love. Such respect and deference the curate paid unsparingly, and Gertrude, in her placid, matronly

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security, received as her due. She was a woman who might have been intimate with half the world of men without being familiar with, or suffering familiarity from, one. Happily, Captain Cleather, irritable, excitable, and suspicious as he was, had yet sense enough to perceive this.

'My foot is all right now,' said Lalagé at last, getting up, though she flushed slightly as she did so.

'Not quite right, I am afraid, Miss Hesketh.'

'Yes, it is.—Shall we explore this funny old staircase, Gertrude?'

They went up, and found the narrow tortuous steps led to a small room at the top of the house, not more than ten feet square; it was empty, and very dark, the only light being afforded by the door Lalagé had opened; when this was closed, the obscurity must have been complete.

'How dreary it is!' said Gertrude with a little shiver. 'One would like to know who last took refuge here.'

'Let us go down,' said Lalagé, and they stumbled into the light again.

'Look here,' she said, as with eyes accustomed to the darkness she stood gazing up the narrow staircase; 'is not that a window?'

Nearly at the bottom of the staircase was a thin thread of light, almost imperceptible from its being so near the open door. The curate lumbered up again, and found that a wooden shutter, cleverly painted so as to resemble stone on the outside, had been wedged into a narrow aperture about two feet wide. He got it out, with some difficulty, by means of two bolts on the inside, and then carefully put it back again.

'Heaven help the poor fellow who had to make his escape by this way!' he said.

'By no means impossible, though,' said Gertrude, 'for, don't you remember, the gardener's tool-shed is just below? It must all have been done on purpose.'

Lalagé's face was quite saddened. 'It makes one so sorry for all the people of the old times,' she said, 'and so glad we live now instead of then.'

'Let us shut it all up again,' said Mrs Cleather.

They had done so, and Lalagé was just saying she must be going, when the door was opened rudely, and a flushed, excited face thrust in.

'Gertrude,' said Captain Cleather, 'this is madness—murder! The idea of keeping these children cooped up indoors; I must have them out, indeed I must,' he added vehemently, taking no notice whatever of the two strangers—'I must have them out at once!'

'Very well, John,' said Gertrude softly, and the man's troubled face grew a shade calmer.

She lifted each child in her arms, and took them, one after another, to their father. They were by no means unwilling to go; indeed, little Dinner Bell seemed to think her mother's long kiss hardly necessary. Then Gertrude closed the door, and looked defiantly into Lalagé's face; that look said plainly as words: 'You shall not dare even to think him rough; he more than satisfies me.' The curate was evidently accustomed to scenes of this sort; but a little sadness crept into Lalagé's heart, as she took up a hat with a floating veil and more mauve ribbons, and putting it on, looked lovelier than ever to the bedazzled curate.

'You must let me see you home,' he said to her; 'I shall be so uncomfortable about your foot, if you don't; and you know it's my duty to look after my flock.'

'Yes, pray, do, Lalagé,' said Gertrude; and the big curate was unspeakably happy.

As he swung along by her side in his foolish bliss, he felt that he was, as he expressed it, 'done for,' and 'for good' this time, forgetting that he had already more than once given and recalled that susceptible heart. But none of his captors had been in any way equal to Lalagé, who, with her refinement, freshness, and frank open manner, was to him like a breath from a new world. He could hardly keep his eyes from her face, hardly keep the throbbing of that big foolish heart to himself; but he managed to do so, and talked very creditably all the cruelly short way to the Hill House. He told her how old and curious the Cleathers' house was; how there was a paper extant written by Charles I., dated from 'his poor lodging at Grimswold;' how the whole place was full of historic association, if only people cared to look it up. And the bliss of taking her slender gloved hand in his when they reached their destination, and 'Good-bye' was imperative, more than repaid all his efforts.

CHAPTER IV.—VISITORS.

'So the curate is not an utter monster after all,' said Belle.

'No, indeed he isn't,' said Lalagé; 'still, his hair is terrible.'

They were sitting in the cool Hill House drawing-room, with the French door open to the lawn, and every pink-shaded window flung wide, to admit the sweet summer air. Belle, who was scientific, and read deep books, and even wrote papers for the *Social Science Review*, was sitting somewhat in the shadow of the room, with a great pile of volumes on a little table beside her. She had just taken up that 'heaviest book out,' *The Great Store-book of Nature*, but Lalagé's incessant chattering forbade very deep study.

There she sat, silly Lalagé, quite content with youth and beauty, and with delighted eyes gazing out on the fair land over which the summer glamour was cast.

'Do put down your book, Belle; I am sure it is that odious *Plurality of Worlds*. O dear, if you were only as contented as I am! I care nothing for any world but this, for it's such a beauty,' said idle Lalagé, who hated work, letting fall the piece of embroidery she held. 'Do you see that little wood on the side of the hill just in front of us? O Belle, I long to go there: I wonder if it is as far off as it looks; I think I'll try it this very afternoon.'

'After we've called on the Cleathers, then,' said Belle.

'O yes; I'll go there with you first,' said Lalagé; 'and then, when you go for your stupid drive, I'll set out.'

'Hadn't you better take one of the servants with you?'

'No, Belle; you know that just what I like best in this place is its charming independence. Oh, I long to go,' she went on, still gazing out on the fair hill-side; 'I could find it in my heart to set out this very minute.'

It was absolute pleasure to her to sit in that

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pretty room, with well-chosen furniture and artistically designed paper; but to this pleasure she was accustomed. It was the outside beauty which gave so keen an edge to her happiness: the soft mouldings of the hills made her heart swell, the broad sweeps of light and shade made her eyes by turns dance, and grow calm.

There she sat, still revelling in the gorgeous pageant outside, when an hour later the big curate stumbled into this—to him—Elysium. Stumbled, I say, because the poor bedazzled man felt his big feet and clumsy limbs so incongruous in the midst of such surroundings. He sat down gratefully by Belle, who came forward with her queenly graciousness, and resolutely turned those too-small, unwise eyes of his from Lalagé, as though he expected her to be covered with confusion, as was he himself. But she rose and went to him with easy courtesy, blended with pity, and held out a slim hand sparkling with jewels.

'I had the pleasure of meeting Mr Mitchell yesterday at Mrs Cleather's,' she said—'my sister, Miss Hesketh—Mr Mitchell.'

This little introduction had a soothing effect upon the curate.

'I am so sorry I did not call last week,' he said; 'the fact is, I did not know you had actually come.'

Belle begged he would not mention it, and asked him about the place and people.

He told her it had been a considerable town two centuries before, but people had drifted away till it had been left in its present desolate condition. 'There is even a legend that its desolation was nearly fatal to one of your sex,' he said with a humorous smile: 'it is said that a certain Lady Lowther pined away and all but died in this very house, five years ago.'

'I am glad she had the politeness to say nothing about it to papa,' said Lalagé. 'I don't see why it should be so desperately dull; there are the Cleathers, and some people who live near them.'

'Yes,' said the curate, taking heart of grace, and turning round so as to face his divinity; 'but the Cleathers have not long been here, and till they came the Hill House was uninhabited for years. To be sure there are the Vereys, as you say; but they don't care for sociability; they are reserved people—very reserved, I may say.'

'And do you find it very dull?' asked Belle.

'Well, no, not exactly,' said the curate; 'at least it doesn't much matter to me; the parish is large, and I have plenty of work to do; still, one wants a little social intercourse now and then. But, as a clergyman, I get more society than poor Lady Lowther could. There are several retired tradesmen who have bought up places about Grimswold, and, of course, I have to attend their parties, and keep up a sort of intercourse with them. I must say they are all most kind about helping me with my Sunday-school: the Misses Farmer walk in from their place two miles off every Sunday morning at half-past nine, and stay for the afternoon school, bringing their luncheon with them, and sitting in the school-room in the interval.'

'How good of them,' said Lalagé. 'But don't the Misses Verey help?'

'O yes,' said the curate. 'There are eight Misses Verey, and six of them are good enough to come.'

'Mr Mitchell,' said Lalagé, with her faint pink blush, 'could I be of any use to you in the school? I have never taught before, but I should be so glad to help, if I could.'

'You, Lalagé!' said Belle with calm surprise.

'Yes, indeed. Don't say no, Belle; I have wished it so often.'

'Indeed, I should be very grateful if you'd come,' said the curate—'if you don't think it would do her any harm,' he added, turning to Belle.

'I should think it could do her nothing but good,' said Belle gravely: 'it was impossible in London; things are managed so differently there.'

Lalagé thanked her with her eyes.

'But you must have a large school, Mr Mitchell,' Belle went on, 'to require so many teachers.'

'I am glad to say it is a very large school,' said the curate, with a glow of honest pride. 'I think the long way that most of the children have to walk to get here every Sunday has something to do with it. Difficulty always enhances value.—So I may arrange a class for you, next Sunday, Miss Heaketh?'

'Quite a baby class, please,' said Lalagé shyly. 'I have never done anything of the sort before, but I will try my very best,' she added in her sweet humility.

'Quite a baby class,' echoed the again dazed curate; 'I will remember.'

He took out a pocket-book and wrote down 'Miss Heaketh, baby class,' partly because he knew he should begin to think it all a beautiful, indistinct dream, the moment he was out of that charmed circle, partly because it was such a pleasure to inscribe her name there without reproof. Then he slowly gathered his big limbs together, and, feeling it was time to go, unfolded himself, and rising, revealed the full enormity of his stature.

'Good-bye,' he said abruptly, shaking hands with Belle first, for he knew the giddy feeling would come on directly his fingers touched Lalagé's.

He knew the symptoms of old, this poor big man, who had so often been smitten, but whose sluggish vitality had hitherto saved him from being utterly slain. But as he strode out of the Heaketh's gate, he acknowledged to himself that he had never before been so speedily vanquished as now.

'I wish to goodness I were safely married out of the way,' groaned the susceptible curate; 'and I would do anything on earth to win her.'

To such ambition had his unwise thoughts already elevated him.

Meanwhile, happy Lalagé had fluttered up to Belle, and put her arms round her. 'I am so happy!' she said; 'it is all just as I wished. I always felt it would be so much easier to try to do right out here, all alone in the country, than in that gay, busy London.'

'My darling!' said Belle, kissing her softly; and if she did not agree with her, she said nothing.

After all, Lalagé did not go to the wood that day, for when luncheon was over they had more visitors: Mrs and three Misses Verey called. Mrs Verey was a stout old lady, rather red-faced, and very silent, at least at first. The daughters were even more monosyllabic than their mother; they were not young, half-a-dozen of them being over thirty; but Lalagé had never seen such awkward shyness in the youngest school-girl; it quite provoked her, for they were past the age when shyness calls forth sympathy.

They sat close to their mother, with crossed feet, and awkwardly protruding shoulders, and looked

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frightened beyond description. Belle and Lalagé talked hard, but this in no way added to the comfort of their visitors; one girl vibrated her elevated foot nervously, and any remark addressed to her hideously accelerated the movement. At last Lalagé left her alone, and elicited from one of the others that she did not know there had been a Paris Exhibition; they never read the papers—'papa did not like it.' They looked so old to have a father; but Lalagé afterwards discovered that Admiral Verey was in his dotage. No ground of public interest being open to them, she tried nearer home.

'Did they like Grimswold?'

'O yes; they had never been anywhere else in all their lives, and they were so fond of it,' said two speaking at the same time.

'But haven't you been to school?' asked Lalagé.

'Mamma does not approve of schools,' said Hester, the plainest but least shy; 'so we used to have a governess, mamma's own old governess, we were so lucky to get her; but she died after she had been with us two or three years.'

Lalagé could not be surprised at this.

Then Miss Verey, in virtue of being the eldest, boldly hazarded a question on her own account. 'Have you been to the Roman encampment?' she asked.

'No,' said Lalagé. 'I had no idea there was one near here; I hope it is within walking distance?'

'O yes,' said Hester Verey; 'it isn't far off, just at the top of one of the hills, and there is such a splendid view from it! There was a picnic there once, but it was given by those vulgar, stuck-up Farmers, so of course we didn't go.'

'Are they vulgar and stuck-up?' asked Lalagé gently.

'Yes, I suppose so,' said Hester; 'they used to be tradesmen, you know, and they dress so! Mamma doesn't like it; she dresses us plainly on principle.'

'What a bad principle it must be,' said Lalagé to herself, as she thought of the hideous garments in which they were enfolded.

Meantime Belle was getting on heavily with Mrs Verey.

'The curate called here this morning,' she said; 'he seems a nice person.'

'I think him a very dangerous young man,' said Mrs Verey solemnly.

'He seems very hard-working,' said Belle, thinking Mrs Verey's judgment by no means infallible.

'So I hope we all are,' said the lady tersely.—'There is one question I am anxious to ask you,' she went on after a pause, 'if you will allow me.'

'Certainly,' said Belle, with well-concealed surprise.

'I hear that a young woman, by name Hannah Prole, has taken the place of housemaid with you, may I ask that you will keep a strict hand over her? I fear she is far from pious. I take a great interest in her, as she was in one of my daughters' class at school a long time, and I distinctly remember her being twice detected in falsehoods.'

'Perhaps she was very young,' said Belle, as the face of one of their new servants, a fresh, pleasant-looking country-girl, flashed across her.

'Is youth any excuse for sin, Miss Heaketh?' asked her visitor severely.

'I think it is,' said Belle, a slow crimson flood spreading over her clear pale face; 'at anyrate, I can promise nothing with regard to her; the housekeeper looks after the servants.'

'Oh!' said Mrs Verey, and got up to go.

And her verdict, as she shook off the Heaketh dust from her feet, was: 'Utterly frivolous.'

'But are they not pretty, mamma?' said Miss Verey.

'Now, girls,' said Mrs Verey, 'I'll have none of this nonsense: they are not a bit prettier than any of you; it's only all that dressing up, and vanity, and ribbons round their heads, and light muslins that does it—such frivolity!'

'That was only the youngest,' said Hester the audacious.

'Well,' said the exasperated woman, stopping short, 'and I suppose the other hadn't on black moire? Black moire indeed! why doesn't she sell her clothes, and give to the poor?'

And the Misses Verey were convinced.

When they left the house, Belle and Lalagé looked at each other in dismay.

'Odious, atrocious, wicked people,' said the girl; 'fancy dressing in that way!'

'Oh, hush!' said Belle; 'but certainly to-day we have had a refutation of the old idea, that fat people are always good-natured;' and she told Lalagé what had passed.

'For all her stoutness and her silence, I believe one could easily put her in a passion; and,' said Lalagé, with a guilty look in her violet eyes, 'I believe I shall put her in many a one.'

Then they went to the Cleathers, and Belle was introduced to the little girl, her godchild, and with Gertrude groaned over the society, or no society, of Grimswold.

A MEDIEVAL BANQUET.

ALTHOUGH, to our severer taste, the feasts of the middle ages may seem barbaric in their extravagance (and nowhere was this carried to greater lengths than in the wealthy states of Italy), still the almost meagre simplicity of modern times makes it interesting to look back upon those splendid entertainments, described with so much gusto by contemporary Italian chroniclers. How far the heavily burdened taxpayers of the day relished the magnificence with which their princely and ducal rulers celebrated their victories, or welcomed their illustrious visitors, we need not inquire; they probably, like our French friends each successive 15th August, admired the show, and grumbled at the bill. Leaving also to political economists to decide, if they can, how far the profusion of a court is advantageous to the prosperity of a nation, or the reverse, let us transfer ourselves in imagination to the wedding banquet of the Lady Violante of Milan, 1368 A.D.

Early in the month of May of that year, Lionel,* Duke of Clarence, second son of Edward III. of England, entered the fair city of Milan as the affianced of Violante Visconti, attended by her father, Galeazzo Visconti, who shared with his brothers, Matteo and Bernarbo, the sovereignty of that opulent province. All the Milanese nobles,

* This prince had first married Elizabeth de Burgh, daughter and heiress of the Earl of Ulster, by whom he had only one daughter, married to Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March. He died in Italy, soon after his marriage with Violante, by whom he had no issue. In character, he greatly resembled Edward the Black Prince.

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knights, and ladies escorted Visconti and his guest, attired in magnificent dresses, designed expressly for the occasion; and a brilliantly equipped force of two thousand English horsemen and archers formed the Duke of Clarence's contribution to the splendour of the procession. From that time until the 15th June, when the marriage ceremony was performed by the Bishop of Novara in the church of St Maria Maggiore, the English and their prince were entertained with the profuse hospitality of the age, which in the evening, after the solemnisation of the marriage, culminated in the feast, of which we will endeavour to give a description.

The banqueting tables were arranged in the open court before the palace of the Visconti, in the Piazza dell' Arenga. Amongst the guests admitted to the private table of the bride and bridegroom were the Count of Savoy, the Bishop of Novara, and the illustrious poet, Francis Petrarch, then in the zenith of his fame. At another table a hundred of the most beautiful ladies of the court displayed their gorgeous toilets, studded with pearls and other precious stones, their extravagant use of which is a frequent subject of censure with the contemporary historians.

The 'breakfast,' if we may so call it, consisted of eighteen different courses, ushered in with the utmost pomp, and accompanied by appropriate presents for the newly-married pair. The first course, as a mark of peculiar honour, was served up in duplicate to the bridegroom's table, and was composed, amongst other dishes, of two small porklings entirely gilded, with fire in their mouths; and small gilt fish called porcelletti. As presents, two of the choicest greyhounds which could be procured, with their appropriate trappings, were led round and exhibited to the company.—The second course consisted of gilded hares and pike; with twelve greyhounds and six goshawks as presents.—The third entry was a large gilt calf in a silver dish, and an infinity of small gilt trout; twelve sporting dogs of various breeds, with velvet collars and silken leashes, as presents.—The fourth course—attended by twelve couple of sporting dogs, and twelve beautiful falcons with bells, hoods, &c. of silver—was principally of gilt partridges, quails, and roast gilded trout.—The fifth course, of gilt game of all kinds, and large gilt carp, was accompanied by a similar present of hawks to the fourth, only that they were enriched with hoods covered with costly pearls.

With the sixth entry, the solids of the feast and the more cumbrous presents commenced—beef and capons with garlic sauce, sturgeons whole in water; and twelve steel cuirasses of exquisite finish, buckled and studded with silver, for the bridegroom.—The seventh course sounds novel to our ears—capons, game, and fish served up in lemonade; and as presents, twelve matchless suits of Milan armour, twelve tilting-saddles, and twelve lances.—The eighth entry, pastry, beef, and huge eel-pies, with twelve more suits of war-armour.—The ninth course and its successor were more moderate, consisting of meat and fish, jellies, and lampreys; with gold coins, gold cloths, silver basins, and flasks filled with Malmsey and Vernaccia wines, as presents.—The eleventh course of this never-ending banquet was of kids, accompanied by six horses, with saddles, lances, targets, and helmets in like number.—The twelfth, hares and other game, with six large coursers, with saddles and golden trappings.—The thirteenth service, venison and beef; with six war-horses, with gilded bridles, bits, and full heraldic trappings and housings.—The fourteenth, fowls, capons, &c. dressed in coloured sauces with citron; and six light jousting coursers, with gilded bridles, red velvet cloths, and halters.—The fifteenth, peacocks' tongues, more carp, of which the Italians and French were particularly fond, vegetables, and fruit: as presents, a ducal hood, mantle, and lower robe, covered with pearls, and lined with ermine.—The sixteenth, rabbits, peacocks, ducks, &c.; and a huge silver basin, containing one large ruby, one large diamond, a large pearl, and some other choice specimens of precious stones.—The seventeenth course was rural and pastoral in comparison, being cheese, Parmesan, even then famous amongst epicures, and other products of the dairy, with the very appropriate present of twelve fat cows.—For the eighteenth course—fruits, sweetmeats, and various wines—was reserved the most costly present. Two splendid chargers—one called the *Lion*, the other the *Abbot*—were presented to the Duke of Clarence by his princely father-in-law; and seventy-seven similar steeds for his principal knights and barons.—The bridegroom's table at this unconscionable feast, which must have lasted many hours, was served by twelve principal knights of the duchy; pages of lower rank, but all of gentle blood, attending on the other tables, and taking charge of the various presents.

For more copious notices of the splendid entertainments of that period, such as the coronation banquet of Gian Galeazzo Visconti, brother of the Lady Violante, in 1395, the reader may consult Captain Napier's *History of Florence* (6 vols. 8vo, 1846), a work which appears less generally known than the accuracy of its facts and the pleasantness of its style entitle it to be.

DEAD.

With closèd lips and closèd eyes,
Wrapt all in white, so white she lies;
Calm as a statue's carven face,
And, oh, so cold to love's embrace!

Her share in all our dealings gone,
Life, as we know it, hath she none;
Slid into slumber calm and deep,
A maiden sculptured in her sleep.

She was my own ere this befell;
Whose now she is I cannot tell:
Man knows not—has no sense that saith
What this thing is that he calls Death.

And I but know that all my hopes
Lie like dead leaves on smitten slopes,
That though my evening is not yet,
The day-star of my life hath set.

Now all my thoughts will turn and tend
In one direction to the end;
And with the ghost of my dead Past,
Mem'ry will wander to the last.

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THE CLERICAL MARKET.

IT may not be generally known that there are establishments in town where clergymen of the Church of England can be obtained in the same manner (except that they are not 'on view') as hired domestics. 'Strong, active, willing' clergymen, as maids-of-all-work advertise themselves; clergymen with or without encumbrances; clergymen who, in addition to thoroughly performing the duties of their office, will throw in an extra or two, such as, 'can intone,' 'can train a choir,' just as the lady's maid intimates she can 'dress hair,' or 'understands millinery.' A good plain clergyman can be procured at a very reasonable rate, and a chaplain for private use at almost next to nothing.

There are periodicals also—two of which are now lying before us—which concern themselves solely with that curious branch of social economy, the supply-and-demand of ecclesiastics. It would abate the rancour of some of our radical friends, who are so given to cry out against the bloated church, and to see a purse-proud parson in every gentleman with a white tie, to cast their eyes over these instructive pages. Their indignation would then be turned to wonder at the fact of so many divines being able to afford white ties at all. At this present writing, there are, it seems, two hundred clergymen of the Church of England 'wanting places,' and the salaries they demand are certainly not of an ambitious character. There is only one man—who, with unconscious self-satire, has described his 'views' as 'moderate'—who ventures to demand L.180 a year. Only seven aspire to L.150. A single divine underbids these by ten pounds. Thirty-five ask for L.120; and the other hundred and fifty or so of reverend gentlemen are actually going—or wanting to go—for L.100 a year or less; going for a hundred (nine of them); going for L.90 (three of them); going for L.80 (six of them); going for L.70 (eight of them); going for L.60—the price of a butler—(four of them); going for L.50 (one of them); and even (one of them) going for '10s. 6d. a service, and his travelling expenses:' below which, one is not surprised to find, clergymen of the Church of England are not to be had, but (we suppose) are 'bought in.' The spiritual services of all these two hundred divines could be annually secured, therefore, for L.2000 a year—two-fifths of the price paid for those of one bishop. Here is an opportunity for some good lady, attached to the clergy, and with a handsome jointure, to provide herself with a whole army of preachers; or for that faithful but genial son of the church, who is said, after an overnight bowl of 'Bishop,' to have called in the morning for a Sodor and Man, instead of a soda and brandy.

Nor let it be imagined that these gentlemen are merely flying buttresses of the great clerical body, hangers-on, or in any way inferior to their more fortunate brethren, who are in the enjoyment of these wished-for stipends. Each divine is indicated by a register number, and if you purchase a copy of the next issue of either of these publications, you will see that these numbers have mostly vanished, and others have taken their place. In other words, the applicants have 'obtained their situations;' and one of them is at this moment perhaps installed as curate in the very parish in which you, reader, have the fortune to live. Your rector has provided you with a spiritual pastor at one of the very reasonable figures above indicated; and I think you will agree with me that he can scarcely be dear at the price. The average of the salaries demanded in these periodicals is, in fact, the standard of remuneration offered to unbeneficed gentlemen of the Church of England. Well, a hundred a year is not a bad income for a young man who has just taken orders, and has only himself to support. In no other calling could he have obtained a subsistence so soon, and with it a certain social position, which may also have been desirable. He will be welcome at the tables of his wealthy parishioners, or, at all events, on their croquet lawns; and may even, at that fascinating game, secure the heart—and fortune—of one of the squire's daughters. This is the worldly view, which—as we are talking of stipends—we may perhaps be permitted to take; since emolument has been mentioned at all, why not also these little 'perquisites' and godsends?

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But in the clerical journals which we are considering, the *age* of these candidates for rectorial favour is printed in each case; and unhappily the great majority are *not* young men, and *not* unmarried. One applicant is sixty-eight! The amount of his stipend is 'to be privately arranged.' Are we uncharitable in supposing that this aged divine is desirous of the post of 'warming-pan;' that he is prepared, that is, to take a living, the owner of which is at present of too tender years to occupy it? When this is the case, a clergyman is sometimes found *pro tem.* to hold the benefice, until the young man comes of fit age, with the understanding that he shall then resign in his favour. But there are objections to this practice. These *pro tem.* ministers have been sometimes found to entertain conscientious scruples—just as Henry VIII. did in the matter of his marriage—with respect to giving up what has been thus intrusted to them; it has savoured to them of the nature of a simoniacal contract, and they have declined to execute it. To guard, therefore, against such tender consciences, Death is, as it were, retained for the proprietor's defence; the most venerable divine that can be procured is presented to the living, and hence it is that in these peculiar cases age may not only be no bar to a reverend gentleman's success in his profession, but even a distinct advantage. Still, these are but chance windfalls, and sixty-eight is a great age for a poor divine to be beginning work afresh, and asking for employment. There is another candidate of sixty-four. There are a dozen of fifty years and upwards. There are not threescore—even including those Seeking Titles to Holy Orders—under forty years of age!

This is surely a sombre picture. Imagine in any other profession—the members of which have spent from one to three thousand pounds upon their education—a similar state of things! It is true that, notwithstanding the minute particulars that are given in each case—so minute that it would scarcely astonish one to read, 'only back-teeth gone'—it is not stated how many olive branches belong to each divine; but the majority of them are 'married,' and require 'house accommodation;' and we all know how rare it is to find a married cleric without many mouths to feed. They have all of them 'views,' of course; from 'Ritualistic' to 'Evangelical;' but the greater part announce themselves as 'moderate,' or, as some rather curiously express it, 'views *via media*.' Some (perhaps with the idea of suiting a diversity of employers) have 'Prayer-book views;' others, 'sound' views; others express their opinions like a war-cry, 'no extremes.' Some, like housemaids, give the duration of their stay at their last 'place:' 'late positions, two and four and a half years;' 'incumbent' [probably a warming-pan, who has honourably fulfilled his engagement] 'four years;' 'present sole charge' [a poor fellow, whose rector is dead, and whose curacy dies with him] 'three and a half years;' and so on. In one column we find the word *immaterial* under 'views'—which is terrible to contemplate—but it is among those who are Seeking Temporary Duty, and evidently refers to the period of engagement.

If any one has any especial gift or advantage, it is of course made mention of. One reverend candidate has been an archdeacon—probably in the colonies, but still here he is with a genuine 'Venerable' prefixed to his name, and going for a modest hundred a year. Some have been engaged in missionary enterprise; some have been hospital chaplains; some have been masters of grammar-schools; and one has been a number of years 'on the Bombay Establishment'—the bearings of which, in the way of attraction, are by no means self-evident. Many offer 'opportunities for pupils'—and, let us hope, they may get them, and thereby eke out their scanty stipends. Some advertise their 'good voices,' and even their 'good health.' One modestly announces himself as 'a fair reader,' as though he were a lady; another, with more self-complacency, advertises his voice as 'powerful,' and his 'reading and preaching, good.' Some of them express themselves rather oddly: 'Not far from London; loud voice,' as though, if necessary, the advertiser could preach at Edgeware, and still make folks hear in the City. 'Voice equal to any church,' states another; and indeed this elliptical phrase is a very favourite one with our clerical friends. Again, they use the word 'wished' in a peculiar way: 'Plain service wished;' 'hearty service wished,' &c. One vague enthusiast expresses himself as 'fond of schools.'

It seems curious that 'clergymen seeking titles to holy orders,' should ask the same salaries (though, indeed, they could hardly ask less) as the old and experienced hands; but so it is. Length of service in the church is by no means of necessity rewarded. The taking of curacies is a labour of Sisyphus, and is finished only to be recommenced. Of course, in some cases, virtue is its own exceeding reward. There are saints upon earth (and quite as many of them) now, as of old. But to the majority of these clerical toilers it must be heartless work indeed. Imagine them, with their wives and families, removing from this place to that with their scanty furniture, to make a new home among strangers, again, and again, and again! They have one advantage. Disestablished they may be, but under no possible system can they be disendowed or rendered worse off than at present. Some of them, too, have not only poverty to contend against: 'a dry and bracing air,' 'a genial climate,' are sometimes 'essential,' and that, we fear, must mean ill-health or delicacy of constitution in the wife or the little ones. May God help His Minister. More fortunate brethren indulge their ecclesiastical tastes by stating this or that 'diocese preferred;' or they like sociality, and demand 'a cheerful neighbourhood:' one will only serve 'in the W., S.-W., or N.-W. London districts, or at the seaside, where there is agreeable society;' and another requires what he calls 'a nice locality;' but in these cases, the secret of their fastidiousness is disclosed in these pregnant words, 'has private means.' *When* house and land are gone and speech 'can preach extempore,' 'can train a choir,' &c. may be most excellent gifts, but, in the meantime, it must be very nice to have private means.

But these are the happy exceptions. That average stipend of a hundred a year only too often represents the poor curate's entire income. The usual payment, for temporary spiritual assistance, seems to be at the same rate: 'one guinea each service with travelling expenses and hospitality.' This last word reminds us of an anecdote of real life connected with our subject. A poor clergyman having obtained a curacy in a place where the air perhaps was *not* 'dry and bracing,' or the 'climate genial,' fell ill and died. The squire's wife, who

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had not been pressing in her hospitality while the reverend gentleman was alive, was quite shocked to hear of his demise. 'Dear me, John,' cried she to her husband, 'there's that poor Mr Threadbare dead. *And we never asked him to dinner!*' There was surely both pathos and humour in the lady's remark, although she was conscious of neither.

AN INVENTOR'S REVENGE.

Time passes swiftly to those who have no settled home—to those who, from habit or necessity, have always before them a speedy change of scene. They have no need to seek painfully in their immediate circumstances new aspects and interests to conjure the dulness of life—contrasts with the past and the probable future come to them unsought; these fill their minds with easy occupation, and the new impressions have no time to stale. But, looking back on such a life, its incidents have a singular sameness, and successive cities and successive skies mark its stages so clearly and sharply, that it seems in the end about as sequent and interesting as a page of Bradshaw's *Guide*.

Partly from habit and partly from necessity, I have led such a life; the time has passed swiftly, and each stage is as clearly marked to me as the succeeding ones. But there is one episode in my life that appears to me dimly like a half-remembered dream; that will in no way be classed with the rest; and yet it was the most important of all. I will recall it as clearly as I can.

I was a student of science, and very young. Of course, therefore, I was unsettled and given to wild theories. Talk of the evils and pitfalls of army or navy, what are these to the influence of scientific study? When the senses themselves turn out delusive, and the difference between white and black vanishes in the hands of the chemical professor, it is long before one learns that these are only *objective* relations, that the *subjective*—— But this delays my story, and my meaning may be misunderstood. After studying in Germany and Italy, I had settled for a time in Paris. I was working under a distinguished chemist; and having made some original investigations, I was received as a member of the Société X. This Society had considerable influence in the Paris scientific world, and shortly before my reception it had attracted much popular attention by the striking discoveries of some of its members in the subject of the artificial production of gems.

My lodgings were in the students' quarter, the Quartier Latin. The house was chiefly inhabited by students, and it faced an old-fashioned *café* much frequented by the young population. I observed the students and their ways as I sat after dinner at the café, but I entered little into their amusements; and as each of the many inhabitants of the lodging-house was as independent from the others as the barristers of an Inn, my life was a very solitary one among all the laughter and dissipation of the Quartier. My mornings were passed in lecture-rooms and laboratories; then followed dinner at a restaurant, where the merry hum of the students' voices, their frank gestures and eccentric costumes, were enough to occupy my attention and make the meal pass pleasantly; then I sat at the door of a café, and watched the passers-by; then a stroll along the Luxembourg gardens; a chat with the pleasant lively housekeeper of the lodging-house, who sat in the evening in the porter's lodge, with her niece and a fat agreeable old priest; and then I would shut the outer door of my rooms, and bury myself for the night in my books. I did not lead this solitary life because I found the Quartier Latin the undesirable pandemonium I had heard it described in England. French students appeared to me neither better nor worse than students elsewhere. They were supreme in their own quarter, and one there saw both the worst of them and the best. Many were idle and dissipated, many were vigorous workers; most were neither one nor the other; and the view of their lives that I had learned in England was as true and yet as essentially untrue as the views of naval life that one acquires from the best naval novels. I was solitary from taste and from the nature of my objects, which were then less popular than now. This loneliness of my life had in part to answer for the bizarre adventure of which I was soon to be the victim.

One summer evening I was sitting in the Luxembourg gardens: it was nearly sunset, and there were many strollers enjoying the coolness of the long watered alleys, whose leafy walls dispersed the slanting sun-rays, and seemed to filter them of heat. The windows of the neighbouring houses flamed fitfully like answering signal-lights; the lofty dome of the Pantheon rose above like a blue distant mountain, the gilded cross on its summit flashing in the pure blue sky. The scene was beautiful and calm, and I was lost in reverie and delight; for the pure sky of Paris, contrasted with the fantastic aspects of the glorious city itself, had always for me a peculiar and enchanting charm. Suddenly, a large dog rubbed against me, and, as it were, awoke me with a nervous start. I instinctively thrust it from me, and the animal turned round, and shewing a foam-flecked mouth, bit me slightly in the hand. A municipal guard here hurried up and shot the animal through the head. A crowd was attracted by the shot, and much sympathy was expressed for me. At length an individual of striking appearance pushed his way between the others, and after ascertaining what had happened, told me he could prevent all consequences from the bite if I would follow him to the nearest chemist's. His appearance impressed me as that of a remarkable man; and having little confidence in the usual remedies, I was glad to grasp any chance of cure.

We reached the chemist's without speaking. My companion drew a small case from his pocket, asked for some very ordinary substances, and mixed them with others from his case. Having thus prepared a draught and a powder, he gave me the former to drink, and rubbed the latter on the wound. He then said there was no longer any danger, but an hour's walk would be advisable. I felt my position embarrassing, so, asking if he had leisure to accompany me, I was glad that he readily acquiesced. Observing that he spoke French with difficulty, and with a strong Italian accent, I addressed him in Italian, and found I was not mistaken as to his nationality. He appeared much pleased to speak his own language, and he was truly eloquent in it, for our talk passed from remedies to general science, and we found that our tastes and occupations were similar. I was charmed with my new acquaintance; our conversation grew more and more interesting; the hour passed

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swiftly; and I pressed him to dine with me. He agreed, but left me for a little, promising to return.

I ordered the dinner, and waited for the Italian. He soon returned, and I had leisure to examine his appearance attentively. He was of medium height, and clearly past middle age. His head was singularly massive, and, except some short stubble at the back, had hardly a single hair; but his piercing eyes, his shaggy and bright black eyebrows, and the vigour and lightness of his movements and gestures, contradicted all appearance of age. He was dressed with remarkable plainness, but the plainness of a Quaker dandy, shewing elegance in the nature of cloth and linen, though not in cut or ornaments.

The soup was brought, and we commenced our dinner. Our conversation grew animated towards dessert—it became, I may say, confidential. I learned the principal facts about my new friend: first, that he was a passionately enthusiastic inventor; secondly, that he was animated by a deep feeling of resentment against the French government, which he considered to have cheated him; and against the French *savants*, who had ignored and professed to despise his discoverics. 'They accepted my inventions,' he said of the first, 'and for years they have refused to pay me. Should he who racks his brain in discovery spend his force for the benefit of scoundrels of *birboni*, who reap all the reward for themselves? I tell them they have cannons, and I have none, and that is the sole reason I have not my rights. They tried to poison me once: they asked me to a grand dinner; but I suspected them. I know all poisons, and I snap my fingers at them. I called in the morning on the agent who had asked me. I entered, and found him with one of the diners of the night before. "You thought me dead," I said. "I salute you, *messieurs*—do your worst, you will not injure me." They were stupefied, and I left them so.' Against the savants he was less bitter, but more contemptuous. He spoke of the ridiculous dogmatism of French chemists; of their impotence to solve questions which he had solved; of their ignoring his work, and then by degrees assuming it as their own. And I saw that if any opportunity of revenge should occur to him, the savants would not be forgotten. But these unpleasant characteristics were soon only subordinate in my impressions; for all other feelings were swallowed up in admiration of the daring audacity and the penetrating clearness of his intellect. He threw light on the darkest problems of chemistry; he described to me discoveries that he had made; he related the most marvellous cures; he told how he had solved problems of analysis through the application of one lucid original thought, where all the mechanical niceties of the best analysts had failed. And I knew enough of medicine and chemistry to recognise that his reasonings were just, original, and lucidly penetrating, and that they implied a vast study of the facts of nature, utilised by a marvellous memory, and a still more marvellous reasoning power. He disdained all conventionalities and etiquette of science; he described conjuring tricks which he had accomplished, and was as astonishing and enthusiastic about them as upon the highest problems of science. He seemed to have vowed war against the impossible, under whatever name, classification, or repute—to do all that others had not attempted, and, still more, all that others had failed in. But it may seem improbable that such a man should speak so freely of his discoveries to a stranger. True; but, first, our minds were analogous in that enthusiasm which is so rare now-a-days; and, secondly, though my friend was magnificently open, and in appearance so rich in thought and power that he could afford to waste it as he listed, yet he was no fool, and in all matters of really important discovery some essential point was left obscure—some point sufficiently indicated to complete the irresistible appearance of truth of the whole, was yet left so indistinct as to be utterly useless to the vulgar mind of a scientific plagiarist. Under all his glorious openness there was the wiliness of the Italian nature—the wiliness that once conquered the world, that now defeats the force of all opposing tyrannies, and can employ the strongest nations for Italian aims.

At length we left the restaurant, and strolled along the Boulevards. My companion became witty and amusing, but still he shewed in his conversation the prevailing tendencies of his mind. A Frenchman accosted him, and spoke to him on some business matter connected with his discoveries, and as he was speaking, a regiment of soldiers passed. 'What do you think of their appearance?' said the Frenchman. 'Oh, very fine,' said my friend; 'but my father had a saying he often used: "*Petit homme, petite affaire.*"'

For some days after, we continued to meet and talk. At length my friend invited me to his lodgings. They were in an old house in the cheap quarter between the Quartier Latin and the Champ de Mars. The street was dull, but there were gardens to the back, and my friend's windows looked over them towards the dome of the Invalides. A long dingy passage led past the smoky den of a cobbler, who acted as porter, and who directed me by a tortuous stair to the third floor, where I knocked at a rickety door. It was opened by a young woman, whom I recognised at the first glance as Italian, and who, after calling my friend, was introduced to me as his daughter. She seemed about twenty. Her clear olive complexion was transparent to a delicate vermilion tinge; and her dark eyes, fringed with long lashes, and surmounted by perfectly pencilled eyebrows, were strongly characterised by a tone of blue; her hands and figure were as near perfection as I have seen. Perhaps this girl more strongly influenced me than I have been accustomed to admit to myself, and she may have had a more important part in the subsequent events than I have been willing to suppose. She was like her father in expression and somewhat in mind; and in the conversation that followed his cordial greeting, she entered into his ideas intelligently, and seemed to half-worship his genius.

The apartment was small, and indicated poverty. The household work appeared to be performed altogether by the daughter, with the exception of the cookery, in which the father took part—speaking of it with as much originality and as much freedom from conventional prejudices as he had shewn in everything else. He spoke of his discoveries in cookery with enthusiasm; he had applied his knowledge of chemistry and his untrammeled originality of mind to the subject. He insisted on my staying to share their dinner and test his skill. The dish he had prepared was excellent, and it was evidently particularly

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wholesome: it was accompanied by a bottle of Asti; and we finished with some excellent Rosolio, a liqueur I had not tasted since leaving Italy. Perhaps the Rosolio was partly to blame, but I know that no woman ever before made such an impression on me as did the Italian's daughter. The first impression is half the battle in such matters; and though I was little given to falling in love at the first sight of a pretty face, yet, when I left at the conclusion of the dinner, I felt there was another witchery that drew me to the Italian, perhaps more powerfully even than the magic of his conversation.

Day after day we met, and our intimacy continued to increase: I felt more and more impressed with the inventor's originality and power. In his rooms were a great number of vials containing chemical preparations—for at the time of my acquaintance with him he was specially occupied with chemical investigations—but it was strange and striking to me to see how little apparatus he required. With a few glasses and ordinary cooking utensils, he produced delicate and astonishing results in dyeing and other processes, such as my knowledge of the subjects assured me were of vast importance and value. He shewed me contracts, drawn up, but unsigned, with the English and French governments, for important applications of chemistry and physics to military and naval purposes; and contracts, also in the same state, with private manufacturers and companies. I was sometimes at the Bourse, for I found the excitement of a little dabbling in speculation a refreshing change from the seriousness and high-flown nature of my usual pursuits. And here, among the crowd of speculators and great capitalists who talked in eager groups under the pillared portico, or congregated at the cafés in the place, I found my friend was well known, and that he was much sought after by promoters of companies, and much believed in by them.

But how, then, it may be asked, was he poor? The causes were simple, but peculiar. He was almost wholly ignorant of English, and his knowledge of French was very slight: he was no longer young, and had an aversion to learning languages. Having been cheated already in some contracts, his character had acquired an overweening tinge of suspicion, and he would trust neither interpreter nor agent. Moreover, he seemed to care little for money, except as an acknowledgment from others of his power and genius; and he was extremely touchy on small points of treatment. So, somehow, though considerable wealth was within easy grasp for him, he hardly ever completed a bargain, but would draw back at the last moment; and he seemed never to fear that others would discover the same things as himself. He seemed confident that none could follow the same reasonings, that none could attain the same results; he appeared to take a pleasure in tantalising eager speculators; and having an iron constitution and exuberant spirits, he considered that he could delay as he pleased. Perhaps, if any project in his mind was fixed for definite and speedy accomplishment, it was the project of revenge on the government and the savants of France, for real or fancied injustice and insult.

We had been talking one day on that fascinating subject, the artificial production of diamonds. We had discussed the numerous attempts, the supposed successes, and the ultimate undoubted failure of all processes that had yet been tried. I had some ideas of my own on the subject, and on my stating them, the Italian took them up with considerable eagerness and enthusiasm. He met me next day, and immediately recurred to the subject: he had evidently concentrated on it the full force of his marvellous penetration and vast knowledge of nature. He sketched out to me a scheme of experiment, in which, though I recognised the general outline of my own ideas, I was astonished, and powerless to explain how those vague and confused apprehensions had crystallised in his mind into the clear and substantial reality with which he gave them back to me, supported by lucid analogies, and so interwoven with undoubted facts and irresistible logic, that they seemed possessed of all the characteristics of the very strongest scientific probability. He insisted, however, that the ideas were essentially my own, and that it was my proper business to realise them; as to himself, he would willingly aid me with his advice; but, as I knew, he had already enough that was valuable on his hands.

I prepared the necessary materials, and placing them in a dark cupboard, locked and sealed it—for absence of light and freedom from disturbance were necessary elements of the process—time, too, would be required; for, to produce any perfect crystals, a slow process is always inevitable. After a month had passed, the Italian entered my room one morning, and recommended our ascertaining the progress of the experiment. Too agitated myself, I reached him the key of the press. He broke the seals, opened the door, and reaching in his hand, withdrew the glass containing the liquid and transparent mixture. With a triumphant exclamation, he handed it to me: some twenty small transparent crystals were scattered on the bottom. A few simple tests proved them to be diamonds. We replaced the glass and its contents, and again locked and sealed the door. I shall not describe the intoxication of my success; such a feeling is indescribable. That evening, I dined with the Italian and his daughter; she shared the secret with us, and I thought her worship was not now wholly given to her father. We drank to the triumph of knowledge, sang songs, and formed projects for future discoveries together, swore eternal friendship, community of interests, drank to confidence in ourselves, and contempt of all bunglers and the world.

A month later, my friend again proposed to observe the progress of the process. He asked me for the key. I gave it him, and, standing behind, saw him remove the glass from its shelf. He reached it to me, and I found the diamonds twice their former size. Another month passed, and again he proposed an inspection; half instinctively I reached him the key. The diamonds had grown to thrice their first size: they were now of considerable value. There was no need of further proof. The process was perfectly successful.

That night we talked long, discussing the probable consequences of my discovery. The Italian was eloquent as usual, and his eloquence fascinated and convinced me. I determined to act as he advised, and I fully sympathised with the opinions he expressed. We determined to give the discovery to the world, making no restrictions as to its use. This course would yield me a greater reward in

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the fame and high reputation it would bring, than a patent, which, on an article of such uncertain value as the diamond, would be harassing to work and difficult to sell. I had, moreover, enough for my wants, and we looked forward to what discoveries we pleased.

A meeting of the Société X. was to be held in a few days. My position as a member, and my assurance that I would announce a discovery of importance, obtained for me a portion of the time of the Society for that evening, and my name was entered on the programme for a paper 'On the Artificial Production of Precious Stones.' In preparation for the meeting, I devoted myself to preparing my paper. I commenced it with a general review of the most necessary conditions of the production of gems, and from this passed to the discussion of the various attempts to produce diamonds; and so gradually, and with the help of what I remembered of the arguments of the Italian, I passed to the description and justification of the process of which I was to exhibit the successful result. My friend, when the paper was finished, took it with him, and the next morning returned it enlarged and corrected, with numerous notes. After translating these into French, I was even more astonished than before at the clearness and irresistible evidence of his reasoning; and it was without any doubt as to the immediate and unquestioning acceptance of my discovery that I took the completed paper and the diamonds, on the appointed evening, to the meeting of the Society.

The long room was more than usually filled, and several foreign savants were present, besides most of the members of the Society. My paper was third on the list, but all eyes were turned on me as I entered; and it was evident that, from its title and from what I had hinted about it, my communication was to be the event of the evening. The first two papers were read, exciting little remark, and at length I took my place at the table facing the president. He mechanically touched his bell; but there was no occasion to call for silence. I placed the bottle of specimens on the table, and began to read. As the splendid and convincing reasoning that I owed to the Italian was gradually unfolded in the course of the paper, the attention of the Society became still more earnest; and when I shewed the bottle of specimens and concluded, there was perfect silence for some minutes. At length the president rose, and asked if none desired to speak. A second time he asked the question; and then one after another, several of those best acquainted with me, rose and spoke in terms of enthusiastic admiration of my discovery. When they had done, there was still not a word of criticism or doubt. All seemed convinced, or at least to find nothing to object to. The president rose again, and spoke a few words of praise, alluding to the disinterestedness I had shewed, and concluding that all that remained was for some of the other members of the Society to repeat and confirm my results. The meeting was then declared at an end; and I hastily left the room, leaving the specimens on the table, and observing as I left that most of the members appeared too overcome with astonishment to speak.

I gained the street, and made my way to the Boulevards, my brain on fire with excitement; seeking movement and life, the glitter of shops and cafés, the crowded pavements, the brilliant theatres—for thus I might escape from the thoughts and the feelings that, charged with strength and impulse, crushed and confused my mind. As the night wore on, and the lights became fewer, and the pavement solitary, so calmness and quiet entered into my mind, and I found in the solitude of the now hushed streets a charm as strong and as absorbing as I had found in their brilliancy before. I wandered long, and left the Boulevards for the still more silent smaller streets; and as the dawn approached, and the stately towers of churches and the summits of the higher-rising buildings grew black against the more and more transparent sky, I passed instinctively from the newer quarters of the city towards my lodgings in the old Quartier Latin. But I walked without definitely directing my steps, without choosing the shortest or the longest way; and in passing from street to street I seemed only guided in my choice by the curiosity or the whim of the moment. For this reason, it was no doubt less surprising that one of those strange coincidences should now happen to me which occur often in most lives. But through the acquired scepticism of my nature, it did not wear to me the significance that others might have attributed to it. As I traversed the students' quarter, I found myself in the street, and in the shadow on the further side, opposite my Italian friend's address. As I passed, the door silently opened, and two men stepped noiselessly out—two men whose faces and figures I recognised in the light that struck across upon that other side. They were Jewish speculators of the most unscrupulous and sordid type. Secret and cunning in their relations to others, they were yet well known to be frequently engaged in vast speculations, and to have immense capital at command. But whether they acted for themselves alone, or were rather the agents of an association of capitalists, was not clearly known, though the *latter* supposition was most generally accepted. Their faces were wizened and hard, expressing only the cold dryness of avarice. Their dress was usually shabby, and the passion for trinkets and tinsel common in a closely related class of their brethren, in no way shewed itself in them. But on this night, though I recognised their faces, their manner, and their walk, their dress was clearly a disguise, and seemed a rather clever attempt to realise the appearance of ordinary gentlemen. I had not observed the Italian ever speak to these suspiciously regarded characters; but nevertheless his frequent presence at the Bourse, and the character of the house in which he lived, which was not a likely one for other speculators to inhabit, made me at once conclude that the visit of these men had been to him. Had I then believed in the significant nature of striking coincidences, I might have been seriously impressed by my having obtained thus accidentally the apparent evidence of some dark scheme being engaged in by my strange and clear-headed friend. But though much astonished at first, I soon dismissed the occurrence from my mind, supposing it had somehow to do with his many inventions, and never dreaming that it concerned myself.

Tired with my walk and with the violent emotions I had experienced, I slept till late in the morning, and then visited my friend. He had already heard of my success; the papers were full of it, for besides the peculiar importance of the subject, such matters

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attract more of general attention in France, and through the quick intelligence and vivid imagination of the people, produce a more immediate effect than elsewhere.

The Société X. was to meet again in a week; and I passed a part of the time in the company of my friend and his daughter, the one aiding me in the preparation of arguments to meet all objections that might possibly be made at the meeting, the other intoxicating me with the charm of her voice and of her beauty. The rest I passed at my lodgings, polishing and completing my paper for publication in the Transactions of the Society. The time passed quickly, and the day of meeting arrived. Some objections were proposed, but I answered them with evidently favourable effect. Altogether, I was thoroughly successful.

The next morning, as I had given in the paper for publication, I was free from work; and before visiting the Italian, I determined to cross the river to the Bourse, as much for change of scene and occupation, as in the interest of the trifling speculations I had been engaged in, and which, in the absorbing labours of the last week, I had entirely neglected and almost forgotten. So greatly had I been absorbed, that I had even omitted to look at the newspapers; and it was only afterwards that I ascertained how much they had been occupied with my discovery. At the Bourse, I attracted much attention. A speculator whom I had sometimes spoken with, came up to me, and exclaimed: 'Monsieur has then sworn to ruin all the diamond-merchants.' I was overcome with surprise. Singular as it may seem, this view of the question had never occurred to me; while cut off from general intercourse, I had been absorbed in the contemplation of the scientific magnificence of my discovery. I answered accordingly; and the speculator, after hesitating a moment, spoke laughingly of the singularity of *les savants*, and turned from me in evident amusement, and perhaps with some contempt. I questioned my Bourse agent and some other acquaintances, and found that the diamond-market had been steadily falling. I got away as soon as possible, avoiding the questions with which I was importuned by some of those who spoke to me. I told them that the discovery was now in the hands of the Société X., that the full details would be soon published, and that I had no further interest in the matter.

I spoke on the subject of the diamond-market when I found the Italian; but he treated it as of no importance to us, for the necessary consequence of nearly every important practical discovery was at first to injure some special class. He, moreover, recommended me to refrain from all business or study until the next meeting of the Society, which was to take place in a fortnight; for he thought that, now I had done all that was necessary in the diamond matter, I would be the better of a thorough rest, in preparation for the future works we were to undertake together. I thought his advice excellent; and we decided to spend the time together making country excursions, and so providing a fund of health and freshness to draw upon in the future. My friend's daughter of course accompanied us in our rambles, and many a pleasant day we spent beside the upper reaches of the Seine or in the woods of Fontainebleau. At first, the Italian was in splendid spirits; he seemed to enjoy our picnics with all the zest of a boy. He cooked the dinners with wonderful dexterity and most ingenious contrivance. He amused us with conjuring tricks; and had always a ready flow of jokes, quotations, and paradoxical sayings apropos of every incident, pleasant or annoying, of the day. His daughter was charming in her manner, but seemed a little sad and silent. On the whole, the time passed delightfully, and I abandoned myself wholly to its enjoyment, putting off all serious thoughts until the time of meeting of the Society. As this approached, my friend's manner became (I now think) a little more reserved, and I remember observing that he looked at me occasionally with a somewhat peculiar expression. Perhaps his daughter grew a little sadder and more silent towards the end; but this perhaps is only a fanciful creation of my own wounded vanity. What conscious part she played in the whole unscrupulous scheme of my ingenious friend, I am still at a loss to decide; I believe, on the whole, she was neither altogether innocent nor yet altogether guilty.

We usually returned thoroughly tired, and soon after dark. We would separate after a slight supper, and I would return to my rooms and sleep soundly till the morning, in preparation for another similar day. On the day of the meeting of the Society, I went in the morning to the Italian's lodgings: I found he had left with his daughter very early that morning, having packed during the night, and having announced his intention of leaving immediately on receiving a letter late in the evening. He had left no note or message for me, and the people of the house supposed he would have seen me before starting. He had left no address.

I felt surprised that no note or message had been left for me. I went back to my rooms with a vague fear oppressing me, but trusting that some delaying message would still afford an explanation of these strange appearances. I found no message for me yet. I sat and waited in my rooms with the vague fear upon me, that, growing more and more oppressive as the hours dragged slowly on, and increasing with the slow course of each successive minute, rose at length to a stupefying horror, a blackness of desolation and despair, that numbed all thought and sense. I was roused by the darkness of night, the lighting of shops and street-lamps, the buzz of pleasure-seeking students: I started up, and being still in time for it, I hastened to the scientific meeting. I was asked many questions that I felt powerless to answer; I understood confusedly that no shadow of a result had been obtained from the experiments, that other investigations had shewn the improbability of the results I had announced. I was half-conscious of innuendoes imputing fraud and impudent deception. I alleged illness, which my appearance fully bore out. I mechanically promised to justify myself at the next meeting. I was allowed to escape from the room. I walked hurriedly home; I wrenched open the cupboard where I had solutions in process of digestion, which I had placed there with the confident expectation of such results as I might wish. No traces of diamonds appeared in them! I dashed the glasses madly on the floor: then I fell into a state of stupefaction, slept at length on the sofa where I had thrown myself, and awoke late the next morning.

I felt calmer and more collected. The violence

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of my emotions had produced a crisis and a reaction. I felt the necessity of cool reflection, and of immediately deciding on my course. I concealed the broken glass; I dressed slowly and carefully, removing as far as possible the traces of disorder in my appearance. I went out to a café, ate a substantial breakfast, and then examined the newspapers while smoking the best cigar I could obtain. I found the announcement, that for some days it had been suspected by the diamond-dealers that the late depreciation in the value of diamonds had been insufficiently justified by the recent discovery announced by a member of a distinguished scientific Society; that it was supposed this opinion was owing to private information from certain distinguished savants; that it had been discovered that vast quantities of diamonds had been bought at their depreciated value by a company of unscrupulous and ingenious speculators, to which several well-known frequenters of the Bourse were suspected to belong, but as to the *personnel* of which, nothing was yet certainly known; that certain information received late on the previous evening had confirmed all previous suspicions that a deep and ingenious financial plot had been successfully executed, and by such intricate and ingeniously planned machinations, that it was improbable any judicial proofs of conspiracy or fraud could be obtained; that a member of the scientific world was seriously implicated, but appeared to have been imposed upon by others; and that further particulars of more definite character would probably be obtained before the next impression.

I saw it all. The Italian had avenged his real or fancied slights and injuries—on the savants by imposing on them—on the government, through the Society it had constituted, and more directly by executing a vast fraud upon the community, which it was impotent to punish or prevent. He had snapped his fingers at both. My position in the scientific world had made me the tool he required; and the means he had used were, to some extent, now easy to understand. He knew enough of the Bourse, and was known enough therein, to find speculators able and willing to take part in such an enterprise. He had enough knowledge of conjuring to introduce the diamonds at our inspections of the solution. He had enough charm and fascination at his command to quiet all suspicions of mine, and to direct my occupations as best suited his scheme.

But one thing I could never explain—the marvellous plausibility of the man. I have since mistrusted all relevant hypotheses, all clearly self-evident theories. I have always shuddered when I hear of theories of which the several parts support each other like the stones of an arch, and are so consistent in themselves, and so supported by analogy, that they cannot but be true. All men of science mistrust such theories now—look on them as useful in their place, but separated by a wide gulf from certainty and truth. At the time of my story, it was very different; and those who know of the theories then readily accepted, will understand that much that could never happen now might have easily happened then.

I started immediately for Switzerland. I changed my name, and have wandered in many countries since. I never saw or heard of the Italian again. He had sometimes spoken to me of America, during the first part of our acquaintance, as the proper field for his inventions. These inventions were undoubtedly genuine, and the man had an astonishing genius: he may have gone to America, and prospered there. His daughter I have seen at Wiesbaden, playing an apparently elaborate system at the roulette table.

AMERICA'S NEW HIGHWAY.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

'YES; the Pacific Railroad is open through to New York,' were the welcome words which greeted our eager inquiries on our arrival at San Francisco in August last. Before leaving Sydney, intelligence had been received to the effect that two hundred miles of railroad remained to be completed. Under the faith of the probable completion of this link before our arrival on the American coast, we had left Australia as pioneers of a new route from the colonies to England. Besides the novelty of the journey, there were certain substantial advantages connected with it which were not to be despised. The chief of these was the avoidance of the horrors of a mid-winter passage round Cape Horn: the desperate cold, and the short days, and dismal, weary nights, which have been so often described. We had a quick passage of sixty days to San Francisco, from whence the transit to England of about twenty days or so would, for those of us whom the attractions of *home* rendered sternly proof against the counter-attractions of a short tour through the States, complete the journey to England in about eighty days. San Francisco, or 'Friscoe,' as it is endearingly termed by its inhabitants, is, as seen from the water, decidedly disappointing. The Bay, it is true, is magnificent—the broad expanse of water stretching out full seven miles to the Golden Gate, as the entrance is termed, reminding us a little of Sydney harbour. But then the aridity of the situation of the city is quite distressing to the eye of any one coming from a sea-voyage, who naturally looks for trees, and grass, and herbage. The sand-hills are worse than our Sydney sand-hills, and are not compensated by surrounding vegetation, except where small, carefully watered patches of green mark the outside carpet of some villa. Moreover, a chilly white fog hangs over the scene, spoiling everything, and making us long for our bright southern sky. Then the arrangements for landing are very behindhand. We found no conveyance of any kind for ourselves, though we soon got an express for our baggage. Fairly arrived, however, in the city, we found the streets well laid out, with fine large buildings and stores on either hand. The presence of well-appointed street-cars gives to these the twang of Americanism which is otherwise not very apparent. When we got to our hotel, we discovered sure proofs of the wealth of California; in truth, the hotels in San Francisco are luxurious and magnificent beyond expectation. The *Cosmopolitan*, at which I staid, surpasses any hotel with which I am acquainted in any part either of Europe or America. In the matter of the table, California possesses great natural advantages over the Eastern States. Vegetables and fruit arrive at greater perfection along the Pacific coast of America than, perhaps, in any other part of the world. There is a much better supply of fresh fish than along the Atlantic coast; while a more

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temperate climate allows that hanging and keeping of meat, the absence of which contributes in no small measure to the toughness of beefsteaks. We were all in a condition to appreciate these good things, coming as we did from a long sea-voyage. We did enjoy those juicy melons, and the fresh fish, and the little *recherché* dishes, and the fancy breads. But let us get up from the dinner-table. Going below, we try to pick up some information about the great Pacific Railroad. The walls of the newsroom are papered with any quantity of those peculiarly American railroad advertisements (not railway, as that Britisher by my side suggests; here, in America, it is rail*road*, if you please), which are constituted as though it were the object of their publishers to give the least possible information in the largest possible variety of print, and colour, and form. Of course the groundwork of all these is 'Atlantic and Pacific,' 'from Ocean to Ocean,' or words of like effect; but any one who expects to gain any useful information from such puffs is sure to be disappointed. But is not there an American *Bradshaw* to be bought? Well, there is an *Appleton's Railroad Guide*, which *professes* to do the same thing for one here that *Bradshaw* does in England. It is, however, full of inaccuracies, and is so little used, that I was unable to procure a copy of it in San Francisco. Alas, good *Bradshaw*, we don't know how precious you are till we travel to where you are not! I have often called you hard names. I have called you absurd, and confused. If I live to turn over your pages again, I will do so no longer.

But what is really to be found out from these advertisements? I find that there is an 'Erie Railway' (it was called railway because it is an English institution, I believe), and a 'Lake Shore Line,' and a 'Michigan Central,' and a 'Rock Island,' and a 'Chicago and North-western,' and a whole host of others too numerous to mention. The Erie Railway carries you on the 'broad gauge,' and the 'Pennsylvania Central' promises to do all sort of things for you. 'Silver palace sleeping-cars' accompany all sorts of trains, and 'lightning expresses' carry you all over the country: and wherever we go, it is apparently 'without change of cars;' we read all this in red ink, and blue ink, and black ink, and are directed to ask for tickets by the various routes indicated; but not one word is said about the times of starting, or the cost of our tickets, or, in fact, about anything which a real traveller wants to know. We have barely recovered from the fit of despair which was the result of our investigations, and are consoling ourselves with the hope that we might find out these things some day if we live long enough, when a gentleman comes up, and enters into conversation with us. His manners are agreeable; and, seeing we are Englishmen, he makes polite inquiries as to our probable journey to Europe. We eagerly clutch at the opportunity this offers for the discovery of the information we are in search of. It soon transpires that our informant is a ticket-agent, one of those gentlemen whose business it is to be about the hotels, and collect the waifs and strays of the travelling public. He not only offers to book us through to England, but to any other part of Europe as well. He can give us a ticket to St Petersburg. He can book us all round the world —to China, by way of England and the Red Sea, and back to San Francisco by the Pacific steamers. But, great and wonderful as these proposals are, they are even outdone by the generosity our friend shews in their negotiation. 'Yes, sir,' he says to one who hesitates, 'I'll book you through to Europe; and, if you ain't through in sixteen days, I'll return you the money.' Who can complain at such an offer? Some of us shake our heads, and we call to mind a certain passage across the North Atlantic which took seventeen days by itself, and then we suggest that there might be some little difficulty about the return of the money *after* seven thousand miles of sea and land had been placed between us and our friend, if the travel *had* been effected at a less rapid rate than sixteen days. The ticket-agent takes it all very good-humouredly, only he won't admit his exaggeration; he puts on a sort of thoughtful expression, and quietly remarks: 'No, but it 's a fact.'

Well, there was nothing to be gained by stopping to dispute this *fact*, so we came to practical business, and some of us booked ourselves through under our friend's auspices. The main line of travel from San Francisco to the eastern seaboard passes through Chicago. The fare through to New York is 112·50 dollars in gold, or a little over twenty-three pounds of our money. The distance is something less than 3300 miles. The time of transit is eight days. Of the 3300 miles, the first hundred or so were, at the time of my crossing the continent, performed by steamer up the Sacramento River to Sacramento City. At the present time, however, this portion of the journey is performed by rail from Oaklands, a point opposite San Francisco. From Sacramento to Omaha City, on the Missouri River, is a distance of 1774 miles. The line between these points was made, and is owned by two distinct companies. The Central Pacific Company possess the western portion, which consists of six hundred and ninety miles; the remainder, or eastern portion, belongs to the Union Pacific Company. The point of junction of the two lines is a place called Promontory, situated near the Great Salt Lake of Utah. The two companies, besides being allotted alternate sections of land along their lines of route, were highly subsidised by the United States' government. It is stated that something like ten million pounds of our money was paid away to them in bounties. The Central Pacific worked from the west towards the east, while the Union Pacific worked from east to west. Promontory was the point at which the lines happened to meet. By far the more difficult portion of the work was that which was performed by the Central Pacific. They had to ascend the sierras of California, while they worked under the pecuniary disadvantage of having to bring their materials round by sea, or across the Isthmus from the Eastern States. The greater part of the Central Pacific Railway route was made, I am informed, by Chinese labour. The quiet and orderly conduct of these much-abused Asiatics formed a striking contrast to that of the superior race working on the Union Pacific. Among these latter, indeed, there was not only lawlessness and every species of ruffianism, but even murder; while such a crime as this last was, I am told, unknown on the Chinese section.

As the railroad progressed, temporary settlements or towns were run up at its temporary terminus. 'As this was changed every thirty or forty days,'

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says an American writer,* 'these settlements were of the most perishable materials—canvas tents, plain board shanties, and turf hovels—pulled down, and sent forward for a new career, or deserted as worthless at every grand movement of the railroad company. Only a small proportion of their population had aught to do with the road, or any legitimate occupation. Most were the hangers-on around the disbursements of such a gigantic work, catching the drippings from the feast in any and every form that it was possible to reach them. Restaurant and saloon keepers, gamblers, desperadoes of every grade, the vilest of men and of women made up this "hell on wheels," as it was most aptly termed.' The same graphic writer goes on to describe, in terms which one would fain hope exaggerated, that settlement which he himself visited, as being the then westernmost point of the Union Pacific line. 'One to two thousand men, and a dozen or two women, were encamped on the alkali plain, in tents and board shanties; not a tree, not a shrub, not a blade of grass was visible; the dust ankle-deep as we walked through it, and so fine and volatile, that the slightest breeze loaded the air with it, irritating every sense, and poisoning half of them; a village of a few variety stores and shops, and many restaurants and grog-shops; by day disgusting, by night dangerous; almost everybody dirty, many filthy, and with the marks of lowest vice, averaging a murder a day, gambling and drinking, hurdy-gurdy dancing, and the vilest of debauchery the chief business and pastime of the hours.'

Leaving San Francisco in the afternoon, in the beginning of September last, I proceed by steamer by the Sacramento River. There is not much of interest to be seen on this trip. For forty miles or so, the river is a broad estuary, then it contracts, and the banks on either hand shew a treeless, arid, uninteresting-looking country, such as one would expect to see where no rain had fallen since the month of March. At 6.30 the next morning the cars left Sacramento, and, having secured a berth in a sleeping-car, I felt well prepared for the long hours of railway travelling which lay before me. Not that I was going through the three thousand miles without stopping—that was not at all my intention. The chance of visiting Salt Lake City, and seeing something of the Mormons, was far too attractive to me to be thrown away. And, accordingly, I was bound for New Jerusalem. It is one of the advantages of American railway law that a through ticket enables you to stop at any station you choose on the line of route, and go on again when you please, without any forfeiture of your ticket. As to sleeping-cars, they are a grand institution, a real comfort, and in fact almost a necessity in these long railway journeys. For the payment of a few dollars, you secure a berth which is laid out with clean sheets; and you can, if you please, undress yourself, and, if you are of a sufficiently imaginative turn of mind, and the motion of the cars is not too great, fancy yourself to be arrived at your journey's end, and established in your hotel. As to sleeping, if you are at all of a sleeping disposition, you will certainly be able to do that; and if not, you will get a good rest, and a stretch of your limbs. Next morning, when you get up, you will find your boots blacked, have a wash and brush, and feel reinvigorated for the next day's travel. This arrangement, added to the facility of moving about, and changing place and position in the cars, really makes American railroad travelling far less wearisome than English. Our train started with two sleeping-cars, nine day-cars, and two baggage-cars, and was drawn by a couple of engines. There were, as far as I could count them, about seventy through passengers, and many way passengers, among whom were some Chinamen. In San Francisco, I was told that about fifty odd passengers went through to the east daily; but I cannot vouch for the accuracy of this statement.

In an hour's time we got to Roseville Junction, so named after a certain fair one, who was either false or true, as the case might be, to her railroad admirer. I heard the story, but forget it. A story hangs by many of the names given to stations along the line of route; and it was only to be expected that the 'master passion' should supply one of them. At Roseville the line from Oaklands comes in. Here we waited a quarter of an hour or so for breakfast. The meals along the road are generally well arranged, and the fare good. The train, as a rule, delays three times a day for meals, giving twenty minutes for each. As it pulls up at the platform, you hear the welcome sound of the dinner-bell going, and you sit down to your food, and begin to eat without further ceremony. The cost of each meal is six *bits*, or three shillings, in California and Nevada; while in the regions of paper currency it is a dollar and a quarter. The fare decidedly deteriorates as you go east. The line was dusty and disagreeable during the first portion of it; but we were fast ascending. Soon we got to the region of pine trees, and then to a gold-mining district. Here was the Chinaman (the 'everlasting' Chinaman, as he threatens to be called, after his 'nigger' predecessor), taking in washing, or gold-mining, as the case might be. There seemed to be a great dearth of water, for the *races* were all dry. Some magnificent views were opened up in the sierras; and there was an ever-varying scene as we went swinging about, running right up the gullies, then doubling round, and coming almost straight back again on the other side of the gorges. We passed miles of snow-shedding—strong wooden-work framed to prevent the snow from coming down upon the line and overwhelming it. These sheds have not been, as yet, tried against the snow; but they have found another and an unexpected enemy, which bids fair, as yet, entirely to get the better of them. The heat of the sun dries the wood-work, until it falls an easy prey to the sparks from the engine, which catch on it as on tinder. Whole miles of shedding have been thus destroyed by fire, and some of these fires have been so extensive as to necessitate an entire suspension of the traffic over the blistered rails for days together. Such a fire had occurred a week previously, and we passed the charred remains of the sheds. At about 1 P.M., we were on the summit of the sierras, being a little over seven thousand feet above the sea-level, and a hundred and five miles from Sacramento. Soon afterwards we passed Truckee, a small town made by the railroad, being the chief lumber and wood station of the Central Pacific, and possessing certain attractions in the form of some bold and picturesque lakes near by, at which there are hotels which are frequented by the tourists of

* *Our New West.* By Samuel Bowles.

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California and Nevada. Eastward of this point, the scenery gradually becomes tame, and the Central Pacific pursues the remainder of its way over a table-land at levels never descending much below four thousand, or ascending above six thousand feet above the sea-level. Reno is the next important stopping-place, being the point of departure of stages for Virginia City, the centre of a large and important mining district in the state of Nevada. The country hereabouts is desert and dreary in the extreme. There is absolutely no vegetation, and the dust is very disagreeable, whilst the monotony of the parched plain is only partially relieved by the line of mountains in the distance.

Next morning, being the second day of the railroad journey, I found that we had run as near as possible four hundred miles in the twenty-four hours. Slow as this pace is, it must be remembered that a considerable portion of this distance was up steeply ascending gradients and round sharp curves; though, to say truth, when on the level plains, we did not go much more than seventeen miles an hour, including stoppages. I now began to make inquiries as to the stations from whence the stages run up to Salt Lake City. I found it very hard to get any information. Those passengers whom I questioned were not *posted* in the route; while the conductor of the train either did not know, or did not choose to tell me, and anyhow did not deign to listen to my inquiries. At last I found two Englishmen going up to Salt Lake City, and they informed me that Uintah was the station. It was a new station, and not even marked upon the only time-tables published in California. We were now following up the course of Humboldt River, a small sluggish stream with some vegetation, and patches of cultivated and pasture land in its valley. The only station of importance we passed through that day was Elko, the point of departure for the celebrated 'White Pine' mining district. It is like all the other places along the railroad. A new set-up town, consisting of a few rows of wooden shanties, many of which have canvas roofs stretched over them, and some fragile-looking tents, standing treeless and naked on the desert, it presents about as uncomfortable and cheerless an appearance as it would be possible to conceive. Still one cannot help feeling that these towns, or villages, or whatever you like to call them, are monuments of Yankee enterprise, and the only wonder is that they should have sprung up where and in the time they have. At 10 P.M. we arrived at Promontory, having travelled over the six hundred and ninety miles in a little less than forty hours —that is, at a rate of between seventeen and eighteen miles an hour, inclusive of stoppages. Here we had to wait for a few hours until the arrival of the Union Pacific train, and were, in addition to this, detained after the arrival of that train, while the whole of the baggage was transferred from one car to another. We had ourselves, moreover, to change cars. These very unnecessary and provoking proceedings are, I believe, the result of a jealousy between the two companies, and are about as absurd and unwarrantable an interference with the comfort of passengers as can well be conceived. The result of it all was that four hours were wasted, and we did not get away from Promontory till three o'clock in the morning.

Promontory is the remains and essence of those 'hells upon wheels' of which mention has been made. Some half-dozen bonfires were burning in the street, and these served to throw light upon the proceedings of certain card-sharpers and gamblers behind them. Each of the former had his table in front of him, around which were congregated about as villainous and blackguard looking a set of men as one may hope to meet with in any single locality. Here one of our passengers was green enough to allow himself to be sharped out of one hundred dollars—all the money he had upon him. It appears that a confederate of one of the gamesters was travelling on the cars, and there made friends with the passenger in question, until he induced his wretched dupe to stake his money upon his arrival. According to the account given to me, neither law nor order prevails at Promontory. I was told by persons who knew the place, that even life was not safe there from the hands of plunderers. So great was the terror entertained, that one gentleman, who asserted that his fear was grounded upon his knowledge of the place, refused to go unaccompanied from one train of cars to the other.

A LIMITED HORIZON.

IN FIFTEEN CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER V.—POOR TOM MITCHELL.

So the days passed on; spent by Lalagé chiefly out of doors, discovering new wonders and beauties on those wonderfully beautiful Cotswold Hills. Description of them is useless; word-painting is generally stereotyped, cold, and formal; but the old magical glimmer and glamour comes shining out before the eyes of the writer of these pages at the bare memory of that well-remembered loveliness.

Grimswold was formerly famous for its manufactures—cloth-mills, pin-mills, cotton-mills, mills of all sorts abounded there, chiefly on account of the immense water-power ready to the hand of any one who chose to make use of it; for the whole place abounds in brooks, springs, freshets, rivulets; walk in any direction you will, the sound of trickling and gurgling is seldom out of your ears. Sometimes, after rainy weather, you even come upon a brawling brook, flinging itself headlong round the very middle of a lane, and have to pick your steps as best you may; or, strolling along in the sweet summer stillness, you hear a continuous drip, drip, and wonder whence the sound comes, till a sudden dip in the land brings matters to a crisis, and a tiny waterfall shews you that you have been walking on with a small brook at your side, hidden by the grass and weeds at the foot of the hedge. Then the old channels which men made to turn aside the wasting water, and bring it into use, are in themselves pretty and picturesque. One could sit for hours, watching it foam, and fret, and dash over those flights of broad, winding stone steps, which must have been cut out so long ago, and which afford endless new combinations of cascade and waterfall.

Then the Flora of Gloucestershire is especially interesting; few other counties yield in such abundance such choice wild-flowers. Snowdrops, blue-bells, orchids, foxgloves, lilies of the valley, honeysuckle, all in their due season, with rare

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ferns, come with splendid extravagance to this richly vegetated county. Rich, too, in other ways: those bald places on the sides of the hills, which throw up in bolder relief the numerous woods and fruitful fields, have a tale of their own to tell. The Cotswold stone quarries must be mines of wealth to their owners, and these quarries are yearly on the increase.

Altogether, it is a rich, fragrant, healthful land, and to the town-bred eyes of Lalagé Hesketh it seemed the realisation of an ideal dream of beauty. She wandered through it with full content, now and then startled by the monotonous voice of the fearless cuckoo close by her side, or making herself giddy by watching the aspirations of a lark. She was drinking long draughts of beauty, and deemed that her fervid thirst for it would never be slaked. Did she forget that even Paradise could not wholly content Eve? In the after-time, when it all seemed to mock her in her pain, mock her with its nearness and yet distance, she wondered at the old self which had found no sting in it. But there *was* no sting yet, and her happy, thoughtless feet guided her whithersoever she would.

Belle was not so ambitious; she had become accustomed to the uphills and downhills of Grimswold, and was contentedly driven out every afternoon, being occupied with her books all the morning.

About a fortnight of this placid life passed, varied now and then by short, perturbed visits from the big curate, who seemed to find some difficulty in arranging Lalagé's class. At last, he 'hoped to have the pleasure of seeing her next Sunday at the schoolroom,' as he told her in a small cramped hand, on a big sheet of paper; and Lalagé went.

She found herself, at ten o'clock on Sunday morning, standing before the door of the National Schoolroom—given up to the clergyman on Sundays—hesitating, in a sweet unusual shyness, as to whether she should go in or not. Her embarrassment was soon relieved by the big curate, whose foolish heart beat quicker as he came up to her.

'You are in capital time, Miss Hesketh,' he said; 'won't you come in at once?'

He opened the door, and—mercifully, as Lalagé thought, confusedly, as he knew—went in first. She found herself in a large room full of children; there were likewise six Misses Verey, four Misses Farmer, and the National schoolmaster: these were the teachers. Every eye was of course turned upon her as she entered in the wake of the curate, whom she followed nervously as he shook hands with the ladies; but the proceedings at church had led her to expect that. She had hoped to have taken her place by one of the Vereys; but they looked utterly repelling, and the one she liked best—the one with a face like a horse, Hester—was absent; so she drifted into a corner of the room, and stood gratefully by the National schoolmaster, who made way for her. Then came prayers; and after that the curate went up to her and begged her to go up-stairs—the baby classes were always taught there. She followed him, and was glad to find that only one class besides her own was held in this room, and that was taught by the grocer's daughter.

Eight little girls were given her; and when the curate was fairly gone, she felt quite at ease again. Her love for children made teaching them no hard task, and their open-mouthed admiration wrought in her favour. Only one, the youngest and most shy, burst into a terrified roar; but Lalagé took her up, and making a soft nest for her on her lap, soon won her to silence.

On the whole, she got on very well: it was not difficult to teach to these pure little baby hearts the great truths which she herself loved so well; but she could not keep their attention fixed for long, so they had a talk about their homes and mothers; it was then that the restless curate strode in again, and saw the prettiest picture but one that had ever blessed his eyes. But Lalagé, in her unconscious innocence, looked up in his face, and asked: 'Is it time to go?' as though she were any ordinary mortal.

He only said: 'Very nearly;' and how could she tell that, when one of the children stretched out a hand to stroke her dress as she rose, that big man would have given much to stoop down and do the same? Of all this, she knew nothing; and as the two, one with a heart looking up, and the other with thoughts bending down, walked together to church, they were silent from different reasons.

And yet the curate was blameless as far as his love for his work and his earnest perseverance in it were concerned. Even then he tried hard to draw his thoughts from Lalagé—this man, whose soul, mind, and heart were all of unequal heights, so to speak, and did not exactly work together; for the first stretched out to the heavens, and threw itself earnestly and gladly into its Master's work; but his mind was lightly led away by the fair things of the world, and that easily involved heart had more than once drawn him into scrapes which seemed incongruous in a man of his practical religion.

He was sorry, very sorry to feel himself once more slipping into the old pitfall which had so often ensnared him; he even prayed that he might be spared this time, for he knew well how the giddiness, the bliss, the dizziness, the joy, the despair, would make his foolish head swim, and his unwise heart throb, just when the one should be steady and the other calm; how the actual work, the daily duties would go on just the same, but with a little inner lack known only to himself.

That this new fatality should have a happy, conclusive ending—an ending that should be as iron bars and bolts to the wandering heart—he only dared to hope in his most sanguine and ambitious moments. To all the symptoms he was well accustomed; but any such ending had always been very, very far from him. Why should he be more lucky this time? he thought on that Sunday evening, sitting alone in his lodgings. He was a poor man, a very poor man, rising early, and going to bed late; working hard from week's end to week's end for one hundred and fifty pounds a year; and out of that—living being cheap at Grimswold—a yearly pension of sixty pounds was paid to his widowed mother. The big curate groaned, not from discontent, but just from acknowledging the fact that he must leave all his ailments to work themselves off.

How could Lalagé stoop to such a life as his? How could he ask her to do so? And even if he asked, and she consented—he had not hitherto found himself utterly distasteful to ladies—how could he reasonably expect Mr Hesketh to give his consent to such an alliance? No, it would never

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do; he must keep his feelings to himself; and then he got up and shook himself, hoping much from Time, which had so often worked wonderful cures for him; Experience forgot to tell him that any such reticence as he was planning was impossible; and he walked out a little comforted, and spent the last hours of that busy Sunday reading and praying with a sick man.

Belle and Lalagé returned the Vereys' call, but, to their relief, they were not admitted; the servant told them 'Missis and the young ladies were very busy;' so they went home rejoicing in that easily fulfilled duty. The two families had evidently not 'taken to each other,' as people say; so, a few days after Lalagé's first essay at the Sunday school, the sisters were much surprised by receiving a note from Mrs Verey, requesting the pleasure of their company the next evening; they would be quite alone, the note said.

'I won't go to that wicked woman's house,' said Lalagé; 'besides, we must refuse, for in his last letter papa said he would try and run down to-morrow afternoon.'

'Suppose we ask them to come here instead?' said Belle. 'It would be very civil, and might possibly prevent their substituting another evening.'

'Then you mustn't ask the wicked woman herself.'

'Very well,' said Belle; and she wrote her note, saying they hoped to have the pleasure of seeing all the young ladies.

'What a dreadful, horrible evening it will be!' said Lalagé. 'O dear, what shall we do?'

'We can ask Gertrude and Captain Cleather to come too,' said Belle; 'that will make it a little better.'

'Ah, yes,' said Lalagé; 'but suppose they decline? Belle, don't you think Captain Cleather is rather—peculiar?' The defiant look she had seen in Gertrude's eyes suddenly flashed before her, and forbade her using a stronger word.

'No; I don't see it,' said Belle: 'he has rather a quick manner—is that what you mean?'

'Oh, I don't know,' said Lalagé, and went out to gather a sweet white rose that was bending its gigantic cup till it peeped in at the window.

The Vereys accepted; as Lalagé told her father with a groan as they sat down to dinner next day.

'But Gertrude is coming too,' she added, 'so perhaps it won't be so very bad; but, papa, they are terrible people.'

'I should think so,' said Mr Hesketh. 'By Jove! none but terrible people could make up their minds to live in such a place; hang me if the streets were not utterly empty as I came along!'

'An old woman told me the other day she remembered the time when the streets were so crowded at night with people coming from the mills, that one could hardly get along: there used to be lots of mills here, papa.'

'Much good they do now,' grumbled Mr Hesketh.

In due time their visitors arrived, and the heavy work of entertaining began; it was easier for Lalagé than for Belle, for she found that the Misses Verey knew all about every child in the school, and could tell her many interesting facts concerning the members of her class. It was in the midst of a flood of anecdote—for, oddly enough, if one of these young ladies spoke, the others invariably joined in—that a knock was heard.

'That 's Gertrude,' said Lalagé, springing up to open the door for her friend. But when she had done so, the big curate, not Mrs Cleather, stood before her astonished eyes.

'I have brought you a note from poor Mrs Cleather,' he said, with his fascinated eyes fixed on her face; this unexpected meeting was almost too much for him.

'Poor Mrs Cleather!' echoed Lalagé; 'what is the matter? is Gertrude ill?'

'I have made a great mistake,' said the bewildered curate; 'I have almost betrayed confidence; pray forget what I said; Mrs Cleather's trouble is no outward one.'

Lalagé looked pained.

'It is a very peculiar case,' he went on, 'and I could not help knowing it, or she would never have told me. And I am trying to help her,' he added humbly.

'I am sure you are,' said Lalagé looking up in the kind brown face. 'But do come in and see papa! he came down this afternoon;' and she opened the drawing-room door.

Then she went to the dining-room to find her father, and took the opportunity of reading her note.

'Dear Lalagé,' it ran, 'I find it quite impossible to spend the evening with you; my babies must be my excuse. Pray, ask Belle to pardon my shortcomings, and let me see you for a few minutes to-morrow morning—Sincerely yours,

G. Cleather.'

Lalagé re-folded her note, and returned to the drawing-room; there, to her surprise, she found her father in animated discussion with the curate, whom he afterwards declared to be 'a nice genial fellow after all, and a university man, though he doesn't look like it.

'You must find it confoundedly dull here, though,' said Mr Hesketh.

'Well, I do sometimes,' said the curate, who now felt as if his whole life previous to meeting Lalagé must have been a blank.

'Well, you must come in and see my daughters now and then,' said the imprudent man; thinking in his own mind that such a hard-working fellow should meet with some encouragement.

The evening was not so bad as had been expected. Lalagé took her visitors out on the lawn, and taught them croquet, of which the Misses Verey had never even heard, and which the curate had seldom played; indeed he was so awkward that she even had to put the mallet in his big unskilful hands, thus causing an instant accession of that dizziness which made him so hopelessly incapable. When the strange, imperfect game was over, she took them back to the house, where Mr Hesketh and Belle were reading, and sang song after song whilst the summer darkness dropped slowly down outside.

Ah, that voice—the sweetest, the dearest I ever knew, soft and clear, though never strong, touching alike the hearts of old and young! Yet it was rather talking to music than singing, for each clearly uttered word had its due weight, and its own appealing sweetness.

Mr Hesketh laid down his paper, and thought of Lalagé's mother; Belle, with her sober thirty-five years graciously enfolding her, thought of the nearer heaven and the half-done journey; the Misses Verey thought Lalagé the prettiest, sweetest

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thing they had ever seen, though they must not say so to mamma; but the curate—the curate knew not what he thought, sitting by her in a mist of delirious fancies, a sea of intoxicating delight.

But when Mrs Verey heard of all that had taken place—'So the curate was there,' she said: 'I will take care that none of you spend the evening there again without me; I believe him to be a man quite capable of breaking any girl's heart.'

CHAPTER VI.—GERTRUDE CLEATHER GOES TO THE SEA-SIDE.

The next morning, as Lalagé stood at her window ready dressed for breakfast, she saw, to her surprise, a little pony-carriage being furiously driven down the hill just in front of the house. It rocked to and fro in an alarming manner, but the driver lashed the horse unsparingly, so that the fearful pace was not likely to diminish. She was fascinated with terror, and watched it as it grew nearer and nearer; then a sudden turn hid it from her, but not before she had caught sight of Captain Cleather's inflamed countenance and Gertrude's white face. But how could it be Gertrude? argued Lalagé; it was so early—hardly nine o'clock—and from the state of the pony it was evident they had been some distance. And would Gertrude have allowed her husband to be so very, very cruel? she thought, with a glow of indignation as she remembered the distressed state of the poor animal. And yet she knew that it could be none other than Gertrude.

Still, when she went down-stairs, she said nothing about it, thinking it best to be quite sure first. After breakfast, she went to the King's House; the door was opened for her by Gertrude herself, her calm face placid as ever.

'I am so glad to see you, Lalagé,' she said, 'though I must not ask you to stay for more than a few minutes. We are in a state of great confusion, for we are going off to the sea at once; my husband thinks we all need a change.'

'Going to the sea!' cried Lalagé blankly.

'Yes,' said Gertrude; 'and I want to know if you would be kind enough to look after my district-people for me in my absence; I have neglected them shamefully, lately, but what can I do when there are three little children at home always wanting me?'

'Of course not, dear,' said Lalagé, rather incoherently. 'I promise to do my best, but you must not expect much from me, for all that sort of work is new to me, you know.'

'Mr Mitchell will tell you which houses I have taken; and I have one more thing to ask you, will you make a point of thanking him for me for all his kindness last night? He helped us so much in making our arrangements; and after all, I let him go in a very cavalier way, with a note for you.'

'Yes, I will,' said Lalagé. 'I wish I could help you in a more substantial way.—O Gertrude,' she added, as she turned to leave the room, 'I had such a fright early this morning; I fancied I saw you and Captain Cleather out driving in a very reckless way. Could it have been you?'

In a moment, she felt that she had been almost cruel, such pain came into Gertrude's face, but the old defiant look slowly grew into her eyes.

'A very strange fancy,' she said. 'Do you think a sober married woman like myself has time for early drives? Besides, if you thought Captain Cleather was with me, how could you have been frightened?'

'Forgive me,' said Lalagé humbly; 'I am so stupid.—May we have little Dinner Bell this morning? We will take great care of her, and she will be out of your way.'

'Thank you,' said Gertrude; 'it would be a great relief;' and Lalagé afterwards remembered that she herself went out to get the child ready, instead of ringing for the nurse.

'Dinner Bell'—so called by herself when professedly unable to pronounce her rightful name, Isabel—was very glad to go, and made herself quite at home in the Hesketh' drawing-room. After some baby talk, got up for her benefit by the two sisters, she suddenly branched off, very irrelevantly, into home topics.

'Papa was so wexed last night,' said Dinner Bell, placidly smoothing down her pinafore—'he was *so* wexed, he said "Too bad," and sent all the servants away home. Two came from Sumset, and one came from London, and one came from Chelpenham; and they all had to go in the train in the dark; and Mary cwied, and said she was afwaid; and old nurse cwied, and kissed mamma's hand with the ring on.'

'But you must not tell us about that,' said Lalagé, looking at Belle in dismay; she hardly knew how to convey a warning of which mamma would not eventually hear. Dinner Bell was undaunted.

'And Mr Mitsell came,' she went on, 'and got all the trains ready for them, and said there wasn't time for me and Boy to get on his back, but we should have two rides next time. And he sent a big girl, with a little fat nose; but she is so stoopid, so stoopid,' said Dinner Bell, raising her two hands; 'she did put on Boy's pinafore with the strings in front, and he said: "'Found it!" and mamma said it was very wicked; poor papa only said it when he was ill; but I think'—with a solemn little nod—'he is ill 'most always.'

To stop this flood of undesired knowledge, Lalagé took the child up in her arms, and went out into the garden; but the recent events had evidently made a great impression on Dinner Bell's mind, and on her way she told her friend that papa was cooking the dinner down in the kitchen, with cook's big apron on.

The sisters were inexpressibly shocked and grieved by these revelations, but in mute respect to Gertrude the subject was not discussed between them.

After luncheon, Mrs Cleather came for the child, and bade Belle and Lalagé good-bye; she knew it was quite possible she might never return to Grimswold, but she could not trust herself to say anything of the sort to her friends; so she went out from among them in her self-contained calmness, bearing her own burden. Only she, of all the world, knew how her lot had fallen; only she, like that wearied dove of old, knew how wide had been her wanderings—how she had rarely found rest for the sole of her foot for any length of time—how she was once more about to flutter forth into the wide world, with drooping feathers and a fearful heart. Only she knew that death alone could bring her peace—that life had grown to be a terror and a misery.

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One man had come to her in her trouble, and helped her as far as man could help; but the cause of that trouble he had only guessed at—and guessed wrongly; for Captain Cleather loved his wife with all his heart and strength, and Tom Mitchell had put him down as a brutal husband. He had been very good to her, this unwise curate, who, for all his foolishness, knew how to comfort the sorrowful and succour the needy; and if he did not believe in the often repeated 'It is not his fault,' which rose from Gertrude's lips, few men in his place would have done so.

And so Gertrude wandered out, with the love of her youth—the only love of her life—now grown to be a restless, miserable man, and, as she painfully knew, with failing funds and increasing troubles; a woman who bore the cross in her bleeding heart, and who was daily tasting the bitter waters of martyrdom.

The next two months were to her just what she had expected; they wandered from town to town, from village to village, along the southern coast, leaving each place abruptly and with scarcely an hour's notice, and the baby was ill, and the new servants careless. A time of trial—but all times were alike to her in that respect; a trembling sword hung daily over her unprotected head. The cup was bitter, but she had almost forgotten the taste of any other draught; and that old love of hers was still unspeakably dear to her.

But to return to Lalagé. She was glad to have Gertrude's district; it was a great occupation and a great pleasure; the big curate called about it the day after Gertrude left.

'Mrs Cleather said she would ask you to look after her people,' he said, and his unwise heart filled with a flood of bliss as he thought that this new state of things would bring his goddess nearer to him.

He took her round to the ten cottages of which Gertrude had taken charge; and it was pleasant to see how the people welcomed, and the children loved him.

'It 's a good bit sin' you 've come inside my door,' said an old woman nearly bent double, and crouched up in a wooden arm-chair.

The curate made kindly excuses: 'There were so many sick.'

'Well, beant I sick?' snarled old Widow Wallop. 'I 'n got Tantony's fire in my legs; and the rheumatics have got into my bones and s'news, till they feel like a bag of rusty nails.'

Lalagé looked on with her soft pitying eyes, but she found no favour in the old woman's sight; she could not help thinking how gentle, and kindly, and forbearing was this man, whose tremors and awkwardness left him when on his own ground, among his own people.

They went from house to house, most of the humble people being glad to see them—'very exceedingly much obliged' for their visit, as one woman expressed it. Then the curate's work was over, and his reward came; for he found himself, half-bewildered though he was, walking home through the happy summer afternoon with Lalagé. And receiving that message of thanks from her lips was very sweet.

'I would do anything to help Mrs Cleather,' he said; 'as it was, I was of very little use;' and as Lalagé saw how earnest the kindly bronze face looked, she began to think she really liked him very much. She took him home for a cup of their five o'clock tea, and made Belle laugh by her animated description of the 'funny poor people' they had been to see.

And when the curate begged to be taught a little more croquet 'before visiting a district four times as large as yours, Miss Heaketh,' she saw no harm in giving him the benefit of the hour before dinner.

District-visiting proved a great boon to Lalagé; firstly, and chiefly, because of that old childish longing to 'be good,' which made her desire to do right from the highest motives; and secondly, from a motive of which she was hardly aware, or which, at anyrate, she did not acknowledge to herself—a lack and emptiness in her life.

Hitherto, she had been accustomed to many friends, to much society; suddenly she had been removed from everything of the kind to a place of indescribable social desolation. Up to this time, the great beauty of her surroundings had more than made up to her for this great and utter change; but the novelty had now worn off, for they had been some months at Grimswold. As the slow weeks rolled on one after another, all exactly alike, and there were no more walks to be found out, no fresh lanes to be explored, she began to be a little lonely, to yearn a little for human companionship. She was either too deep or too shallow minded to find the beauty of hills and valleys quite sufficient for her; she was beginning to understand what Gertrude had meant by saying that she herself was 'very fond of human beings;' and Gertrude's absence was another cause of regret and loneliness; for even her district did not suffice her; she wanted some one to whom she could talk about even that; but still more, she wanted some one of her own class and station to whom she could talk her foolish, girlish talk, and who could in some degree see things from her point of view. A silence had settled over her life which chafed, and yet awed the girl.

True, she had always her sister; but between Belle and Lalagé was fixed that gulf of seventeen years, which is almost impassable at eighteen; and Belle had a deep still life of her own, almost uninfluenced by outer changes, and which Lalagé respected too much to disturb by her undefined, and yet growing ennui. In the midst of that former busy London life, Belle had been the same—a calm woman, moving in the world and yet not of the world; a hallowing influence over her father's household rather than an active member of it, doing all that was required of her in so exact and equal a way that every duty seemed an 'of course,' for which no special acknowledgment was required. She was like a mother to Lalagé, her tenderest, wisest, best; but for those very reasons, not to be intruded on by girlish emptiness of mind or vague longings.

Summer flamed into autumn, and the grand hill-sides blazed out like gorgeous illuminations; but the autumn sadness, without its pomp and glory, had grown into Lalagé Heaketh's heart. She would stroll out, day after day, to the old walks, and stand gazing down from some hill-top into the valley below for long hours, and then go back with the yearning in her heart unfulfilled, and life seeming to lie out before her as one long autumn road, with grand surroundings, but no inward peace for her. She used sometimes to

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think of that old life in London, and wonder how she should like to go back to it, then turn away from the idea with a shudder—no; she wondered she had ever had spirits for it. Unhealthy morbidity of mind coloured all the world just then.

The curate went away for a fortnight in September, and this was a fresh grievance to Lalagé. Suppose her people got very, very ill, how unpleasant it would be to put them in the hands of that stranger from Gloucester, who knew nothing about them: she wished Mr Mitchell would come back. And when he *did* come back, she met him with an eager: 'I 'm so glad you 've come!' which was unspeakably sweet to the curate.

There was much to tell about district and class; and Lalagé poured it out in her impetuous way, and for a time forgot all about her weariness in the comfort of once more having a sympathising listener, and all unwittingly threw fresh spells over the unwise man, and nullified all the good his absence had wrought.

She was glad to see him, she had welcomed him eagerly—were not these signs in his favour? Perhaps she might be taught even to like him, he thought, with the latent conceit which lurks in so many apparently unassuming men; so he plunged eagerly into hopefulness and happiness, and went on in his foolish path.

He was very much to her then; able to help her in the little difficulties which arose among her poor (thoughtfully considerate of them he had always been), and giving her freely the sympathy he so ardently felt. The mutual interests that bound them together naturally threw them much in each other's way, but not so often as the curate found necessary. He was pursuing a selfish path; but, to do him justice, with no idea of its selfishness; he was too unwise to look far ahead; besides, he was accustomed to this state of blissful misery, and knowing by experience that that catholic heart of his was by no means likely to get unalterably riveted, he judged Lalagé by himself, and thought—if he thought at all—that no possible harm could come of this. It was an episode in the life of this hard-working man, which life, without such variations, would have been very, very dull.

And so he got into a way of seeing her home from her district, whither she went every Tuesday regularly; and if there was time for a game of croquet afterwards, they generally had one. With him the girl was never anything but her old bright self; she had always plenty to tell and ask him about, and she liked and respected his kindness and goodness.

Of the curate's feelings with regard to herself, Lalagé did not guess. It is an old theory that women always do know when any man regards them with warmer feelings than those of friendship, but of the untruth of it many women could testify. But that by-standing women do see and credit such admiration even before the parties involved are themselves aware of it, is unquestionably true. Isabel Hesketh, with a sort of scornful half-pity, watched the unwise bedazzled man, but took somewhat his own view of the case. It could do no harm to either: he was big enough to get out of this trouble, and foolish enough to get into another, without any one's interference. Lalagé was unconscious of his admiration, and would probably remain so to the end of the chapter; and as for *her* feelings being in the slightest degree involved—it was impossible. Belle smiled at the bare idea. She looked upon this awkward bronze curate somewhat with the upper-servant theory, which had been in Mr Hesketh's mind when he had asked Mr Mitchell to call upon his daughters as often as he liked.

WHEN YOU WERE SEVENTEEN.

When the hay was mown, Maggie,
In the years long ago,
And while the western sky was rich
With sunset's rosy glow,
Then hand in hand close-linked we passed
The dewy ricks between,
And I was one-and-twenty, Mag,
And you were seventeen.

Your voice was low and sweet, Maggie;
Your wavy hair was brown;
Your cheek was like the wild red rose
That showered its petals down;
Your eyes were like the blue speedwell,
With dewy moisture sheen,
When I was one-and-twenty, Mag,
And you were seventeen.

The spring was in our hearts, Maggie,
And all its hopes were ours;
And we were children in the fields,
Among the opening flowers.
Ay! Life was like a summer day
Amid the woodlands green,
For I was one-and-twenty, Mag,
And you were seventeen.

The years have come and gone, Maggie,
With sunshine and with shade,
And silvered is the silken hair
That o'er your shoulders strayed
In many a soft and wayward tress—
The fairest ever seen—
When I was one-and-twenty, Mag,
And you were seventeen.

Though gently changing Time, Maggie,
Has touched you in his flight;
Your voice has still the old sweet tone,
Your eye the old love-light;
And years can never, never change
The heart you gave, I ween,
When I was one-and-twenty, Mag,
And you were seventeen.

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MR W. H. BAKER'S RING.

MR BAKER himself told us this story. He said it was true; nor is this unlikely. I have known Mr William Henry Baker personally for a number of years, and I am inclined to think he has hitherto never in all his life told the truth. Now, it is so manifestly improbable that the most consistent man should protract a long and useful career of story-telling to such extraordinary limits, without at some period telling the truth by sheer misadventure, that it is quite likely Mr Baker may have committed himself in this instance. At least the time has arrived for human nature to assert itself, according to the doctrine of averages.

'Only once, gentlemen,' said Mr B., 'have I been deceived. William Henry keeps his eyes open, in a general way; William Henry also takes the liberty of seeing out of them. He uses them, as a rule, for purposes of observation, gentlemen. Still, I admit I *was*, once, taken in by as dead a swindle as could be, I am not ashamed to own it. I made money by it, after all; but I *was* swindled.

'It was about a diamond ring. I knew the fellow who had it for many years in the way of business. He was a commercial traveller, and used always to flash this ring about whenever he came round on his journeys. A jeweller friend of mine, who happened to be in my office once when Mr Block called, asked, I remember, to be allowed to examine it; and had pronounced the stones to be diamonds of the purest water, telling me afterwards the ring was worth about seventy pounds. Mr Block's initials were engraved inside the hoop of the ring: "R. B.;" and besides that, it was a ring of peculiar and rather old-fashioned make. Indeed, having once seen the ring, no one would be likely to mistake it for another. Well, Mr Block got into difficulties, and went so entirely to the bad, that I never saw or heard anything more of him. But about two years afterwards, whilst walking down a back street, my eye was taken by a ring exhibited in a pawnbroker's window. "Mr Block's ring," I exclaimed directly; "I'll swear to it." It was in a tray with a number of very seedy-looking rings, and was as discoloured and dirty as they were. I went into the shop and asked to look at it. The pawnbroker, an old Jew, said: "Yesh; I might see his ringsh; but he didn't know mosh about ringsh himshelf. They wosh unredeemed pledges—thash what they wosh—and they wosh all marked at the monish advanshed upon them, with a very shmall overplush for interesh—thash all he knew."

'There was no mistake about it. It was Mr Block's ring, and had his initials inside.—But how did the Jew get it? He would soon tell me. Referring to his book, he found it had been pawned two years ago in the name of Smith—"Thash all he knew. Would I buy? It wosh dirt sheap—three poundsh twelve; and cosht him all the monish!"

"Three pounds twelve!" I repeated, thinking he had made a mistake; for the ring was worth twenty times that amount!

"Well, if it wosh too dear, he had some sheaper ones—beautiful ringsh, he dareshay—but he knew sho little about ringsh, you shee, exshept that he alwaysh advanshed too mosh monish on them. One couldn't undershtand everything in his bishnish, you shee, from flat-ironsh to diamonsh."

'I bought the ring, after beating the Jew down half-a-crown, partly to prevent his suspecting its value, and partly—well knowing the disposition of the peculiar people—to oblige him.

'I wore my new purchase about, with no little inward satisfaction at having bettered a Jew at a bargain. In my own mind, I accounted for its coming into his possession somewhat in this way: Mr Block must have sold the ring, when in difficulties, to some one else. It was quite certain Mr Block had not pawned it at the Jew's, or the Jew would have known its value. The ring must, then, have either been lost by, or stolen from, a subsequent possessor; and the finder, or thief (whichever it happened to be), being ignorant of its value, had taken it to the Jew, who knew no better.

'There is a certain commercial club in our town, which I occasionally visit. The members are of an easy and somewhat lively disposition; generally

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given to indulge in that playful style of banter popularly known as "chaff." My diamond ring came in for a good share of it. I can stand chaff as well as most men; but I put it to you, if, when you know very well your brilliants are real, it isn't a little annoying for the chaff of a whole body of people to assume the character of persistent disbelief in the value of your jewellery? For instance, the waiter answers the bell.

"Did any gentleman ring?"

"O yes," one of the members would retort; "it was the gentleman with the paste diamonds."

'Again, there are kinds of sham brilliants known as Irish Diamonds and Isle of Wight Diamonds. The club (not one or two members, but the whole body) refused to recognise such distinctions, and insisted on designating the whole class of shams as "Baker's Diamonds." "Baker's Paste," my gems were also denominated. They actually sent me by post a circular of somebody's Baking Powder, adding to it at the end, where it says the public is respectfully cautioned against spurious imitations, "*but more particularly against a specious preparation to deceive the unwary, known as Baker's 'Paste.'*" Now, after two or three weeks, this became tiresome. Still, I took no notice, and affected not to think the remarks intended for me.

'I hardly know what made me go and call on my friend the jeweller. It was not that I had any doubt of the genuineness of the diamonds, especially as he was the very man who had before valued Mr Blook's ring at seventy pounds. But it had been so dinned into my head they were false, that I wanted just a formal confirmation of the estimate he had previously formed of their worth.

"O yes," said my friend the jeweller; "I recognise the ring again directly.—Want to know what it's worth?" (He put it in the scales.) "Well—h'm—about seven-and-twenty shillings for old gold."

"Eh?" said I, as pale as a turnip. "Why, didn't you tell me it was worth seventy pounds?"

"Yes," he answered; "when it had diamonds in it—not when it has paste."

'Talking the matter over, the jeweller suggested, that on Mr Blook getting into difficulties, the first thing he did was to sell the diamonds out of his ring, and get their places supplied with paste; whilst, finally, he had pawned it himself with the Jew, *as* a paste ring.

"Well, William Henry," said I to myself, "the Jew has jewed you, and the club has chaffed you, and you may consider yourself trod upon, after the manner of speaking."

But the worm will turn.

"Did the jeweller let out diamonds on hire?" I asked.

'He did.

"Would he have a certain alteration, which I suggested, made in my ring in a fortnight's time?"

'He would.

"And keep it secret?"

"Certainly—business was business."

'For the whole of that fortnight I never went near the club; that was probably the reason why my appearance at the club-dinner was greeted with such lively sallies about Baker's Paste. One would-be wag recommended me, whilst helping a tart, "to keep my fingers out of the pastry." Believing him to intend some obscure allusion to the gems on my little finger, I thought it time to open fire.

"Gentlemen," said I, "for some weeks I have listened to casual observations in which the name of Baker has been unworthily associated with paste and pastry, but have refrained from making any remark, having been firmly persuaded they could only apply to industrious tradesmen employed in the manufacture of home-baked bread." (Oh, oh!) "It now occurs to me that such remarks were intended in allusion to the ring I wear—a ring, I take this opportunity of informing you—which, unlike the wits who have amused themselves at its expense—is indebted for its brilliancy to nature."

'They hooted me; they heaped opprobrious epithets on the name of Baker; they laughed and talked me down.

"I 'll bet him five pounds it 's paste," said one.

"So will I," said another. "And I." "And I."

'So said *eleven* of them.

"Really, gentlemen," said I, "I am sorry you should take the matter so much in earnest. All I can tell you is, I believe my ring to be a diamond ring, and this, notwithstanding I will freely admit I only paid a very small sum for it."

'They laughed and hooted me still more at this admission. They said that settled the question, and that it *was* paste.

'I told them I didn't think it was.

"Well, would I bet?"

'I would rather not.

'More hooting.

'At length, very reluctantly, I overcame my scruples. The name of Baker is a name too closely allied to the gentle bred (arms, four loaves, *ppr—sejant*, quartered—crest, the doe, *levant*) to allow it to be wantonly sullied. I bet.

'We adjourned to the jeweller's.

"Without question, they *were* diamonds," the jeweller decided, "and some of the finest he had ever seen." He ought to know, as they were *his* property—hired by me for the occasion.

"Eleven fives is fifty-five, gentlemen."

'Having established the value of my ring, and freed the name of Baker from suspicion, I paid for the hire of the real gems, and had the paste stones reset in their places, believing, after all, the reputation for diamonds to be as good as the possession of them, and free from the anxiety.

'It was talked about, and noised abroad: it even reached the little back street where the pawnbroker lived. You should have seen him.

"Real shtones! Oh, my heart! Sheventy-five poundsh—dead robbery—clean gone. Oh, my bootshe and bones! not to know that folkshe do shometimes come and pawn real diamonsh for pashte, sho as to have less interesh to pay for taking care of their ringsh. Oh, my bleshed heart, only think of it!"

'He came to me. He grovelled, and wriggled, and twisted himself before me. He prayed me to sell him his ring again. "Oh, my tere Mishter Baker, you musht shell it to me, or I shall be a ruined old manshe. The time wosh not out, and Mishter Smit has come to redeem it, and he shays that it wosh a legacy, and if he doesh not get it by Shaturday next he will ruin me—sh-help him, he will. Oh, Mishter Baker, think of it; twenty poundsh—all in gold—sholid money. Now, my tere, what do you shay? thersh a good mansh!"

'What did I say? Could I turn a deaf ear to the distress of the old man? There are people who

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might do it, gentlemen, but not people of the name of Baker—not W. H. Baker. I certainly did ask him for more money. We compromised it at last at twenty-two ten, which he paid, part in sixpences and coppers, and owes me fourpence-halfpenny to this day.

'Twenty-two, nine and sevenpence-halfpenny, and fifty-five pounds, is seventy-seven, nine, seven and a half. It just paid for the real diamonds; for I bought the ones I had previously hired of the jeweller, and had them set in a ring the fac-simile of Mr Blook's, except that the initials inside are W. H. B.

'That was the *only* time I was ever swindled, gentlemen,' Mr Baker concluded.

A WONDERFUL SQUARE MILE.

If Mr Haywood's recommendations should ever meet with fulfilment, we shall hardly know ourselves here in London, and must buy a brand-new map forthwith. The City authorities, overwhelmed with the magnitude of the traffic, and the difficulty of providing new channels through which it may flow, some time ago instructed their engineer, Mr Haywood, to examine into and report upon the whole affair. He has done so at considerable length, and has given us exact facts and figures on a world of subjects previously known only in a vague sort of way.

It shews how nearly complete must be the absence of gardens in the City of London, that nearly one-fourth of the entire area consists of public way—carriage-way and footway. Even a back-yard is too precious to be left open: it becomes built upon by offices and warerooms. Where land is worth something like half a million sterling per acre (a million, in one particular instance), we can understand the strength of the motive which urges owners to make the most of every square foot of it. We have plenty of streets and lanes in the City; but they are too narrow, and do not connect sufficiently well to supply main arteries in adequate number. There are 913 thoroughfares of various kinds in this one square mile of area (for it is no more; although the *Metropolis*, as defined by the Registrar-general and by the Metropolitan Board of Works, covers the enormous area of 120 square miles). Of this large number, however, 311 are only wide enough for one vehicle; and of 117 out of the 311, we are told that they are *culs de sac*—mere alleys or courts blocked up at one end. Let us look at the places where the stock-brokers have their offices, within stone's-throw of Capel Court; let us read their names, and, still better, penetrate into them: we shall see that they are mostly little stuffy alleys, which would be occupied only by labourers in any other part of the metropolis. Angel Court, Copthall Court, Warnford Court, Union Court, Shorter's Court, Cowper's Court, Adam's Court, Crown Court, Change Alley, Tokenhouse Yard, King's Head Yard, Finch Lane—why, you could cover them all with a Brobdingnagian blanket! Here the stock-brokers—nearly every one of whom has his well-to-do suburban villa—crowd together in a dense mass, giving fifty or a hundred guineas a year rent per room. And not only stock-brokers; merchants and factors, commission agents and wholesale dealers of great wealth, have offices in many such narrow courts as those of which we are now speaking. They *must* (such is the theory) have their places of business near the Bank and the various Exchanges.

The strangest part, perhaps, of this alley-topography is, that there are 441 courts, &c. so narrow as to admit no vehicles at all; they are merely footways. Bringing Cocker to our aid, and adding these 441 to the former 311, we find that there are 752 public thoroughfares in the City of London so narrow that two carriages cannot pass each other abreast; and we know what *that* means, so far as the circulation of traffic is concerned. Of the fifty miles of thoroughfare (for such appears to be about the aggregate length) in this square mile of area, there may be a sort of fourfold classification. Thus—so many miles free from drivers' bad language, because there are no drivers there; so many disturbed by drivers' 'curses both loud and deep,' because there is no shunting-ground for passing vehicles; so many where the drivers are calm, if two lines of vehicles are steadily and uninterruptedly moving on, without any obstruction from carts and wagons stopping at traders' doors; and about seven miles of main thoroughfare broad enough for three or more vehicles abreast. Seven miles out of fifty give a very small ratio, shewing how few of our streets are broad enough for the requirements of trade.

No city in this world is more free from any visible wall, boundary, or limit. We can none of us tell when we are in the City and when out, so far as appearances go. London Wall is all very well as a name, but where *is* the wall? Shoreditch may have been, as the old topographers tell, a ditch outside the City wall; and Cripplegate, Aldersgate, Newgate, Ludgate, Aldgate, Bishopsgate, and Moorgate may have been gates in the wall—but where are these gates, ditch, and wall? Temple Bar claims exception; but even that does not belong to the real old City 'within the Walls,' which in that direction terminated at Ludgate. There is no wall. There are forty-eight inlets to the City, in the several forms of carriage-roads for vehicles, paved courts and avenues for foot-passengers, bridges, steam-boat piers, and water-side stairs—besides railway stations; and the corporate authorities have no means of ascertaining how many persons enter and quit the City every day, except by watching all these points. It was by means of this sedulous watching, continued for eight, twelve, fifteen, or even twenty-four consecutive hours, that those astounding numbers were obtained which have been noticed in a past volume of the *Journal*. Without troubling the reader to refer to it, we will mention that, in twelve hours of one day in 1865, there were (in round numbers) 4000 vehicles passed a particular spot in Aldersgate Street, 4500 at Barbican, the same number at Gresham Street, 5000 at Eastcheap, 6500 at Finsbury Pavement, 7500 at Bishopsgate Street, 8000 at Aldgate, 9000 at Holborn Hill (before the disturbance of traffic at that point by the works of the Holborn Viaduct), 10,000

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at Blackfriars Bridge, 12,000 at Fleet Street, and—marvel of marvels—19,000 at London Bridge! On one day of twenty-four hours (not specially selected as being more or less busy than usual), 38,000 vehicles passed over the Thames at London, Southwark, and Blackfriars Bridges.

As there is comparative greatness in the great, we may be prepared to believe that the passenger traffic in the metropolis is still more wonderful than the vehicular—vast as the latter admittedly is. Mr Haywood tells us that on nine hours of one day in 1848 (8 A.M. to 5 P.M.), 315,000 persons entered the City; that on twenty-four hours of one day in 1860, the number reached the stupendous figures of 707,000, of whom 528,000 were between 7 A.M. and 7 P.M.; and that about three-fourths of the people came on foot, the remainder being in or on vehicles. In reference to foot-passengers only—those who walk on the side pavements—the following numbers were presented at eight of the principal inlets into the City, in one day of twenty-four hours: Aldersgate Street, 16,000; Finsbury Pavement, 21,000; Bishopsgate Street, 23,000; Blackfriars Bridge, 24,000; Temple Bar, 25,000; Aldgate, 29,000; Holborn Bars, 30,000; and London Bridge, 42,000. All these were persons who *entered* the City; and as about an equal number left it, there were 420,000 persons who walked into or out of the City at those eight arteries alone. But great as this throng is at the City boundary, it is still greater in the heart of the City itself; enabling us easily to understand how it is that Smith and Brown and Jones, or Jack and Bill and Dick, are always knocking up against one another. Just look at the significancy of the following figures. They relate to twelve hours (8 A.M. to 8 P.M.) of one day in 1867; and they include foot-passengers only, disregarding those who were riding in or on vehicles. Particular spots were selected, in the following thoroughfares, and the number of passers-by counted: Walbrook, 17,000; Throgmorton Street, 18,000; Threadneedle Street, 22,000; Lombard Street, 30,000; Newgate Street, 33,000; Leadenhall Street, 36,000; Cornhill, 44,000; Fenchurch Street, 46,000; Fleet Street (near St Bride's Church), 62,000; Poultry, 75,000. The busiest spot in the City—perhaps in the world—for foot-traffic, is the north side of the Poultry; it overpowers the south side in the ratio of about eight to seven. Along that wonderful foot-pavement of nine feet in width, there pass by more than *a hundred persons per minute* in a continuous stream for twelve hours! The average is above a hundred; there are certain periods of the day when the number very much exceeds a hundred.

There are certain very curious inequalities in the number of passengers on the two pavements of the same street. Why, for instance, are there three times as many passengers on the north pavement of Throgmorton Street as on the south? Will Echo tell us? or must we ask the sixty-five firms of stock-brokers and stock-jobbers who have their offices in that favoured street? And why is the north pavement of Lombard Street trodden by fifty per cent. more boots and shoes than the south? Mr Haywood very fairly points out that passengers cannot be expected to avoid jostling one another, on pavements often only four to five feet wide (Wood Street, Cheapside, has actually got less than a yard for the width of each pavement, at one part): 'Two adults of average size cannot pass each other, if walking straightforward on a three feet six inch footway, without touching; and even when it is four feet wide, they, as a rule, should nothing prevent it, do not pass without one of them stepping into the carriageway, where vehicles interpose; or, if the wheels of carts overhang the footways (a frequent occurrence), they with difficulty avoid jostling each other. Such footways are therefore highly inconvenient, even in dry weather, but are still more so during rain; for an average umbrella is, when opened, three feet six inches in diameter. And it should be borne in mind that, upon the average, there are quite three days in the week upon which rain falls, more or less, in London.' He considers it surprising that accidents are not more frequent than at present, in some of the busy narrow streets where the vehicular and the pedestrian traffic make up together an almost hopeless muddle of excited men and horses.

'Men,' we say; but Mr Haywood is more correct, for he says 'persons.' Women have not much to do in the City; but still they are to be found there. Mrs Brown goes twice a year to receive her dividends. The wives and daughters of wealthy cits go to be tempted by the jewellers and the mercers. Mothers are taking their children to the Epping train at Bishopsgate, or the Gravesend train at Fenchurch Street, or the Greenwich train at Cannon Street, or the Crystal Palace train at London Bridge. And large numbers of young women wend their way into the City, to the warehouses in which ready-made apparel, as well as textile and needlework goods, are stored in vast quantity. Still, the rougher sex preponderate notably over the gentler. Observations have led to the conclusion that there are about five times as many males as females to be seen in the City. Mr Haywood points out, as delicately as he can, that, however much our streets may be graced by this addition to the pedestrianism of the City, still there are certain disadvantages, seeing that 'females occupy more space, move more slowly along thoroughfares, accommodate themselves with less facility to the exigencies of the traffic, and, upon the whole, impede it more than the males do.' Mr Haywood's special observations were made, we believe, at a time when crinolines were in high favour, and when women certainly did 'occupy more space' than men; and although the more slim girl-of-the-period costume of the present day is less amplified, still feminine dress is an important matter in reference to street-traffic—especially if skirts are allowed to drag along the ground.

The feminine element is especially concerned in one particular feature in City pedestrianism: we mean, the danger of being run over. It is all very well—or rather, it is all very easy—for small wits to make a joke about 'only an old woman knocked down;' but it is no joke. Men and women, boys and girls, all are in danger: women and girls the most, because of the nervous flutter that so often seizes hold of them at such a time. The amount of crossing from pavement to pavement in the City is almost inconceivable; and every such transit is attended with a certain amount of peril. Mr Haywood selected five of the most momentous of these places of crossing; he appointed careful watchers to count the number of persons who crossed the streets from one foot-pavement

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to another during the daylight hours, and he added an estimated small number for the night hours. Let us look at the figures, and bear as well as we can the visions of being 'run over' which they suggest. 1. We take the busy corner at the east end of Cornhill, where Gracechurch Street, Leadenhall Street, Bishopsgate Street, and Cornhill meet; and we find that forty-two thousand persons crossed the roadway on foot in one day, to get from one pavement-corner to another. 2. Then comes the still busier corner where Lombard Street, Fenchurch Street, and Gracechurch Street meet—the very heart and centre of the old, old City of London, in days when the region around the present Bank of England was almost out of town; here the number swelled to forty-six thousand. 3. Still more thronged is a corner which once belonged to the 'City without the Walls,' where Ludgate Hill, Fleet Street, Farringdon Street, and New Bridge Street meet; here the persons who crossed the road from pavement to pavement in one day were found to be fifty-six thousand in number. 4. Going again eastward, we know that there is a certain statue of King William IV. at a spot where Gracechurch Street, King William Street, Cannon Street, and Crooked Lane meet. The angles are many, and the necessities of pedestrian traffic require that the hazardous transit across these several roadways at that spot should be made in many different directions. Thus it is that the number swelled to sixty-four thousand. 5. But now comes the giant. There is a spot which is assuredly one of the sights of London: a sight which, whether for vehicular or pedestrian traffic, has probably no equal in any other part of the world. The Bank of England, the Royal Exchange, and the Mansion House, are all in sight one from another; and the open space between them is a centre from which nine thoroughfares radiate — namely, Cornhill, Threadneedle Street, Princes Street, Poultry, the new street (not yet named) leading to Blackfriars, Walbrook, Mansion-house Place, King William Street, and Lombard Street. Now people want to cross from every one of these corners to every other; and it often requires no little skill in steering to determine how many tacks must be made in order to effect the passage safely. The authorities have judiciously constructed three circular paved standing-places, with lamps and posts, at certain spots in the intermediate space; but even with this aid, the wayfarer on foot should have eyes in his poll, eyes all over him. Will the reader believe that more than eighty-four thousand persons cross the carriage roadways on foot, in this wonderful spot in a day? We have Mr Haywood's authority for the statement.

Let it be remembered that these almost incredible numbers of persons cross roads which are from morning till night jammed with vehicles. Talk of Scylla and Charybdis! they are nothing to it. If eighty-four thousand people cross where ten thousand vehicles are passing, there are a myriad chances per day of somebody or other being run over within easy sight of the Duke of Wellington, as he sits bestriding his horse in front of the Royal Exchange. A crossing-passenger never knows when he is safe. If he dodges behind the four-wheeler No. 999, he comes full butt upon Hansom No. 1001. If he escapes a *Favourite*, he finds Rawlings's Ginger Beer running into Pickford, and both of them likely to run into him. Then comes a *Royal Oak*, then Borwick's Baking Powder, and then an alderman's carriage, making a very close shave of it. Next we find an agitated old lady running into the middle of the road to catch a Kingsland 'bus; she catches a Greenwich *Nelson* instead, and is rewarded by the objurgations of the conductor, in addition to her own terrors. A City policeman frantically telegraphs with outstretched arms, to denote what a driver may or may not do; but he can scarcely prevent Sally and her three little brothers from being run over during a daring transit to the opposite pavement. Your real City clerk has acquired a knack of wriggling and worming between the vehicles in an extraordinary way, forming a pattern something like that of ladies' crochet or tatting—a knack not yet acquired by West-enders. Fortunately, there are no fascinating glittering shops at the corners of this extraordinary thoroughfare, to attract idlers and loiterers; every one is intensely busy, mind and body being equally determined in getting across to the other side as quickly and safely as possible; else the perils would be vastly increased. It must also be admitted that the City authorities do their best (under the provisions of an act of parliament obtained for the purpose) to keep the main streets clear in the daytime of wagons with a long string of horses, slow-going vehicles, and wagon-loads of exceptional length, breadth, or height.

Mr Haywood sees nothing for it but the construction of a new East-and-West Street, of great length and vast costliness. He admits that new railways and new bridges give improved access to the City; that the construction of the Holborn Viaduct and the removal of Middle Row are good things; that the approaches to the new Meat Market have greatly improved the neighbourhood of Smithfield; that the crescent at the west end of Ludgate Hill lessens the crush at that busy corner; and that the widening of certain portions of Newgate Street, Leadenhall Street, Fenchurch Street, Upper Thames Street, Ludgate Hill, Poultry, Threadneedle Street, Basinghall Street, and other thoroughfares, is gradually furnishing improved arteries for traffic. But he tells us we must have a new street. It is to begin at the corner of Giltspur Street and Newgate Street, so as to form a prolongation of the new Holborn Viaduct. Sweeping away Christ's Hospital and the Money-order Office, it will cut across Noble Street, Wood Street, Aldermansbury, Basinghall Street, and Coleman Street, to Moorgate Street, avoiding the numerous churches as best it may. Then, absorbing portions of London Wall and Wormwood Street in its width, it will cut diagonally across a huge mass of streets, the very names of which are only imperfectly known to West-enders; and at length join Whitechapel and the Commercial Road near the church. But oh, the cost! The street would be about a mile and a quarter in length, and would dash through buildings every inch of the way. We do not find in any part of Mr Haywood's Report an estimate of the probable amount to be paid to land-owners, leaseholders, and the occupiers of property. What the Post-office authorities have paid for the lately cleared space in St Martin's-le-Grand, to be occupied by an extension of their premises, would make one's hair stand on end even to think about; and that would be a mere drop compared with the mile and a quarter of new street. Nevertheless, Mr Haywood says we *must*

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do something of the kind, cost what it may. There are 3,000,000 of us here in 1869; there will be 5,000,000 in 1899; and we shall be all blocked up unless new arteries are provided.

AMERICA'S NEW HIGHWAY.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAP. II.

Getting to Uintah about five in the morning, we found a coach just about to start for Salt Lake City. It was, however, full, and we had to wait till eleven o'clock for another coach. At Uintah, and the whole way to Salt Lake City, there are delicious streams of running water, and nice patches of vegetation and cultivation. There is a fine bold mountain above Uintah, which, looking more green than the mountains we have hitherto seen, is refreshing to the eye, and suggests the origin of the water-rivuleta. The distance to Salt Lake City is about thirty miles, over a very rough and heavy road. From it are obtained some beautiful views of the Great Salt Lake, peacefully ensconced by the surrounding mountains. We passed several wagons, each having in them usually one man, two women, and a few children. There is a quiet, English-country look about the people; the chief thing we notice about the women being that they avert their eyes from us as we pass along, or pull up at some roadside stopping-place. There are magnificent orchards, and luxurious gardens with any amount of fruit in them—apples, peaches, and grapes. Salt Lake City does not become visible until we get within a few miles of it; but the first view of it is impressive and charming to a degree. There it lies, at the foot of the hills, embosomed among green trees and luxuriant gardens, giving it a fairy sort of appearance somewhat like that which one imagines to have distinguished ancient Babylon. High above all the houses is the great Tabernacle, a huge, ungainly-looking object, of an oval shape, like a mere patch of white rock. This building is capable of seating ten thousand persons. A curtain is usually drawn half-way across it, so that only half of it is used. It was a Sunday afternoon when we got into the city, and the people were then coming out of the Tabernacle. A nearer view of the city does not belie its distant appearance. There are goodly buildings in it, while fresh streams of water run along the sides of every street. Most of the houses are surrounded by gardens, and acacia trees line the streets. The city boasts of over twenty thousand inhabitants, of whom one thousand are 'Gentiles.' The whole territory of Utah is said to contain a population of one hundred and twenty-five thousand, of whom not more than five thousand are 'Gentiles.' A year or two ago, 'Gentile' traders began to come in in such numbers as to threaten to put a stop to Mormon exclusiveness, so the 'Children of Zion' defended themselves by setting up a gigantic system of co-operation. According to the rules of the church, Mormon must only deal with Mormon upon penalty of ecclesiastical censure, if not exclusion from the church. Over each Mormon store is set up the token of co-operation. It consists of the words, 'Holiness to the Lord,' underneath which is represented an eye—the All-seeing Eye—and below are added the words: 'Zion's co-operative mercantile institution.' The stores seem to be good, and well supplied. Abundance of fresh fruit is exposed for sale—the product of the fertile gardens around. On the north and east, the mountains approach near the city, looking grand and rugged. In the latter quarter, a few miles from the city, is a camp of United States' troops, kept there colourably to protect the city from the Indians, but really, probably, to watch the Mormons. The political status here is somewhat singular. Utah, being a territory, has a governor appointed by the United States' government, and the taxes are collected by officials similarly appointed. The *real* king, however, is Brigham Young. The system is a complete and powerful hierarchy. Brigham Young is president of the church, and associated with him are two counsellors, or vice-presidents; and then there are the twelve apostles. These together make up the governing body of the church, and, in fact, of the state as well. The police, municipal arrangements, and territorial government, are all in their hands; and, if rumour speaks aright, are all ordered by that master-mind of Brigham's. The Mormons place the most absolute and perfect trust in this man, whose talent for organisation must be immense. The municipal affairs are said to be managed in a highly efficient manner, and the police regulations to be equally good. Brigham has in one respect directly defied the officers of the United States government. He has refused, when called upon to do so, to send in a statement of the church revenues for the purposes of taxation; or, which is the same thing, he has sent in a return which is absolutely ridiculous. It is said that the governors heretofore have been mere dummies, and, in fact, that the Mormon system has never yet met with any serious opposition from the central government. But it is not supposed that this state of things can last much longer. With regard to the Mormon faith, it embraces both the Old and New Testaments; and, while it rejects the doctrines of the Trinity in the form which medieval scholasticism has handed down to us, it strays still further from the purer faith of early Christianity. Still it accepts of the divinity of Christ, as well as His propitiation for human sins. The Father and Son are two Persons in one God; but they are both *material* Persons *with* 'body parts and passions.' The Holy Spirit, on the contrary, is a Spiritual Essence proceeding from the Father and Son, and is omnipresent, and pervades all space. Superadded to their faith in the Bible, is that in that singular mass of incohesive absurdities known as the Book of Mormon. This Book is put on a par with the Bible, as being a later revelation from God. Together with this is combined a belief in modern revelations from God, the major part of which refer back to the celebrated Joe Smith. Under this head the institution of polygamy was introduced. Some of these revelations appear to come with singular appositeness—in fact, just ready-made to meet the wants of 'Saints.' Amongst these may be mentioned the revelation with regard to the incorrectness and falsity of the Mosaic cosmogony. The American pride of the people is flattered in others. Our Saviour has been witnessed upon this continent; while it was here that the Ark was built, which, during the one hundred days it was afloat, ran before a westerly wind; until, at the termination of the Deluge, it was found upon Mount Ararat. The people seem to believe firmly in their creed, for which they are

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content to make real sacrifices. They are, I should say, below the average in intellect; but, at the same time, they possess moral qualities which cannot but command our respect. That they are most industrious, frugal, and sober, is admitted on all hands. It is part of the directions of the teaching of the church that they should be so, for the necessity of moral virtues is one of her dogmas. And, for the fruits of all this—there are *only four* drinking-bars in the city; and, during the few days I was there, I never saw a drunken person, or heard a blasphemous oath, though I mingled in the knots of young men at the corners of the streets, from whom one would expect, in accordance with all experience, such vices. During all my wanderings, I have never yet witnessed such a high standard of morality in these matters as at Salt Lake City. I know that I should not probably be in a town half the size, either in America, or in the colonies, or in our respectable old country—in fact, wherever the English language is spoken—for five minutes, before I should have either ocular or aural demonstration of those failings, the absence of which is here so marked. Another of our vices, of which society does not permit the mention, is here almost unknown; while the most insidious of the diseases which afflict the human frame is absolutely unheard of. These are great facts; and, while orthodox Christians may well hold up their hands in righteous horror at the fund of idle superstition which enchains the ignorant and simple-hearted Mormon, they will do well to give him credit for his moral virtues. But Mormonism has its dark side as well as its fair. Like all fanaticisms, it places but small value upon human life, when that life stands in the way of its purposes. Gentiles have come to Utah, and got into quarrels with Mormons, and been shot in cold blood. It is stated that at least eight murders of this nature have been committed within the last few years. It is probable that some of these were, either remotely or directly connected with offences, or supposed offences, bearing upon 'the peculiar institution' of Mormonism and its concomitants. Jealousy is a passion directly encouraged by the Mormon system; and it is not the first church which has imposed the penalty of death upon offences which in a natural state of society would assuredly thus be exculpated.

With regard to 'the peculiar institution,' it would appear that the majority of Mormons have not more than one wife; for no person is allowed to marry a second wife unless he be known to the church authorities to be faultless in his every-day relations of life, honest and upright in his dealings, and a good member of the church; and last, but not least, unless he be able to shew that he has means for the support of his additional spouse. I don't know—nor does any one else that I have heard of—how many wives the great Brigham possesses; but I have heard the number variously stated at from fifteen to twenty-five. Some of the other church dignitaries have, I was told, as many as twelve wives; while ordinary well-to-do people have two or three. It is the system of polygamy which prevents the entrance of Utah as a state into the Union, one of the amendments to the constitution of the United States being to the effect that polygamy shall not exist in the United States. Otherwise, Utah has a sufficiently large population, and would doubtless be admitted as a state. It is said that Brigham Young is anxious for this admission, and that he maintains, moreover, that the amendment in question is contrary to the fundamental constitution of the Union, as being an interference in a matter of religion; for polygamy he claims to be part of the Mormon religion. Be this, however, as it may, the future cannot fail to be watched with interest; nor can there be a doubt but that, whether for weal or for woe, the little primitive community in Utah will have ere long to succumb before the advancing tide of nineteenth-century civilisation. Moreover, there is on the subject of polygamy a schism at the present time. Joseph Smith, the son of the prophet, preaches against the practice, and has a certain following, who are nicknamed 'Josephites,' and against whom the invectives of the orthodox are directed. It is said, too, that many of the young men are opposed to the system; while women have been known to speak of it in the bitterest terms. 'Gentile' writers have been accustomed to lay stress upon what they term the 'dejected' appearance of the ladies of Salt Lake City. I don't know that too much may not have been made of this; for the absence of the bold, and really unfeminine countenances which we have grown used to meet in our modern towns, may have contributed to produce in their minds the notion of female dejection. The women did not strike me as looking so much dejected as shy, and reminded me in their ways emphatically of the country population in our rural districts in England. But that the system of polygamy engenders domestic broils and bickerings, there cannot be the least doubt; and the fact of men having two or three separate entrances to their houses, and, in fact, in many cases, two or three separate houses for their wives, is not suggestive of domestic peace.

Salt Lake City is suffering at the present time from a commercial depression, caused, in some measure, by the diversion of the through travel to California, which, before the opening of the Pacific Railroad, used to pass through it. A branch railroad is now in course of construction, which, it is hoped, will serve to right matters.

But, to return from this digression to the Pacific Railroad. From Uintah the line passes through a gorge, called 'the Devil's Gate,' thence up the narrow valley of the Weber, with its refreshing patches of cultivation, and grand red rocks overhead. 'Echo City' is the principal station of this district, which is a mining one. Soon after this, it passes through a country where there are coal-mines, and leaving Utah, wends its way through the neighbouring territory of Wyoming. We have now left the mountains, and with them all traces of vegetation. There is again the old sage bush, and the alkali dust of the desert. One or two deep sluggish streams, the water of which looks green and foul, and is, I believe, scarcely fit for drinking purposes, are crossed by the track. Close to one of these, on a small patch of meagre vegetation, was an encampment with ox-drays. I also noticed some cattle being driven over, I suppose to California. The time consumed in the transit across the plains in this manner is very considerable, and consequently trying to the temper of those undertaking the journey. The most desperate quarrels have been known to take place, and murder has sometimes ensued. A man who had himself driven over cattle from the Missouri River, in the early

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days of gold-mining, described to me a somewhat amusing incident to which he was witness. Two partners who were utterly unable to settle their differences, had come to a halt in the middle of the desert, and had determined upon then and there dissolving partnership, and making a partition of the property. They carried out their intention so literally as to saw the wagon into two pieces straight through the middle, one of them going off with the fore, and the other with the hind wheels.

We were now commencing the fourth day of the railroad journey, and on this day we passed the highest point on the whole line, being 8424 feet above the sea-level—the highest point reached as yet by any railroad in the world. The ascent to this point is very gradual, and presents few engineering difficulties. The land bears an even surface, interrupted only by patches of red rock. There are no peaks visible, and nothing but the light mountain air to indicate the great height at which you have arrived. Just below is a forest of pine trees, which serve for supplies of fuel for the line. Sherman, accordingly—for so the summit is named—is a dépôt for wood, and it contains a few stores and bar-rooms. From Sherman, the course of the railroad is one unbroken line of descent, the first portion of which is very rapid. There are many walls hereabouts, built to protect the track from the winter's snow-drifts. The next station of importance is Cheyenne. This is a real town, and decidedly the most important place we have passed through since leaving Sacramento. From hence stages start for the important and rapidly rising town of Denver, in the state of Colorado. Here we altered our time, taking Omaha clock-time. This is the second alteration of time on the journey—that at Promontory being the first. Soon after leaving Cheyenne, we passed an emigrant's train, or rather a goods-train with emigrant-car attached. These people were, to use a nautical expression, eleven days out from New York, and, at this rate of progression, would take at least eighteen days from ocean to ocean. As we proceeded, the country improved rapidly, and there were cattle-stations and patches of cultivation. In the distance, on our right hand, we could clearly trace the course of the river Platte by the trees on its banks. Next day, we were going over the rolling prairies of Nebraska, and had approached close to the Platte, and our country had come within the influence of its fertilising irrigation.

From about sixty miles west of Omaha, the rolling of the prairie ceased, and we were passing through the richest and most luxuriant pasture-country conceivable. Herds of cattle on either hand gladdened our eyes; while little boys passed down the cars offering us of the riches of the land—fresh milk and boiled eggs. The track had improved, and so had the pace of our train. All looked cheerful; and as we hastened along, feasting our eyes on the growing maize or the tall grass, I think we should all, if we had been asked, have said that this was the pleasantest two hours of our journey. We arrived at Omaha at about 1 P.M., on this the fifth day of our railroad journey. Thus, including the passage from San Francisco to Sacramento, the journey to Omaha had occupied nearly five days. The time of the journey will probably be soon reduced to four days, and possibly something less; but I think it will not fall below that point, until considerable improvement is made in the track. The present line is very bad in places, especially on the Union Pacific. I did not see much to complain of on the Central Pacific, and this is the more creditable to the latter company, considering that they have had greater difficulties to contend with.

Omaha is situated upon high land on the right bank of the Missouri River, being something less than one thousand feet above the sea-level. From this point, New York is reached in about three days. There are a great variety of routes. Two rival companies compete for the traffic to Chicago, from which place there are four main lines of travel to New York. The Southern and South-eastern States are reached by taking the rail from Omaha to St Louis, which place may also be reached by steamer down the Missouri River. Omaha is, as I have stated, the present terminus of the Pacific Railroad; but it is uncertain how long it may remain so, as a loop-line proposes to cut it off from the south; while there are other projects afloat which may divert the principal line of travel.

I am not now going to expatiate in hackneyed phrases upon this perhaps the greatest of Yankee enterprises. I wish simply to say that it is one of which the republic has a right to be proud. It is one, it is true, which is incomplete in its details, and at which orthodox railway constructers might well turn up their noses. On our English system of railway construction, such a line would, even if projected, have remained probably incompleted for years to come. The cheap and rough railroads of America are the only ones suitable for such a work. Rapidly, and, as we should say, carelessly constructed, they are nevertheless the proper railroads for a new country. One great advantage they possess is, that an error in the original route is comparatively cheaply corrected. It is probable that an error has been committed in the choice of the route for the present inter-oceanic line. It is stated that to the north of the present route a railroad may be constructed without rising to any higher elevation than five thousand feet, while to the south of it a line is being pushed forward, which is asserted to possess considerable advantages over it. Thus, in a few years' time there will probably be three Pacific railroads, and the public will patronise the best. The present I regard as in some senses an experimental line; and though the experiment gives out brilliant promises as yet, it must be remembered that a winter has not yet been passed, so that the severest trial of the line remains to come. Whether the present line stand the ordeal or not, one can safely predict that there will ultimately be permanent railway communication all the year round between the two oceans. To America herself, this fact is fraught with important consequences. Of these, what is known as the 'Chinese question' is the most important. American civilisation has been suddenly brought face to face with the civilisation of hundreds of years ago. The opening up of the line of steamers in the North Pacific introduced California to the eastern world: the opening up of the Pacific Railroad will introduce the whole of America to it. Englishmen and Americans have often talked about opening up China to Anglo-Saxon enterprise. China has returned the compliment, and opens up America to her enterprise. Western life has been suddenly brought face to

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face with eastern life. 'The way of the kings of the east has been prepared.' It would seem as though the tide of human life, which has for centuries been flowing westward, were now destined to meet that counter-current, which will sooner or later turn it eastward again. We have long known that the Chinese abound in California. The monthly steamers come over crowded with them, bringing from eight hundred to a thousand each trip, and the cry is still 'They come, they come.'

A contract has just been made for the supply of Chinamen to work the plantations in the Southern States; and the Union Pacific Company are stated to be about to employ them in bridging over the Missouri River. Other companies in the Eastern States are said to be also meditating their employment. Of course, the attraction is cheap labour, the Chinaman being rich on one dollar a day, while the American labourer demands two or three. The trades-unions are scared, and have already taken up the question. They have determined upon attempting the absolute exclusion of Chinese labour. Masters who employ Chinamen are to be struck against. It is probable that these singular and peaceful Asiatics are destined to meet with no small amount of opposition, and even of persecution and physical suffering, in their attempts to open up America and compete with American labour. But no amount of rebuffs will stop a great national movement, as this Chinese immigration appears to be, and the republic will be untrue to her first principles if she attempts to choke it down. I was much struck with the bitterness of the prejudice against the Chinese which I heard expressed in California from men from whom one would have expected larger views. We, in our Australian colonies, to which the Chinamen find their way in large numbers, accord them equal rights; while, in America, an attempt is being made to prevent their naturalisation. That this attempt will be unsuccessful, I have confidence enough in the probity of the American people, as well as in the sacred cause of human liberty, to feel confident. But the strength of the feeling which dictates it is shewn by the rejection of the Fifteenth Amendment by California. Henceforth, American citizens had better make up their mind that there will be a new 'element' in the country. The Chinese 'element' will, in the future, take its place beside the Irish, the German, and the negro element; and it will need, like these other elements, to be Americanised. Personally, I do not believe that there will ever be a total extinction of any of the elements to be found in the States; but I do look forward to the time when these shall be so mollified as to possess a social and traditional rather than a political importance.

Possibly, before this meets the eye of the reader, the scheme of a line of steamers to run between Sydney and San Francisco may have been developed. The journey across the Pacific Ocean is some eight hundred miles shorter than the old Panamá route, while the danger of yellow fever will by the new route be avoided. The transit across the Pacific will be accomplished in about twenty-five days, while the fares will be considerably cheaper than by the P. and O. route. Ever since the break-up of the Panamá line, the want of a new steam-service to England has been much felt in the colonies, especially in New Zealand. It is probable that the proposed line will call at Auckland, or another of the northern ports of New Zealand, and supply the much required communication. Should this be the case, there is no doubt that the new company will meet with considerable patronage in that colony.

A LIMITED HORIZON.

IN FIFTEEN CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER VII.—THE ROMAN ENCAMPMENT.

Belle had noticed Lalagé's failing spirits, but how to remedy them she hardly knew. There were no outer resources to turn to, and poor Lalagé had few inner ones. She liked reading, but only pretty well; it was not to her the all in all that it is to some women. And work she hated intensely, as most people do who have never felt the necessity of it burning into their souls, or have not been obliged to do it for the comfort of others. She was just an idle, gay butterfly, with wings that had not yet gained their full strength, but were just now drooping and useless, almost a burden to herself.

Life seemed so earnest, and yet so empty out there in the shadow of the eternal, desolate hills.

The sisters were sitting together one October evening—the evenings had begun to grow terribly long—Belle reading, and Lalagé gazing idly into the fire. Presently Belle laid down her book.

'Have you ever been to that Roman encampment, about which Miss Verey was talking?' she asked.

'Yes,' said Lalagé wearily; 'I have been everywhere, I think. It is very curious, but such a long way off, I did not get further than the bottom of the hill on which it stands.'

'I wish you would go with me one of these last fine days,' said Belle. 'Would it be a good place for a picnic?'

'A picnic here!' said Lalagé; 'why, who could we ask? But, of course, I should like going with you very much indeed;' and she brightened up.

'Suppose we have the Vereys,' said Belle with a smile, 'just for the sake of society?'

'Very well,' said Lalagé. 'I feel convinced that I and that wicked woman shall fall out, but I shall like it all the better for that.'

She grew quite animated and like herself that evening, making arrangements for the expedition, and laughing over her intended skirmishes with Mrs Verey.

'We can take the pony-carriage, and get two of those horrible old flies from the *Raven* which always make papa so cross. Let me see: I don't suppose that more than seven Vereys will come; ourselves will make nine; and O Belle, do ask Mr Mitchell, because that cross old thing does dislike him so.'

'Well, I suppose we can hardly leave him out,' said Belle slowly.

'That will be four for each fly, and two for the pony-carriage, and the hampers equally divided. And James may just as well be on one of the boxes, he would be so useful in packing up. Of course we will send all the vehicles back as soon as we get there, and they can come for us again about five in the afternoon.'

'And at what time shall we start?'

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'Would ten be too early? O yes, I suppose so. Well, twelve must do, and we can have luncheon about one.'

'And one of "those dreadful flies" will fall to my share,' said Belle smiling.

'Yes, and three Misses Verey too, I am afraid,' said Lalagé. 'I wish you would learn to drive, but you won't; so I must take charge of the wicked woman in the pony-carriage, and Mr Mitchell must go in the other fly with the rest of the party.'

'Very well,' said Belle; 'and we ought to go very soon, before the fine weather leaves us. Would not the day after to-morrow do?'

'O yes,' said Lalagé, and sat down to write invitations.

Every one accepted; only, as Lalagé had anticipated, two Misses Verey remained at home to be with their father. The big curate came up to the Hill House, in a state of bewildered ecstasy, to thank the ladies for being so merciful as to give him a clear day before the picnic.

'Otherwise,' he said, 'I could not have come; and I must not stay here, for I have to get two days' work into one: no time for croquet, I'm afraid, Miss Lalagé.'

'Miss Lalagé!' The familiarity of the address a little startled the owner of the name, but after all it was only natural, she argued, he had heard her Christian name so often. As for the curate, he was thrown into confusion as soon as he heard his unwise lips utter that magical name; but as he swung up the drive, he could not but feel the happier for its utterance; he had in no way been reproved for it, and might even, he thought, venture upon it again.

Thursday came, bright, and sweet, and placid, in the calm dying glory of October, and at twelve o'clock the whole party was assembled before the Hill House.

Everybody being ready now, Lalagé pounced upon her 'wicked woman,' and carried her off to the pony-carriage. The man who usually sat behind was on one of the boxes, his place being taken up by hampers, so these two were quite alone.

'I hope you are not afraid of trusting yourself to me?' said Lalagé, when they had driven on in silence for some minutes. 'I am not very fond of driving, but I think I quite understand it.'

'I am not afraid,' said Mrs Verey grimly; 'it is a theory of mine that we are just as safe in one place as another.'

'Yes, of course,' said Lalagé; 'but then again there is such a thing as courting danger, "tempting Providence," as people say.'

She spoke in all courteousness. It had been very well talking over her intended defiance of this lady in her own drawing-room with Belle at her side; but the sole charge of entertaining her during this *tête-à-tête* drive was a very different matter, and one in which there was only weight and gravity.

After a pause of some length, Mrs Verey spoke again.

'I am very glad of being alone with you, Miss Hesketh,' she said; 'there are a few words which I feel it my duty to say to you; it is quite on my conscience that I have not made an opportunity for doing so before.'

Lalagé rapidly ran over in her mind a long list of questions as to what could possibly be the cause of Mrs Verey's laden conscience, but was in no way enlightened; so she only said: 'We are quite alone now.'

'Yes,' said Mrs Verey; 'and I dare not let this chance slip, lest a neglected opportunity should hereafter rise up against me. It is about Mr Mitchell, Miss Hesketh.'

'About Mr Mitchell?' repeated Lalagé blankly.

'Yes, about Mr Mitchell,' reiterated Mrs Verey, and she spoke more quickly, and her reddening face almost startled Lalagé. 'I hear from my servants that you are almost always about with him, and it is my duty to warn you; and you shall hear me, you shall hear me!' she almost screamed, as Lalagé's face, white with hardly suppressed passion, turned towards her.

That lifted voice did for the girl what her own efforts could scarcely have accomplished; she *would not* get loud and angry like this woman. She turned away her face again, and Mrs Verey went on.

'You are always about with him, I hear from good authority; and do you think he means anything, I want to know? Do you think he really means anything? What are you better than other girls that he should not throw you off as he threw them off, break your heart as he broke theirs! And because I warn you, wishing to save you, you turn upon me.'

Then, for the first time, Lalagé spoke, forcing her voice to calm utterance, though even in her own ears it sounded strange and unnatural.

'I do not believe one word you have said; there must be some mistake,' she said. 'I believe Mr Mitchell to be a religious man, more so than most people,' she added, suppressing the 'slanderers and talebearers' that rose to her lips; 'and as for all you have said about myself, I must tell you that it shall in no way influence my conduct. Mr Mitchell is a personal friend of my sister and myself.'

'In no way influence your conduct?' retorted Mrs Verey in her heated way. 'Is it of no consequence to you that your conduct is the talk of all Grimswold?'

'And what is all Grimswold?' asked Lalagé scornfully. 'A handful of servants, and poor people, and—you. Besides, again, I must say that I do not believe you; people, that is you and your servants, cannot talk about me in the way you mean, for I have done nothing to deserve it.'

'Twice you have given me the lie,' said the infuriated woman coarsely; 'and yet I could give you the proofs of that man's perfidy.'

'If they were verbal proofs,' said Lalagé, 'I would not hear them; if they were written proofs, I would not read them. You have insulted me grossly,' she went on with a sudden blaze of passion, 'and you must never do so again—never speak to me on this subject, for I will not endure it.'

Mrs Verey lifted up her voice, but Lalagé interrupted her.

'If you say one more word to me about all this,' she said, 'I will jump out, and leave the reins to you.'

Mrs Verey could not drive, and the girl's face was determined enough for anything; so she thought it best to close the matter with a surly: 'As you please; I have done my duty.'

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Only once did she break out again, just before they reached their destination.

'Where are my girls?' she asked.

'Three are in the carriage with my sister,' said Lalagé; 'the other three with Mr Mitchell.'

'O my poor lambs!' said the mother. 'If I had only known, I would never have allowed Mr Mitchell to be shut up with them alone all this time without me.'

'You need not return in this way,' said Lalagé in a tone which gave distinct assurance that she would by no means be allowed to do so.

This drive was almost unendurable to her: she could not bear the unavoidable vicinity of her foe. For a disagreement of any sort, surely few fields of battle can be worse than a pony-carriage; that 'can't-get-away' feeling is so dreadful.

At last they arrived at their destination; but there were still some minutes more of endurance till succour, in the shape of the *Raven* flies, should arrive, for Lalagé had driven almost fiercely, and had the lightest vehicle.

When the big curate came to help them out, she held out her hands to him with a show of eagerness, in a mute defiance of Mrs Verey, who got down on the other side unassisted. They had agreed to lunch at the foot of the encampment, so here they had the cloth spread; and whilst James was busy with the hampers, they walked round the hill, waiting to ascend it until their repast was over. Lalagé was in a silent rage. She had thought that the very loneliness of this place made it free from human bitterness, though it might be somewhat desolate, but her foot had trodden on a nest of vipers such as she had never known in her London home, and their venom made all the air poisonous to her.

She was too just and liberal to visit her anger towards the mother upon the children, so she tried hard to make things pleasant to the Misses Verey; but they gathered together like frightened sheep, and had nothing to say. They avoided Lalagé, for any contiguity with the curate was evidently tabooed, and the curate was always by her side. She was glad of it. It was an opportunity of openly taking his part before this woman, and of shewing, too, that her words had in no way daunted her.

Thus, with the petty thoughts of To-day surging through her mind, and destroying all its calm, she stood on ground where, probably, in the distant Long-ago the flower of English bravery lifted up fearless hearts to the God of battles. But that was Past, and this was Present; so the living dog swallowed up the dead lion.

'Two armies—Charles I.'s and Cromwell's—lay here opposite to one another for some time,' said the curate; 'but I don't know if they came to actual blows.'

His words conveyed no idea to silent, gloomy Lalagé: he could not but notice her changed manner, and wondered what caused it. 'Perhaps she is unhappy. Ah, I am unhappy too!' he thought in his tender sympathy, and the only difference he made was to be more gentle, more watchful of her than ever.

All through luncheon, Lalagé sat in angry silence; whilst Belle wondered, and did the honours, and talked to Mrs Verey. Only once she joined in the conversation, breaking in abruptly.

'Beauty is deceitful and vain,' Mrs Verey was saying.

'Then why was it created?' Lalagé said. 'Ah, I think I like beauty and vanity better than age and wisdom.'

Then, the meal being over, she got up and walked away, making a pretty picture against the grim hill-side, as she moved along in her offended dignity. Her muslin dress was looped up with broad blue bands, shewing puffings and frillings on the petticoat below; and what with her light gold-coloured hair, small hat, and floating veil, she looked the very personification of the youth and beauty against which Mrs Verey was inveighing.

The curate, having finished his uncomfortable and dejected repast, got up and followed her shortly, and the Misses Verey sat silent round their mother and Belle. It was an awkward pause; and, but for the way in which her previous 'duty' had been received, Mrs Verey would probably again have relieved herself of the burden that lay on her conscience; but, happily, Lalagé's lesson had sufficed.

The girl wandered on round the hill-side till a sudden turn hid her from sight: then she paused, and stood gazing out on the landscape with eyes that saw nothing of its beauty. So standing, the curate found her.

'Have you ever been up to the top?' he asked.

'No,' she said shortly.

'Won't you come now? The view is well worth it, and I don't fancy you will mind the climbing. I will help you all I can—if you will let me.'

She had snubbed him, but he would not be snubbed—only crept back humbly to her feet like a loving, ill-used dog. Could she help being touched?

'Let us go,' she said, with her old frank smile and voice.

So they went, clambering up the steep ascent, every now and then pausing to take breath, and all the way those big, happy, awkward hands of the curate were stretched out to help her. At last the summit was gained, and a little cry of joy broke from Lalagé.

'It makes the world feel so large,' she said.

There, stretched out before her, lay that beautiful mouth of the Severn, widening into the sea, and splitting inland into many streams that threw a silver sheeting over the green land wherever they appeared. No distinct course of all these glassy breaks could be traced, just a shining patch marked where they lay, but how they reached the sea at last the eye could not discover. To the right, on flat level ground that looked poor and tame by comparison with Grimswold, lay Gloucester and Cheltenham — further away on still, Malvern, steeped in a blue mist; behind and about Lalagé were the everlasting hills in their mute glory. As she stood gazing with gladdened eyes, anger, and passion, and hatred gradually died out of her.

Then she wandered on a few yards from her companion, who was absently looking down on the well-known scene, and went step by step till she stood at the very edge of the steep declivity. She was on the side of the hill-top opposite the one by which they had ascended, and a bare naked precipice lay below her; she looked down with the usual fatal fascination, then, turning her head away with a strong effort, shut her eyes, and stretched out her hands. 'I cannot move,' she said slowly; 'I am so afraid I shall throw myself over.'

Any other man than that unwise curate would

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have taken the appealing hands and led her quietly out of danger, but that would not suffice him. With an ejaculation of dismay and apprehension, he plunged forward in his ungainly strength and lifted her in his arms. In an instant, her late terror was forgotten, and if at first she did not speak, it was only because passion stifled her utterance. 'How dare you—how dare you?' she gasped, as he set her down all ruffled and crumpled.

He hardly took in the meaning of her words; he could not read the signs written in her indignant eyes and flushed cheeks; suddenly, as it seemed to him, his great love overleaped the frail barriers he had placed round it, and carried him away. 'I couldn't help it,' he said; 'I was so afraid you would fall. And how pretty you are—prettier than any one else in all the world;' but even whilst he was speaking a sudden chill came over him, for as Lalagé walked away from him, he could not but be conscious of her displeasure.

'Forgive me,' he said, recovering his lost ground with a great stride, and his voice changed, a tone of humble penitence coming into it; 'oh, forgive me, Miss Lalagé.'

'How dare you be rude to me?' she said turning round. 'Everybody is rude to-day, I think.'

'Not I,' he cried—'not I. I could not do anything to hurt or vex you;' and the pain in his voice was not without a subtle flattery.

She stood looking at him half-puzzled, and then she said: 'Are you sorry?'

'Very sorry,' he said earnestly; 'I would rather do anything than vex you—anything in the world. If you only knew—if you would only let me say half I feel—I have been so unhappy'——

'Hush!' said Lalagé, but she spoke more gently; 'if you and I are to be friends, you must not talk in this way.'

'I won't, if you don't like,' said the easily daunted man dejectedly, 'for I could not get on without your friendship.'

'And my friendship you shall always have,' said Lalagé.

Thinking over those stories of jiltings and broken hearts of which Mrs Verey had told her, she at once dismissed them from her mind as totally improbable in connection with a man so easily repressed. 'I don't think he'd have courage for it,' she thought, half scornfully, yet assuring herself that she liked him all the better for his ready submission.

They walked on in silence for a few minutes; but the awkwardness wore off when they began to climb down, and help was needed and given; then the curate talked to her about his work and her district, and that common ground was very pleasant to both.

It was nearly time to set off on their homeward way when they rejoined the rest of the party; by this time Lalagé's spirits had risen, and she walked up to them talking and laughing, more than she would have done had not Mrs Verey been present. And when the carriages arrived, she drove him off triumphantly under the very eyes of her foe, giving rise to an amount of foolish bliss on the part of the curate, which this unexpected circumstance was never intended to produce.

Arrived at home, she told Belle she had behaved very ill in leaving her alone all the afternoon with those horrible people; 'but I could not help it,' she added; 'I should only have been rude to that odious woman if I had staid. She was so horrid all the way going out, that was why I took Mr Mitchell back; she said she was afraid he would contaminate her lambs.'

Then she went wearily up-stairs. She could not tell her sister all that had passed; that unwise outbreak of the curate's forbade it. She could not afford to lose her only friend, she thought, and if a third person knew of what had passed, their intercourse would be necessarily constrained; besides, she wished to prove herself his champion in Mrs Verey's sight. She was lonely and hurt, and the curate's friendship seemed almost indispensable just then. A little cloud had obscured that friendship that very day; but surely she had dispersed it. She would not look up straight, or she must have seen that it was there still, hanging over her head, the dark cloud of his love, ready to break into big, sudden drops of passionate words that could not be recalled. By not flying while there was yet time, Lalagé was courting the storm; meanwhile, she was only saying to herself: 'He will never be so foolish again.'

CHAPTER VIII.—A BETRAYED HEART.

October was gone; it had rounded itself off in beauty and brilliancy; and sullen November had come, taking revenge for the favour lavished upon its sister month by constant clouds, and darkness, and rain. Day after day, misty sheets came like gray walls over the hills, and then, with advancing march and deepening colour, poured pitilessly over Grimswold, sometimes in sudden gusts, sometimes in wearisome monotony. All colour and foliage had been washed off the trees, leaving only bare black twigs and branches in a dismal fretwork. The hills looked dark, and gloomy, and forbidding; and, for the matter of that, so did the house to Lalagé, who would sit by the window watching the desolate outside world.

That she had no inside world to which she could turn, was, of course, matter of regret; but is it not so with many women? Is there, indeed, one who has not, at some period of her life, found the want of some duty, necessity, obligation for employment—profession, in fact—rise up within her as a terrible lack? Whether it be real kindness or wisdom to provide practical prevention for such dreary blanks, the writer does not say or know; merely stating a fact, which will scarcely be contradicted by those best qualified to judge this question, and trusting that future ages will be wiser than we are, in solving the problem of keeping our women womanly, and yet giving them some occupation to fill up these empty hours; few have either courage, or method, or originality enough to make it for themselves.

Of that happy few, Isabel Hesketh was one; she was a woman very little influenced by outer circumstances. Indeed, bright days came to her with her thirty-five years, rather as a gift, a revelation, a soft temporary gilding given to life, than as a necessity.

But with Lalagé it was just the contrary; she expected a full, bright life: it was not very long since her daily studies had occupied all her time, and then the new life with its bustle and gaiety had come to her, and as long as its novelty lasted was delightful. Sometimes she wondered if she would change places with her old self now, were

the choice given her, but the answer was always in the negative. She felt too depressed for anything of the kind; and yet this present life was depressing too, so utterly lonely. Never mind, she would say to herself; it would be different in summer, it would be all right then; but she could not conceal a certain dim knowledge, that she had already got more of that enjoyment from the beautiful world which summer would create than she would ever get again. She had learned it by heart, but it did not fill her heart; indeed that heart felt very empty just then. She used to think—sitting there by the window whilst the rain poured steadily down—that of course all the old friends had forgotten her by this time: an empty place in London is soon filled again.

She would think, too, that she could now understand the solemn stolidity on the faces of country-people: she used to fancy it was caused by stupidity; but now she changed her mind; she was convinced it came from awe—the awe that the enclosing hills, and the silence, and the loneliness must create—the awe that she felt slowly creeping over herself. 'That is what people call shyness, I suppose,' she said, and remembered that the Misses Verey were shy, very shy. Should she grow narrow, and cramped, and ignorant, like them? Yes, for she was not wise or strong enough to stand against it, like Belle. Should she be always weak and foolish? she wondered, whilst contemptuous tears filled her eyes.

Then her irrelevant thoughts would wander away to the one new friend she had made up in these lonely hills, and unconsciously the remembrance soothed her. Some instinct told her that he was *her* friend, not Belle's, for she felt intuitively that her sister did not like the curate.

He had not been to the Hill House since the picnic; certainly it had rained so incessantly that even that unwise man could find no excuse for breaking into the pretty drawing-room with muddy boots and splashed raiment; but Lalagé would not, in her own mind, accept this fact as sufficient excuse. 'Most likely,' she thought, 'he saw how cross I was that dreadful day, and will never come again.' Meanwhile, the rain dripped a mournful accompaniment to her gloomy thoughts, and made her feel very sorry for herself.

But that very evening the curate came. He had been busy all those wet days writing sermons in his unnaturally small hand; it was his usual employment in such weather; but having accomplished a satisfactory little pile, he could not resist the temptation, to which he had now yielded. That he had squeezed on gigantic goloshes over those big boots was a necessary sacrifice known only to himself, for he thrust them into his pockets on the steps outside, all wet and muddy as they were.

Lalagé was glad to see him, very glad; and even Belle welcomed any one from the outer world; so all three spent a pleasant evening, and one unwise heart was unduly elevated. Whilst it was throbbing without in its foolish happiness, Lalagé within was feeling brightened and comforted, and very glad that he still seemed disposed to continue her friend.

But next day, and the day after, and the day after that, the rain continued pitilessly, and the gloom grew into her heart again. It is a dreary season, at best of times, that sorrowful November weather, doubly dreary when there is no inner warmth and light to counteract the outer cold and darkness: for the first time in her life this girl without resources realised all this.

Weeks passed before the rain stopped and the dull leaden sky cleared. During those weeks, the utmost that the sisters could do was to creep to the half-empty church on Sundays. The churchyard was deserted; the poor people who lived up in the hills had to do without their weekly holiday; there were no rustic dinners spread out on the tombstones now (in winter the few who came for both services were allowed to go into one of the National schoolrooms); even the Sunday school, the curate told Lalagé, was nearly deserted, so it was of no use attempting to go there.

At last the weather broke, and with a thrill of joy Lalagé woke one morning to find a sunbeam lying across her bed. That it was pale and sickly to a degree, hardly a sunbeam properly so called, was all overlooked, and she put out her hand to lie in it with almost childish delight: she was set free again.

All the morning she was at her district, listening to long stories of sorrow and privation with a sweet patience and gentleness, which shewed that, idle and purposeless as she had but now proved herself, there were yet substrata in her heart that were not utterly worthless. Had her district been even more needy than it was, it would have been better for her; as it was, little but sympathy and patience to listen to long stories was required of her. Pecuniary relief she gave more often, perhaps, than was necessary; but, to her inexperience, it seemed terrible that seven or eight human beings should be obliged to live on eight shillings a week. She did not know that that sum in Grimswold was equal to double the amount in a town.

Lalagé went home to luncheon bright and cheerful after her morning's work. Then she set out for a solitary ramble up over the hills; she walked on till, coming to the little wood visible from their drawing-room windows, she paused, and, after a moment's hesitation, went in.

She knew it well now, having been there many times; but she wanted to see if all the gorgeous summer shimmer of light and shade had really died out. Ah, yes, there was no vestige of it left. Standing on the broad cart-road, which led straight through the wood, she wondered how beauty *could* so die, 'fade as a leaf.' It was damp, and cold, and wretched; the decaying stumps, on which she had often seated herself in summer, were black, and oozing with moist corruption; the fair summer dresses of the trees lay rotting on the ground. The very trunks and branches of the trees looked black and sodden with the constant rain, stretching out their bare arms in fruitless yearnings. Alone there, in the silence, she likened herself to them, and something of the old dreary mood came over her. It was a comfort to think that it might now be walked off, instead of idly endured in the confinement of the house; so, with a little shiver, she passed on.

Suddenly she stopped; she heard steps behind her, and a half-terror of the loneliness so broken made her look round. There, at the entrance of the wood, was the big curate, coming to her as fast as ungainly strength and long strides could bring him. She stopped with a half-smile; that almost comic apparition put her dark thoughts to flight.

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'How fast you walk,' she said as he came up.

'I saw you before me as you came up the hill,' he said, telling only a half-truth; for he had seen her from the Grimswold street, and had immediately made up his mind to follow her.

Those wet days had done something for him too; the love which had been simmering in his heart for six whole months had suddenly reached boiling-heat, and was now seething and bubbling. The loneliness of the past few weeks had painfully developed his susceptibility. Ah, if only a fresh face had come before him at this juncture, Lalagé's story might have been different; but both were bounded by the same limited horizon, which made present object of preternatural importance.

'Are you walking this way?' was his next unnecessary question, as he strode by her side along the rutted cart-road, full of yellow little pools.

'I think so,' said Lalagé laughing. 'Where are you going?'

'Old Grainger lives at the other side of this wood,' he said; 'but I sha'n't do more than just ask how he is this afternoon. I saw him this morning.'

So they went on, talking of the work which lay close to both their hearts, till Grainger's cottage was reached. Then the curate asked if he might shew her a certain famous view a little further on, and Lalagé consented. 'Though scarcely any view can be worth looking at, at this time of the year,' she said.

Then suddenly—(what brought it on? Was it the dark landscape on which they were gazing?—was it a sudden turn of the path, or the shelter of the hillside on which they stood?—was it the faint yellow sunlight that fell on them in pale dying beams, like a failing voice calling to them out of the distant heavens that life was brief and death was near, and human joy very fleeting, and human yearning never to be satisfied on earth?—or was it just the unwise impatience of a foolish man?) suddenly the curate, in rushing, passionate words, poured out his whole heart to the girl standing beside him.

How he began, he did not know; but having begun, he went on without let or hindrance, in a flow of language which almost astonished him, though he was by no means unaccustomed to such pleading. He had loved before, he said to himself, but never as he loved now; and this belief tinged his words with the passionate pathos of a man who knows but one such love in a lifetime.

He told her he knew he was unworthy of her in every way, but that none could love her better than he did—that he had been so happy, and unhappy too, since knowing her—that all his life had seemed changed—that he had meant to keep all he felt to himself; but suddenly, without warning, his heart had broken out of bounds, and forced him to utter words which he should never regret, 'If—if—you are not angry with me, Miss Lalagé.'

She stood with averted head turned towards the mournful landscape, and her quick faint flush was flitting to and fro over her face, but she made no answer.

So he went on, telling that 'old story' over again, till he was touched by his own earnestness, moved by his own eloquence, and rose to heights that were new to him. He would not trouble her, he did not wish to be selfish; if she bade him, he would keep his misery out of her sight, and live on in hopelessness, but his love he could not part with; that sacrifice she must not desire at his hands—always and for ever he must think her the dearest and best the world contained. He was unworthy—ah, he knew that too well; but in one thing he was supreme—his love for her; none could rival him in that. Sobs came into his voice before he had finished, and there were small tears in his foolish eyes; but it was not till he descended to common ground, and again asked if she were angry, that Lalagé turned her head.

'I am not angry,' she said softly, and his heart gave a great throb, as he saw that her eyes too were misty with tears—'I am not angry, but you must know as well as I do that all you have said would have been better left unsaid.'

'But'—he began, 'perhaps—is it possible that in time'——

'Hush!' said Lalagé; 'let us leave this subject alone for ever; I don't want to lose my friend,' she said with a tremulous smile, looking up in his face.

Lighted up by the dying autumn sunlight, she thought that face looked suffering, and earnest, and truthful, and she was not keen-sighted enough to detect the underlying weakness. That she had saddened him—had, perhaps, laden him with a life-long sorrow, was a thing to be grievously mourned and sorrowed over, and called fresh tears to the violet eyes.

'Good-bye,' she said, holding out her hand: 'I shall go home the other way.'

'Let me come with you,' he pleaded, keeping her hand one unnecessary moment in his: 'I will not trouble you by talking.'

So they went home together and yet apart, with a silence, which Lalagé felt to be very pathetic, lying between them. A more decided man would have wrung an answer from a more undecided woman long before this; but then the curate was not decided, nor was Lalagé, in her own estimation, by any means undecided. How could she be undecided? Did she not know that both her father and Belle would have been only angry if they had an idea of what had passed that day? And apart from this, she could not help feeling, without exactly knowing why, that any hearing of such a case would be altogether out of the question.

And yet she liked him, liked him much, and was sorry, very, very sorry for him. One thing she was vexed about—why, in that first break, when he had asked her if she were angry, why had she not answered him at once? Why had she allowed him to go on with his pleading, when she—knowing that only one answer was possible—had no right to listen to such pleading? Why had she stood on the hill-side with averted head, and no word to say, with pity and liking surging through her heart, and all the air filled with her silence? Ah, why?

With different thoughts the curate strode by her side, his pace obliging Lalagé almost to run, so as to keep up with him. That he had been allowed to say so much, was an unexpected delight, and he was resolved to follow up his attack. The firm fair fortress already had a gap in her walls, where those fervent words of his had entered. The breach should be wider soon; then wide enough for a man, even though a big one, to pass through

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and take possession. Besides, he could not but be pleased at the way in which he had done his work; he had spoken well, he felt, and that consciousness would not allow him to be quite dispirited. Yes, he would try again, he thought, and heaved a big sigh: 'A man can but try.'

So busy were both with their thoughts, that that long walk was not nearly so awkward as might have been expected; besides, the curate's increasingly accelerated pace greatly shortened it. Still the darkness was gathering over Grimswold when breathless Lalagé reached the Hill House, having parted with the curate at the head of her own district. She went up to her room, locked the door, and flung herself on the bed in a flood of tears.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

Our learned and scientific societies have begun operations for the present session, and now we shall have weekly notices of scientific doings for some months to come, some very dry, some suggestive and animating, but all, we may hope, tending to the advancement of learning and science. The dredging expedition of last summer in the seas off the north-west of Ireland, conducted by Dr Carpenter and Professor Wyville Thomson, supplied a very interesting opening topic to the Royal Society. Science gains largely by this expedition: in the natural history of the deep sea; in questions of geology, besides certain branches of physics, as will appear when the detailed reports come to be published.—The Geographical Society were fortunate in leading off with what seems like a scrap of good news of Dr Livingstone, which implies that not long since the enterprising traveller was alive and well to the southward of the great lakes, and had, as he believed, discovered the true source of the Nile.

The fact that natural science is worth study is growing more and more into recognition at our universities. Cambridge announces that lectures on various branches of it will be added to the established courses of instruction within her walls; Oxford will have to do the same; and our public schools will find out that astronomy, or mathematics, or geology would be an acceptable pabulum to hundreds of minds to which Latin and Greek are absolutely repulsive. But signs of change appear. Eton College and Westminster School are henceforth to be ruled by new governing bodies; and the statute requires that one member of each body shall be appointed by the President and Council of the Royal Society. The condition is attached that the two gentlemen shall be members of the Church of England; but, appointed by the Royal Society, they will of course be scientific, and will no doubt do what they can towards the introduction of science into the two famous schools. At a time when even the sultan is trying to reform the system of public instruction throughout Turkey, it won't do for England to lag behind, in the fond belief that the old ways are sufficient.

Mr Aldis of Manchester has published a few results, from a discussion of the nebular theory, which involve a point in the structure of the earth deserving attention. 'It has been remarked,' he says, 'that there is a tendency in mountain-chains to run north and south, and to present steep slopes to the west, gentle declivities to the east. This may arise from the contraction of the earth. If a portion of unsupported crust sink towards the centre, it will subside on to that which is moving east less rapidly than itself, and, in consequence, will, so to speak, fall over towards the east, the surface forming a gradual slope to the east, and the fractured western edge a precipitous descent to the west.'—Applying the same argument to our satellite, Mr Aldis continues: 'In the moon, too, we see proofs of the contraction carried on long after the stage in which we now find the earth. The spheroid of the moon has contracted since it assumed that shape, and, contracting less in the longer diameter, is now more spheroidal than it should be according to theory, while the thickened crust, no longer crushed down on the interior, has left cavities in which the moon's ocean and atmosphere are entombed for ever.'

Among the expeditions for observing the solar eclipse of last August, was one sent out by the Nautical Almanac Office at Washington, which made their observations at Mount Pleasant, in the state of Iowa. Professor Pickering, in his report thereof, shews reason for believing that the corona seen during an eclipse of the sun does not belong to the sun, but is an effect of the moon's atmosphere. This is assuming that the moon has an atmosphere, and is opposed to the commonly received theory. Allowing the assumption, he remarks, 'the corona would then be caused by refraction, light reaching the observer from parts of the sun already eclipsed.'

An electrical apparatus has been for some years in use for measuring the velocity of a shot or projectile when fired from a cannon; and now an instrument has been invented which measures and records the rate of movement of the shot while it is still within the gun. This instrument, called a chronoscope, is the invention of Captain Noble: it consists of a series of metal discs, which, on the turning of a handle, rotate with great rapidity—one hundred and twenty-five times in a second. When required for use, the discs are coated with lampblack, in front of each one a metallic pointer is placed, and the whole apparatus is connected by wires with an electric battery, and with the gun. But how is the passage of the shot inside the thick heavy tube to be noted? In this way. Holes are bored six inches apart through the substance of the gun from the outside to the bore. In these holes, a kind of hammer connected with the wires is suspended. As soon as the shot begins to move, the hammer in the first hole breaks the wire; a spark from the electric battery immediately flies from the pointer above mentioned, and makes a bright spot on the disc. The same thing is repeated as soon as the shot reaches the second hole, and so on through the length of the gun: and as the rate of movement of the discs is known, the bright spots imprinted thereon become records of the rate of movement of the shot or projectile through every six inches of the gun. With this instrument, and certain kinds of improved gunpowder now coming into use, the supremacy of English gunnery will be fully maintained.

We have on different occasions pointed out the fact, that in the working of railways there is a great waste of power, enormously heavy trains being employed to transport a comparatively light

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number of passengers, and we have shewn that the true economy of railway management consists in the avoidance of this waste. The question has now been discussed at length in the *Times;* and Mr Fairlie, who proposes a new construction of locomotives and railway carriages, and demonstrates his views by working models, may hope to see them adopted. He does away with the present form of wheels, and mounts the carriages on a 'bogie,' or wheeled truck, in the same way as an ordinary coach is mounted on its fore-wheels. The bogie wheels, running independently of each other, travel easily along curves, without risk of running off, or of grinding the rails to pieces; while the carriage being mounted only on the central pin of the bogie, is saved from the shocks and jolts to which the carriages now in use, with their fixed axles, are liable. The locomotive, in like manner, is to be mounted on bogies: there are to be no buffers; but the carriages are to have circular ends, and be screwed closely up to one another. By this arrangement, they will adapt themselves to all the curves of the railway, the cost of travelling will be lessened, and its discomforts diminished.

Agriculturists have such a grand future before them, that anything relating to improvements in agriculture becomes more and more worthy of notice, especially when it appears to illustrate what may be regarded as the economy of nature. Slowly, but apparently surely, practical men are finding out that sewage should not be wasted, but that when poured on the land, it becomes at once innoxious and a source of fertility. On this point, the latest particulars from the camp at Aldershot are instructive. The wild heath-land amid which the camp is situate contains no vegetable soil, but is composed of gravel and sand, resting on a dense layer of iron sand almost as hard as rock. Of this unpromising soil, one hundred and thirty acres were trenched and broken up; drains were put in, and for a year all the sewage and drainage of the camp was made to run over it in a continuous stream. With twelve thousand men and two thousand horses, the camp had been very offensive; but it was purified by the experimental farm; for as soon as the sewage began to run over the land, it was completely deodorised.

By this thorough saturation of the ground the land became so fertile that it produced yearly per acre, of potatoes, from 4 to 5 tons; swedes, 12 tons; mangold-wurzel, 18 tons; garden turnips, 300 bushels; and 16,000 plants of cabbage. A portion of the land is laid down with Italian rye-grass, which is cut from four to six times a year, for horses and cows, yielding at the lowest an average of 6 tons to the acre, and 14 tons at the highest. By this succession of crops, 40 tons of rye-grass are got from each acre yearly. The quantity of land at present under cultivation is—potatoes, 26 acres; Italian rye-grass for feed, 29 acres; the same for hay, 15¾ acres; and for green crops, 6½ acres. This acreage absorbs the whole summer sewage of the camp and barracks; and in this we have a most instructive example of what may be accomplished by intelligent labour. In whatever part of the world—in the temperate or the torrid zone, camps may cease to be *foci* of disease, and become centres of fertility. Cities, towns, and villages may pour out their foul refuse until all their environment shall exult with luxuriant crops of grass and grain, and with fruits in wonderful abundance.

Mr Palmer, who accompanied the Sinai Survey Expedition as palæographer, to study inscriptions, and subjects connected with the language and history of the country, has presented a report to the senate of the university of Cambridge on his travel and its results. To scholars and students, the particulars cannot fail to be of the highest interest, while they will enlist the attention of all readers of Biblical literature. Mr Palmer has again departed for Egypt, with a view to explore the Tih, or 'Wilderness of the Wanderings,' where he 'confidently anticipates a rich harvest of Biblical and geographical discoveries.' On his return he intends to publish (1) a complete collection of the Sinaitic inscriptions, with translations, and a dissertation on their origin and value; (2) an account of the Bedawin inhabitants of Sinai, their history, manners, customs, and traditions; (3) the history of Sinai as told by the Arab historians; and (4) a dissertation on the nomenclature of Bible lands, and a popular account of the Sinai expedition.

WINTER'S WREATH.

The winter's wreath has charms for me;
The barren heath, the leafless tree,
The holly hedge, the purling rill,
Retain a pledge of nature still.
The fir, the laurel, box, and yew,
Give freshness to the wintry view.

There the brown mead, the swollen mere,
The rime-bespangled forest here,
Declare the wondrous Artist-hand
Which all this varied scene has planned.

Look on the crown of silvery snow
That rests for aye on yon mountain's brow,
While streams glide down to the valley beneath,
Waters of life from the springs of death!
When my head, like his, is withered and hoar,
May my heart its fountains of love still pour!

And see the mantle of white that is spread
O'er the stiffened earth, like a sheet o'er the dead,
Now the golden days of Autumn have fled.

The Frost-king binds with icy chain;
But Spring comes, queen-like, crowned with flowers,
And the tyrant yields to her gentle reign,
And melts at her feet into penitent showers;
And fair Nature, released from her prisoning tomb,
Comes wreathed divinely with odorous bloom!

Thus the shroud shall change its sad glimmer of white
For the rainbow hues of celestial light,
A garment meet for the honoured guest
Whom the Master shall bid to His wedding feast!

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TOO LONG A HOLIDAY.

A STORY IN THREE PARTS.—PART I.

I'd got it into my head that I deserved a holiday; so, not to throw away what in a manner belonged to me, I goes an' asks for it; an', no sooner said than done—I got it. Whether I ought to ha' had as long a one as I did have, I leave you to be the judge, when you have heard my account.

You see I'd been a hard-working sort all my lifetime, an' so had my father before me; an' so, for all as I know to the contrary, had his father before him. Not as I would wish, you understand, to represent that as any particular merit of ours; we worked hard just because we were compelled to it, leastwise we couldn't help it, not unless we'd had any fancy for starvation, which none of us, so far as I ever heard, did have. So long as I can call to mind, such victuals as was eat in our family any one week depended on what work had been done the week as was past. So we come, o' course, to reckon holidays rather uncommon—a sort of special perquisites proper for our betters in a general way—but I can't say it ever entered my head, so to speak, to consider 'em dangerous, till the time I'm going to tell about.

Talking of my father, you must know he was a warehouseman, and one o' them contented sort o' souls that, I do believe, from the first day when he was big enough to carry a parcel till he left off warehousin' the month before he died, neither knew nor cared anything to speak on about that part of the world that does not lie exact between Lower Thames Street and Tooley Street, by way of London Bridge. But it was the opinion o' some o' them as knowed me when I was a little un, that I'd got a bit of a headpiece, and ought to be put to a trade. My father, he said he'd never, as he could tell on, heard of any one of all his family as had been sent to a trade; but at last, after he'd had on his studying-cap, as you may say, for a week or two, he gave in as that was no reason why none of 'em ever should, provided they had the ability and a place could be found for 'em. The old man—not that he was, rightly speaking, old, only it comes natural-like to call him so—had his weak side; and though he never would allow it—not he—he'd have agreed to drive a night-cab first!—I've always fancied his pride was a bit flattered by the notion. However, inquiries was set on foot, it being agreed I was to have a chance above warehousing and portering; an', after a time, I was sent off to make a start as a riveter's boy, in a ship-building yard, down about Blackwall way. A touch of reading an' writing, as I got from an old soldier that had set up a night-school at Shadwell, helped me along slippin'; and, in the course of time, I rose from helping riveters to being a riveter myself, and so got forward to boiler-making. With this and that—making an effort now and then, and getting a few good chances—by the time I was five-and-twenty year old, I was doing well as a working-engineer, and had no call to grumble; for I was making good wages, and had as comfortable a little house, as good an' tidy a little wife, an' two as pretty little mites o' boys (one of 'em a babe in arms), as e'er a working-man in the Isle o' Dogs.

'Jim,' says my wife to me, just as I'd finished my breakfast one Friday morning (it was at the latter end of May, three year agone)—'Jim,' says she, 'to-morrow's your birthday.'

'Is it, Mary?' says I, putting on my cap, and laying hold of the door-latch.

'Is it?' says she, a little scornful-like. 'Why, I don't believe as you'd ever know you'd been born at all, if it wasn't for me a-remindin' of you.'

'It's enough for me to remember as you an' them two babbies o' yours 'as bin born,' says I again—not to be done, an' taking a rap at her in turn.

'There, go along wi' ye!' says she. 'Look 'ere, Jim, can't you just ask off for the day?'

'What for?' I says.

'Why,' she makes answer, 'there's a van a-goin' to Eppin' Fores' to-morrow, an' I've a got enough put by to pay for a out; so we might go an' enjoy ourselves—just for once in a way.'

I stood thinking a minute, when she comes up to

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me in that coaxing way as she always had wonderful strong, and puts her arm round my neck, and says she: 'We ha'n't a had never a 'oliday since the week we was married, Jim; an' this blessed darlin'' (meaning my eldest son), 'as were three year old last We'n'sd'y was three weeks, ha'n't a got no more idear o' what the country 's like nor them there fire-irons. So do, Jim; there 's a dear!'

That was what put it all into my head. Still I don't know as I should have done it, but for her kissin' me, to bind me over like—you understand? Not that I ever had the heart to go an' tell her as much, God bless her! though it all did turn out so bad. Off I goes to the yard at Poplar, and at dinner-time I asks the foreman, an' gets leave, an' goes home with the news as merry as may be.

So, on the Saturday morning, away we rides in the van, and rarely pleasant it was for a certainty. There was Mary, in a new merino gown, as she 'd been getting ready on the quiet, you see—as women will, just to surprise them as they've a liking for. And there was my son an' heir, decked out superfine in his Sunday's frock—a sky-blue with velvet trimmings—and a straw hat with a blue ribbon round it. And there, as a matter o' course, was King Baby, a-crowing and a-spluttering as you never did and never could imagine, you know, hardly; with a smart new feather in his hat, and a pair of red shoes on his little mites of feet, as I could scarcely have got my two thumbs into. And—you may believe me or not, just as you please—if Mary hadn't been an' bought a pink tie for me (she says: 'It 'll improve your looks, Jim,' which, it seemed, wasn't good enough for her, that being a subject she was crotchety on, and I being a trifle pale-like)—and if she hadn't made me put a geranium in my button-hole! So I was as fine a dandy as e'er a one there, an' as light-hearted a buck as ever got took to Eppin' on a summer's day.

Then we had a few neighbours along with us, and so made out a tolerable social party. Not as I should have cared much for company, being well satisfied with Mary an' the boys, but that Harry Winter was among 'em, with his wife and their three well-grown children—two fine, promising boys (one just coming into the yard at Poplar), and as handsome a girl of sixteen as you might wish to see. Harry was a fitter; and a smarter man at his trade there wasn't, not in all the Isle o' Dogs. He was a reserved sort of a man was Harry, and some called him proud and stuck-up; but he could be open-hearted and free enough with them he liked. It wasn't long after that trip to Eppin' as we found out what sort of pride there was in him and his wife. No working-man's family was better dressed, or better looked after at home, than theirs. Many 's the time I 've heard men as were drove to the public by their wasteful sluts o' wives, say: 'Look at Sarah Winter, how she keeps her husband's house with no more money than I bring home;' and many 's the time, too, I 've known poor wasted, wretched women, as would have kept their homes and families comfortable, but for the selfish, bad habits of their husbands, say: 'Why can't you take example by 'Arry Winter, as makes no more nor you do, an' yet can keep 'is wife an' child'en in good victuals, good clothes, and comfort?' And never a one could say that Winter owed any man a penny-piece.

How Harry did talk that day! The light he could throw on many things in our trade that had puzzled my brains nearly out of my head, I shall never forget; and he did it in such a kind and quiet sort of way, without a word of boasting or a sign of a grudge. And with all this, he was as polite, in his unassuming, easy style, to my wife and his own, and the other women of the party, and did many little unthought-of things to make things pleasanter to us all, that no gentleman as society ever made could have equalled him.

Well, as my wife said to me when we got back at night, we had 'a day in a thousand,' and 'enjoyed ourselves perfect an' thorough, as never was.' My little Jim was fair mad with wonder and pleasure. I couldn't tell at first what ailed the child, that he sat down on the grass and pulled his boots off, and then ran about dancing, with 'em in his hand; but when I told him to put them on again, he shook his wise little head, and said: 'No; dey 'll 'poil de p'etty carpet.' You see, we had a carpet, as Mary set great store by, in our parlour at home; and Jimmy had had many a lesson about taking care not to soil it when he came in from the muddy street. But after a while, when Mary and Mrs Winter sat down under the trees, and we got out our baskets and spread handkerchiefs for tablecloths, the children got quite used to the green grass and the pretty field-flowers—so different from such as they were used to in town, where they could only look at 'em from a distance, and couldn't pluck 'em without paying for 'em—and they got as merry as crickets. Then Carry Winter began weaving daisy-chains and necklaces of buttercups, and decorated the little uns till they were near growing into May-day sweeps. The birds all come hopping about to pick up the crumbs we had left; and the youngsters wanted to catch 'em, for they were all sure the little whistlers had flown away from their homes, and got lost, never having seen any but dingy, dusty London sparrows out of cages before. We grown-up people drank each other's health, and Winter sung a song, *Under the Greenwood Tree*, as being suitable to the occasion; and my Mary followed with a simple ballad that had first made me think about her, and taught me to love and win her. When dusk came on, we were as happy as only hard-working townspeople out for a country holiday can be; and most of us felt inclined to agree with little Jimmy when he declared that he 'wouldn't do 'ome no more.' However, we got the little urchins packed away in the vans, most of 'em fallen asleep by this time; and jogged comfortably back to London. That night, I wouldn't have changed places with any king as wore a crown! though perhaps that 's not saying much; for some of 'em were having but a poor time of it just then.

Now, you would suppose, when we got home on Saturday night, my holiday was over; but it wasn't: I only wish it had been.

PART II.

The next day after our out to Eppin' Forest, being Sunday, Harry Winter he come round after dinner-time to our house. Well, he seemed to be as pleasant-like in his ways as he 'd shewed his-self the day afore; an' so long as he stopped talking afore the wife, an' playing with little Jimmy, you wouldn't ha' thought he 'd got anything particular

serious on his mind, as the manner of speakin' is. But when him an' me goes out after a while for a bit of a stroll, all of a sudden he turned gloomy an' down-spirited, for all the world as if he 'd a got a sentence of penal servitude for life. Poor Harry! it warn't much less as he had got, if only any one on us had a-knowed the meaning o' what he 'd heard.

'Jim, my boy,' says he, 'I 've been hearing bad news.'

'What about?' says I.

'About trade,' he makes answer.

Then he goes on an' tells me what all the world come to know soon enough—how there 'd come about the biggest smash in trade as ever was; and a run on the banks as was like to bring some o' the strongest on 'em down. How 'twas said as many o' the best houses in London would break up, and thousands on thousands of honest, willing, hard-working people would be thrown out of their daily labour and ruined; and all because of the foolishness of traders and speculators as had overrun the safe mark, and the villainy of schemers as had been calculating on the blindness of people that would risk anything to get bigger profits for the use of their money than they could get in fair, straightforward trade. Harry begins to talk of starvation for innocent women an' children; and, says he: 'Jim, I 'm afeard it 'll come on us very nigh first of all.'

Well, you see, I couldn't see, not so far as he could; so I makes light of his fears; and though he kept on shaking his head when I talked of hoping better things than what he was prophesying, I hoped all the more. I can't say as I thought much more about it after we parted; and he went his way home, and I went mine; for, you understand, politics an' general money matters was a touch above me; and so long as my weekly wage come in all right, I wasn't likely to be fearful for the future. So it didn't make no difference, to speak on, with me an' mine that night; and we talked away the Sunday evening, and then went off to sleep as light-hearted as you could wish—talking (me and Mary) about the long holiday we 'd a had since Friday night.

However, when Monday morning came, there was thousands of us workmen standing outside the yard-gates; and we found as there was no more chance of our making a living in the Isle of Dogs. I don't say as most of us made this out all at once; because we didn't. Some of us was weeks before we could believe it, and weeks more before we could understand it. But, by degrees, to some sooner than to others, but to every one of us sure enough an' black enough in time, the terrible truth was made plain. It was made plain by empty cupboards, and empty pockets, and empty stomachs; by empty houses and empty shops; by sad, sickly faces, hollow eyes, and pinched, half-starved women and children all round about our doors; by crowded workhouses and relief-rooms; and by all the signs of famine and disease in the midst of one of the greatest and richest cities in God's world.

'Round about our doors,' didn't I say just now? Well, yes, we held on pretty hard an' tight to 'em, as you may say, an' to what was inside of 'em, just as long as ever we could. But them among us as held out longest found the 'longest' terrible short. Them as was best off had to help them as was poorest; and, afore we could turn ourselves round, up went the rates, and made paupers of them as, only a week or two before, had been what we considered well off. All the rates that ever could be collected, and all the subscriptions that begun to come in, was very little use—as Harry Winter said to me: 'Only a bucket o' water, like, to quench the thirst of a desert;' leastwise that was the way it seemed to us as were in it.

I 'm not a-making any special complaint against anybody in particular. It was natural that landlords should begin to look sharper than common after their rents; for I was given to understand as we working-men was only feeling part of the distress; and that them as had been 'counted rich before found theirselves as poor as we were all of a sudden. Still, it was hard enough for some men, that had paid their rent reg'lar week by week, or quarter by quarter, for years on years, to be turned into the streets, and have their furniture seized, almost without any notice at all, the instant their work stopped, from no fault of their own, you understand, and, as far as any of us could see, no fault of anybody else's as could at least be made anyways accountable.

The change as came over all the district in a few weeks, was to be compared to nothing I ever heard on, but one o' them blights as we are told happens in eastern countries from locusts or droughts. As you walked about the streets in the daytime—fine summer weather all round you—you might see scores o' men, such as had been industrious, honest, respected, an' happy all their lives before, slinking round the corners, and trying to hide theirselves from all as had known 'em, just for all the world as if they 'd a been convicts. Tradesmen as had been prosperous was broke, and shut up their shops by the score a day. Even the publics lost their trade at last, and put up their shutters, and hung out bills with no more on 'em than the two words 'To Let,' and the name of the agent as was to be applied to by nobody—for nobody wanted to take no houses there in such times as we had fallen on. The pawnbrokers lasted out longest, and very good bargains most on 'em made—though no doubt some was honest, and gave as much as they could for pledges; but even they gave in at last; and I daresay very few of them as pledged their last bits of clothing or furniture have ever been well enough off since, to want to look 'em up and redeem their property.

If I was to try all I could, I never should be able to give you an idea of half the poverty and misery I see growing up round me, an' breeding sin an' crime day by day, and night after night, all through that summer. I 've heard a deal of talk among people as know a sight more nor ever I did about the poor-laws and such things; but I never could see the good of making hundreds of honest, broken-down men, as had 'starvation' wrote plain on their faces, go to work breaking stones an' picking oakum in the workhouse yards, before you would give 'em the value of sixpence in bread an' threepence in coppers, to keep their families on for a week. At other times, I make but little doubt that may be a good plan to see if them as asks relief are idle and wilful vagrants; but when there 's no honest work to be done, and a whole township is distressed, and you know very well as them that comes for relief has been paying rates theirselves for years, it do seem hard to treat 'em as if they was prisoners, or at the least impostors.

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Well, however, that was how it was; and when, after a time, it went about as there was work to be got in the country, up in the north, you may be sure them as could go wasn't long setting off to look for it. By that time, many a man was down at his worst—lost his last penny's-worth of goods, starved and sickened till he could hold out no longer. Some that had friends in other parts, had got help, and gone away and turned to any kind of work they could get to make a penny by. And I will say this for some of the gentry in our neighbourhood—more especially the clergymen and their families—that they did all they could, and got up funds, and, as far as the money would reach, helped them as was best known for good character and hardest up to go to places where there was a chance of earning anything at all. But most of the men as had been best off stood out, independent-like to the last; and when there seemed to be a chance in the north, set off to tramp the road, rather than take charity. Them as afterwards was left behind had no choice worth speaking of; and though most of 'em would rather have taken relief out of the rates that they thought they had a right to than take the money of the relief committees, the parish authorities, in most cases, made it so difficult and degrading to get anything at all—even a loaf of bread—that the agents of the relief committees was looked on as the only hope of most. Why, I've seen men that was used to making three and four pounds a week at their trades when times was good, actually break down and cry like babes when the minister or the district visitor has come to their houses of a night to give their wives a sixpence or a shilling's worth of orders on the baker or the grocer. And no wonder; for the strongest and the cleverest in those days was so starved and worn-out they hadn't the strength of children. The women held out best—God bless 'em; they was so hopeful, and tried so hard to keep up the spirits of the men. Ah, I've seen many a good wife or daughter of a broken-down artisan put on a cheerful smile, while there wasn't strength enough in her to keep the life in her body for another month.

But I'm forgetting my story. I was told there was work to be had at Liverpool, and off I went, leaving just a roof and part of the old furniture and a few shillings—the last of our little savings—with Mary and the two little lads. My holiday wasn't over yet, you see.

There's not much call for me to tell you how I footed it from London to Liverpool—getting a lodging at night with old trampers and thieves in casual wards, or falling down under the hedges or haystacks by the roadside, when I was too knocked up to reach a town; and picking up a penny or two in the daytime, when I was lucky, by holding a horse, or sharing the coppers with some other mechanic I might happen to meet on the road, not quite so hard up as myself. More training was wanted, one might suppose, to break down my proud spirit; and I got it, and no mistake, before I'd done. I dragged myself into Liverpool one night without a farthing in my pocket, after a day and a night without a mouthful of food or drink. It was too late to get into the workhouse; and if it hadn't been, I was told I was a good two mile off from it, in that part of the town they call Toxteth Park. I won't say what sort of a park it seemed to me; only I'd just as soon a been anywheres in St Giles's. Well, I couldn't do nothing but crawl into the nearest shelter I could see, which was the doorway of a sort of chapel, an' there try to get a bit of sleep. Time was, as I've heard it said, when religious places used to give help to worn-out, poor travellers; but I didn't find it so that night. I hadn't a been long laid down—I couldn't scarcely have dropped off asleep, because, you see, summer's night as it was, there wasn't so much as a sign of morning—when I was collared and dragged out by a policeman, as took me off to the station-house, and locked me up for not being able to give any account of myself. So I did get a sort of shelter, after all. Next morning, when I was brought before the magistrate, I told my tale; an' he let me go, telling me he thought I hadn't done much good for myself by coming to Liverpool. And so I found it. Why, there was hundreds of men, as good men as me, hanging about the shipyards and the docks, every one of 'em willing, as I was myself, to turn a hand to anything as could be done, to earn a living, or, so to speak, even half-a-quarter of a living. The yards was all full, though the wages was ever so much less than we'd been used to in Poplar and Limehouse; and as for work as a dock-labourer, or anything else, it wasn't to be got.

Still, I wasn't altogether done, though, as you may suppose, a good bit dashed; and I set off again, and tramped it to Glasgow. But there I found only the same state of things. Then back, the other road, to the Tyne, and never a day's work all the way. When the last chance was gone, and I turned Londonwards again, I think my spirit was gone. It's a hard thing for a man like me to say; but, if you'll believe me, I, as had never before been beholden to any man or woman for more than I worked for, was glad to beg a crust of bread. There wasn't much flesh left on my bones then, nor much hope in my heart. I'd only heard once from Mary since I left home; and after I left Liverpool I hadn't the heart to send her word how I'd only found failure everywhere, even if I could have paid the penny postage, which I couldn't. So I tramped it back again, taking all the towns on my way, and asking for any work as such a man as me could do; but they was full everywhere, and not so much as a hand's-turn could I get. Yes, and there was hundreds of men on the road, as I met all along, just as bad off as I was. So the autumn months had gone by, and winter was far on, and my long holiday was as far from an end as it was on that pleasant day in summer when Mary and little Jimmy and the baby and me went for a out to Eppin' Forest.

If you'd a been in Poplar one foggy afternoon in January, anywheres near where my comfortable home used to be in the happy old times, you might ha' seen a skinny skeleton, pinched and blue with the cold, with a long ragged beard, and matted hair, limping along, footsore and lame; without shoes or shirt, or neckerchief or waistcoat; but only a tattered coat, tied with a piece of string across his naked breast, and leaving the arms almost bare, a poor old pair of trousers, worn to shreds from the knees down, and a shabby, greasy bit of a boy's cap on his head. If you'd a been my own brother, you wouldn't ha' known me. I'd hungered all day, and was making for the old spot, with a feeling like a starved wild beast for

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the bit of food I was foolishly thinking there might be in the old cupboard.

You may conclude for yourself whether I'd been miserable before, and whether I was wretched then. What I'd gone through, no tongue can ever tell; and no book would ha' made me believe till I went through it myself. But that night I could ha' been thankful to the merciful Providence, if I'd been allowed only to fall dead in my misery before going on to my own door. You'll excuse me; but when I think it over again, it's almost more than I'm man enough to bear.

I went up the old street. There wasn't a shop open, nor a house-window lighted. When I came to my old place, and saw it dark and lonely, I hadn't got the courage so much as to turn the latch or knock at the door. While I was leaning against the outside, I heard a low moaning sound, as seemed to come from the room we used to call the parlour; and, with a fit of trembling as I could no more account for than you could, I all but dropped on the step. It wasn't as if I'd a known what to think or what to be afraid of; but, you see, I was weak, and I felt lonely and bewildered, as you might say; and, what with the change in myself and the change in the place, and my being so out of heart—why, I wasn't like myself. I believe I should have fainted, but for a woman that opened the door and came hurrying out. She seemed to be very nigh as weak and shook as I was myself; and when she saw me she started back, with a sort of cry, like as if she was afraid. But she mastered herself, as it were, and tried to pass me; but not before I'd struggled with myself, and found strength to say to her in a whisper, as I put my hand on her arm: 'Does Mary Brydges live here?'

'Yes, yes,' says the young woman, speaking in the frightened way she had looked at me; 'she lives there now; but only the Lord above us knows how soon she may die there.'

She turned as she spoke, to hasten down the street, but I laid my hand again upon her arm, and, feeble as I was, I was strong enough to hold her.

'Die!' I cried; 'what do you mean?'

'O God!' she exclaimed, 'is it Jim?'

'Yes,' I makes answer, wondering who she could be; her face seemed so strange to me, and yet as if I ought to know it.

'Jim, Jim,' said she, 'it's no time for smooth words—you must be told: poor Mary has just brought you another child into the world, and there's neither bit nor sup in the place, nor a bed to lie on. I'm going for help.'

She was away before I could speak again. I tottered into the room that was once our prettily furnished, neatly kept parlour; and there, in the deep gloom, I found my Mary, cold and deathly pale, lying on the bare floor, with nought to cover her but one poor thin cotton skirt, that now was folded off herself over the wretched little creature she had just brought into life. Her head was laid in the lap of another woman, pale and starved and almost without a rag to cover her, like herself. What I said or did, I don't know now, and never shall; only, I recollect that after a time, I had her white, cold lips held fast to mine, and a shudder—a weak sort of convulsive shaking—passed over her poor worn frame; and that was all that gave me hope I hadn't lost my Mary.

Sometimes since that night I've thought of one or two sayings I'd oft-times heard, but little thought of before. 'When things are at their worst, they must mend,' is one. But that wouldn't hardly have give me any comfort then, because, you see, nobody can tell what is the worst he may have to come to. You'll be able to understand that I'd found out something of that. But there's a better saying, though I don't know rightly, to speak to, where I could have heard it: it's this: 'Man's extremity is God's opportunity.' It came into my head then, as I held my poor wife in my arms, and looked, almost in the darkness, at the little shadow of the new life she had brought into so much misery. Not that I could understand its meaning fully, as I can now, that I've got stronger; but it gave me the spirit to do what I hadn't had the heart to do for many a day—to put up a little prayer. I fancy, somehow, it was the sight of that little creature, so helpless and so weak—my child—as made me think how helpless and weak I was, and put me in the mind of my Father.

Well, well, we don't seem able—at least I don't—to understand these things. While I was thinking something like what I've just put down, the door opened again, and somebody came in. I heard two voices whispering, and a lucifer was struck, and a candle lit. Then I saw the clergyman of my district, and a lady, plainly dressed, and the woman that had passed me at the door and spoke to me. The minister had a rough old blanket on his arm, and his wife (that was the lady) had a basket in her hand; and as the light fell on the face of the young woman, I saw it was Harry Winter's daughter. Perhaps I didn't see this all at once; for the face was so haggard and wild, the figure so wasted and weak, that it was hard to know her for pretty, merry Carry Winter, who had played with my little Jimmy and the other little ones, and made strings of flowers for 'em at Eppin' Forest. While I was looking on this woman, so changed in eight short months, from the picture of a laughing, happy girl to the mocking image of sinful despair, the lady took my wife gently from my arm, Carry began to cover Mary with the blanket, and the clergyman took me quietly by the shoulder and led me into the next room.

PART III.

To be honest with you, I must say as I did feel hot words coming ready to my lips, when the parson an' me was alone; an' I daresay as I should ha' said 'em fast enough, but for the misery that seemed to stick in my throat. You see, I couldn't make out how any poor creature like my Mary could ha' been left to pine away and sink to such a state as I'd found her in, if the clergyman an' them as professed to be so anxious to help poor people had ha' done their duty. But the parson, he says to me, before I could get a word out: 'O Jim, my poor fellow,' says he, 'why did you not let me know before this? We would have done something, however little, to save your family from such dreadful suffering.'

Why didn't I let him know? Why, just because I wasn't there, an' didn't know myself. Then I found tongue, an' up an' told him all about it—where I'd been, an' what I'd tried to do, an' how I'd failed everywhere; an' how I'd thought all the time as there was friends an' charitable people in the old place as would never ha' let them as was left at home undergo the misery that I'd had

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away. But it seemed poor Mary had felt she would be disgracing me if she took charity or tried the parish till the very last; and her time had come on her sudden, before she expected to be took ill; an' it was all God's mercy in sending Carry Winter to the house, as you may say, in the nick o' time, as she hadn't died there, an' her baby with her, all alone. I ought to be a thankful man when I come to think that worst sorrow of all was not laid on me. My Mary was saved—but only just saved; an' it'll be many a year yet before ever she gets strong again. I think it was the parson's kindness that made him try to draw off my thoughts from my own troubles, and begin to talk about other people's; because he must have known there was more for me to hear than had been told to me yet, you see. Being the clergyman, he'd of course buried little—— But I'll tell you that after. Just then, he kept me ignorant; and he says: 'You knew Harry Winter, didn't you?'

'Knowed him?' says I. 'I know he's one o' the best men an' best workmen as lives.'

The clergyman shook his head, an' says: 'Not that *lives*,' says he; an' he looked so solemn, I got frightened, an' asked him what he meant.

Then he told me how my noble old friend had kept proud to the last; wouldn't ask for relief, or take it when it was offered; but always went on saying he'd hold up his head, an' have nothing he didn't work for, as long as he lived. One day, somebody got asking among the neighbours what had become o' the Winters. Some thought it likely as Harry had a-heard o' some work, an' gone off to look for it. But others, as knowed all his savings had gone long before, said, how could he ha' took his family with him? Then they put questions to the relieving officers, an' made inquiry at the relief committees; an' at last the police was told, an' they took it up. Well, when they went an' broke into the house, they found Harry an' his wife, an' the two boys, an' Carry all huddled close together, without hardly any clothes on, lying on the floor of one o' the empty bedrooms; an' all but Carry, poor girl, was dead. At first, they made sure she was too; but after a time she come round. It'd been as well, may be—only we foolish mortals don't always know what's best in the end—if she had a-died with the rest of 'em. It's a blessed thing as the father an' mother, that was always so proud o' their pretty daughter, didn't live to see what came to her after. I don't know which was worst even to me, that wasn't her father, nor any relation at all to her—to know I had but little reason to hope my wife and her baby could be brought round; or to know as that young girl, that was tending and nursing 'em in the other room with the parson's wife, had come to be one of them as honest women can't speak about without shame. So, you see, what starvation spared, vice took. Yet neither me nor Mary has been able to think of Carry Winter since without praying the Lord above to be good to her. We have good reason!

When they let me go and speak to my wife again, there was a fire in the room, and she was wrapped up comfortable; and the good woman was giving her what little she could take to revive her strength. I hadn't seen her in the light yet, you understand, only for a moment; an' now, when her eyes were open, waiting to give me a smile out of all her suffering, oh, what a face my Mary's was! But for the weak little smile, it was just such a face as one might say would come back from the grave to haunt a guilty conscience—so pale, so haggard, so like Death. When her head was resting on my breast again, and I thought she could bear to speak, I said: 'Mary, where's the youngsters—the other uns?'

When I asked her that, the tears come rushing into her eyes. She couldn't answer a word at first, and I didn't know what to fear next. But after a time, she whispers, so gentle and kind: 'Dear Jim,' she says, 'poor baby's gone to rest—a better rest than this world could give him. I had no strength, and the poor little fellow died on this breast. But God is good still, dear, an' has given us another little angel in his place,' says she, lifting the cover off the new baby's face, and kissing him in her tender way; 'an' brave little Jimmy is left to us still.'

Yes, the lamb of the flock, the dear little chap I'd carried with such pride an' joy in my arms, was lying in his little grave. Here was my Mary, for aught I knew, just at the point of death, with the weakly, sickly child of sorrow on her bosom. An' my bold boy—my first-born—where was he? Out in the streets, away westward in the streets of the Great Unfriendly City—a withered, starveling four-year-old—trying to sell fusees, to get a few coppers to buy bread for the mother that might not be alive to see him come back. If I'd ha' only lost my trade, my little worldly goods, my health, my strength, an' my hope of making a living in my native country, I could ha' borne it. But to lose my darling little son, that had crowed an' leaped on my breast; to see my wife brought to death's door; to know the only one I could hope to keep had been away since daylight, in all the dangers of the town, his brave little heart trying to remember his mother's lesson, that it was honest to earn, but wrong to beg—was it a wonder my heart gave way, an' I couldn't bring myself all at once to say 'Amen!' to Mary's whisper: 'O Jim, now you've come back, we can thank God!'

Well, I can say 'Amen!' now with a quieter mind, for I've come to the end of 'My Long Holiday.' Yes, my holidays is over; an', please Providence, I'll have no more like 'em. I'm a-writing this account, as I promised to give you to judge by, from the new home as we've found, right up the old St Lawrence River. The clergyman as brought the last thin blanket out o' the charity store at Limehouse, he set about direct to try to find if this big world had a got any place where such as me could make a living. The good gentleman, with all his trying, an' all his friends to help him, didn't find as he'd got a easy job. You'll understand, all I wanted was good work to do, an' I could do it, an' right glad o' the chance. But then, you see, it wasn't me alone, but thousands more, as ready with their hands, an' as willing as me. I've been told as all England was tried before they gave it up in that direction, an' I can well believe it. Hadn't I tried all England myself before the gentlemen began? As a 'bus-driver said to me, the very day before I saw the last of old London streets—he says: 'It do seem a pity, arter all, as a man can't get a decent living in this big town, not without a-going an' taking other men's bread out o' their mouths; an' not even then sometimes.'

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There was a-many of us as would ha' been content to do anything we could ha' turned our hands to, rather than come away from the dear old country where we was bred an' born. But you see, it wasn't to be. The gentlemen found out, after a time, that men was wanted over here, an' them as would come work would be found for. So they kep' us till they could get money from one an' another, to give us a little plain outfit, an' till the government was found determined not to do anything for us (I 'm not a-blaming o' the government, because I don't rightly understand such things, an' it may be they couldn't), an' then one or two o' the old masters found ships for us, an' away we come. And here we are at last—Mary an' me an' our Jim, three left out o' five—just got a fair start, in a part o' the world where honest folks don't crowd over-close on one another.

I 've nothing to say against England; but it do seems to me a pity—more, it seems a shame—that in such a great, grand, old country, a few (or even, for that matter, a many) reckless or unprincipled men, looking only to their own profit, should be able to upset trade, and bring thousands of hard-working men and women to ruin, an' starvation, an' sickness, an' death; and, even worse than all, to drive hundreds to crime an' sin—ignorant men to prison, weak men to suicide, an' girls an' women as would ha' been good an' pure, to the streets an' all manner of misery.

I haven't written this on my own account; though I make no doubt but you 'll think my holiday was both longer and worse than I deserved it should be. You don't know me, and never will; I only want you to think how many more than us suffered as much, and was less fortunate in the end than Mary an' me and little Jimmy was. There 's thousands left at home as will go on suffering for years yet—not unlikely to the end of their lives; unless them as have the power will lend 'em a hand in the old country where we 've left 'em behind us. Perhaps you yourself, reader, may be able to do them *some* good.

DAMAGES.

'A VERY sensible principle, sir,' said Mr Bong.

This was in reference to the custom of compensation in money as applied to the redress of grievances. Your thumb gets pinched off by the banging of a railway carriage-door; or, on counting your limbs at Euston Square, you miss one of your miserable third-class legs, that has been left somewhere on the line; or, somebody inserts a pig-sty and a cow-house in the landscape in front of your drawing-room windows; or, you 've sustained internal injury, in your affections, for instance—broken heart and impaired appetite for solids—whatever accident it may be, you have a claim for compensation on somebody—or ought to have.

Now, I had taken a sentimental view of the question, arguing that no recompense in money could make reparation for the loss of arms and legs, and hearts and things.

'Nonsense, sir,' said Mr Bong, with much coarseness: 'money is a balm for every wound. I don't care what it is. It is a balm legally, and also a balm practically. You commit an assault, and outraged Justice theoretically requires you to tread a pilgrimage of one calendar month on her wheel. Nevertheless, a payment of five pounds will equally appease the stern goddess, that being the precise sum at which she estimates the pleasure of your company, and consequently the amount of compensation she must receive for being deprived of it. I once possessed,' continued Mr Bong, 'two of the wildest, drunkenest, and most disreputable rapscallions of nephews that man ever had. They went to Japan. The Japanese people killed 'em both. Yes, sir; a sad thing indeed for an uncle. However, our government stepped in, and, by way of compensation, they got a lot of Japanese hung up, and made them pay ten thousand pounds to the nearest relative of those young men. That nearest relative, it so happened, was their uncle. Oh, my poor nephews! never did I know your value till I lost you! I regret,' he went on, in an injured tone, 'that people of your sentimental turn of mind don't expend a little of your superfluous sentiment on money. It 's what I call a highly sentimental subject. It is Poor Man's Friend, Gold-beaters' Skin, and Royal Court Plaster for all the ills of humanity. When you authors attempt to bully and worry us capitalists, as you know you do, in print, it always makes me laugh. I say to myself: That poor chap hasn't got any money, but he means he should dearly like to have some. Dogs, my friend, bark when they are hungry, especially when they see other dogs with bones. Now, the only thing about which I do go in for sentiment, is money. Money, we know, is counters, nothing more; but then the counters represent a power about which you may be as sentimental as you please. A piece of money will always buy just as much as it cost to earn it. And, because a coin represents oftentimes good nature, and sympathy, and affection, which have been expended in earning it, that coin, properly spent, has the capacity to buy back as much more. This is just the ingredient which prevents charitable contributions in aid of those suffering bereavement by sudden calamity, from becoming a wanton insult to misfortune. And, since money does represent tears, and love, and gratitude, and all manner of good feeling, it is no such very unsuitable plaster, after all, to apply to wounds of the mind as well as of the body. As to the body, sir—in the case of arms and legs, for instance, the compensation is perfect. Say your right arm earns you two hundred a year, and a railway accident absconds with it. The company has only to ascertain your age, turn to an insurance table, find the amount required to purchase you an annuity for that sum, throwing in perhaps a trifle for personal inconvenience, and there you are. It is so perfect a compensation, that, if there *is* a choice, it is in favour of a wooden arm and a fixed income. Indeed, this will shew you how practically perfect is the monetary compensation for accidents. The Accidental Insurance Companies based their calculations on statistics of previous averages of accidents occurring to people; but they find six pounds per week in case of total disablement so generally acceptable, that the number of disabling accidents to the assured *far exceeds their most liberal calculations*. Now, if money compensation for injury be not satisfactory to the public, how do you account for this?'

'Easily enough,' said I: 'many of the cases are moonshine. There 's Mr'——

'No, sir,' returned Mr Bong; 'slander and libel I can-*not* allow, and it speaks very poorly for your

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argument if you are obliged to descend to such things. You may argue till doomsday, but money, sir, will compensate for anything.'

'Never!' said I. 'What amount, for instance, of your vile earthly dross could compensate me for the faithlessness of an adored being who has ruthlessly torn my heart-strings asunder, and lacerated a loving breast?'

(Mr Bong is a man of coarse nature—no refinement nor delicacy—and I feel bound to apologise for him.)

'A very trifling amount,' he replied—'a mere nothing—perhaps a fiver. A jury would soon assess the damage done. For my part, I should think if man or woman could get rid of a faithless lover by *paying* a five-pound note, let alone *receiving* one, it would be a capital bargain. There is a class of people, like yourself, who don't agree with me, or *think* they don't; but it is a mere question of amount after all. Our office, sir, is very liberal in the settlement of all claims, and I can assure you we should not quarrel about a few pounds, with a paid-up capital of three-quarters of a million.'

'What office?' I asked. 'I didn't know'——

'That I was an insurance agent? You compliment me. It is our business, as insurance agents, to approach these matters with delicacy and caution. Allow me to give you our card.'

He looked at me benignly as I read it.

BLIGHTED AFFECTIONS ASSURANCE COMPANY (LIMITED),
MOON STREET.
MR BONG, *Agent.*—London, E.C.

'The object of our office,' he continued, 'is to guarantee the affection of lovers, or, in cases of Blighting, to offer suitable pecuniary compensation. Its advantages are manifold. Pecuniary compensation *is* grateful to a wounded spirit; the law recognises its justice, and continual cases of Breach of Promise testify to its popularity. But then the public exhibition of heart-strings involved, and the publication of gushing correspondence in the newspapers, have their little unpleasantnesses. We avoid all that. There is no publicity. The compensation is liberal, and the security undoubted. Testimonials from Bereaved and Blighted—small book of Cases, and forms of application, gratis.'

Mr Bong gave me a little book, and a form. This is the form.

BLIGHTED AFFECTIONS ASSURANCE COMPANY (LIMITED).

Form of Application.

1. Sex.
2. Age next birthday.
3. Name of Present Object of Affection.
4. State if either of you has been Blighted before. If so, which, and why, and generally how about it.
5. Say if your family have suffered much from Blight.
6. State the greatest number of Blightings to be covered by this Assurance.
7. Fill in the value you set upon your Affections, L.—s.—d.
8. Also the value Present Object sets upon them, L.—s.—d.
9. State if sane, and (if possible) get a friend to state so too.

The little book contained some touching cases. I am sorry I have only room to extract a couple.

H. D., aged 22, met F. A. at a picnic. Began immediately to adore her in secret. Thought she must be aware of it. All the symptoms of a bad case—off his head and off his feed for weeks. Obtained her address, and at last summoned up courage to call. Horror! She was another's—had a husband and small family. Became utterly inconsolable, world a blank, &c.; would have had nothing left to live for, but was fortunately insured in the Blighted Affections Assurance Company (Limited), and attributes his recovery entirely to that. Compensation, L.8, 15s.

M. L. E., a young person, aged 18. Misunderstanding with her young man: saw him walking with another female. Not believing it was his aunt, she put on her bonnet immediately, and was seen to go out in the direction of the Regent's Canal. Suddenly remembering she was insured in the Blighted Affections Assurance Company (Limited), better thoughts triumphed. She came to our office, and drew 35s.

'THE LADY OF THE NILE.'

SHE was a boat—a large, low, deep-lying, comfortable boat, and she carried a motley load. Mr and Mrs Petherick were on board;* many Arabs, a black boy, and a little black handmaiden, two secretaries, a *reis*, and a mate, seventeen sailors, and two women, who were to grind corn between flat stones, as they did in the time of the Pharaohs, and before it, and the little black babies respectively belonging to these women. On the deck of the *Lady* were two four-pounder cannon; in her cabin were rifles, muskets, and fowling-pieces. Under hatches were all sorts of preserved provisions, a vast quantity of grain, stores of every description, and clothing. The *Lady* was escorted by a small flotilla of four boats, a *sandal*, a *dahabyeh*, and two *nuggers*—the last being the name for small boats, and having indeed a slighting and contemptuous sound. The escorting boats were also deeply laden—the sandal carrying sheep and poultry; the dahabyeh carrying two doctors, an Italian elephant-hunter, their numerous servants, eight sailors, a reis, a mate, and the inevitable corn-grinders, also twelve donkeys. A third boat carried a large number of soldiers, two horses, and their grooms, the crew, the corn-grinders, and a quantity of grain and ammunition. The last boat carried ten soldiers, and twenty-eight donkeys—beautiful desert donkeys, be it remembered, strong, swift, and intelligent. The *Lady* and her attendant flotilla were launched upon the waters of the mystical Nile at Khartoum, and they were bound for Gondokoro, there to meet Captains Grant and Speke, who were exploring the wondrous N'yanza district.

The start was imposing, and very enjoyable; but before Mrs Petherick reached the British consulate at Khartoum, a strange, distant home for an English bride, she had made a desert journey from which any woman might have shrunk, appalled at its fatigue and its wildness; and she

* *Travels in Central Africa, and Explorations of the Western Nile Tributaries.* By Mr and Mrs Petherick. London: Tinsley Brothers.

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had looked undismayed upon the prospect of the Nile voyage, destined to bear her into unknown scenes of uttermost desolation, and of danger, it might be, which there existed no means of appreciating. Quiet courage, quick intelligence, great love of nature, and unselfish cheerful readiness to take her full share of the exigences of such travel, were, as her simple journal proves, her invaluable qualifications for the position. At first, there was peaceful sailing through scenes such as the earliest ages of the world beheld, down the broad, calm river, with hippopotami for spectators; past islands without a tree, but covered with luxuriant herbage, on which thousands of cattle grazed; by flat plains, where 'the sons of Moses' congregate, and pasture immense flocks and herds; where distant ranges of hills are dimly seen, and groves of mimosa cluster by the river, gazelles bounding beneath the trees, and monkeys leaping from branch to branch. Day after day goes by, and the cloudless Egyptian sky is serene by day; and the Southern Cross, low in the heavens, looks upon the mysterious river by night. But the *Lady* nears wilder regions, and they meet a trader's boat, bound to Khartoum with ivory, and learn that the country between them and the Sobât is in a disturbed state, the powerful Shilloohs having been scattered far and wide, and sold by hundreds into slavery. Then it was told the travellers that they should meet boats coming down stream laden with slaves, which was fulfilled in one very unexpected and undeniable instance afterwards, fraught with most unpleasant consequences to Consul Petherick.

Soon the traces of the horrible traffic became evident in the deserted villages. Formerly, the people came fearlessly to the boats to barter cattle, hides, and ivory for beads; now, not a human being was to be seen. But one night, while Mrs Petherick and her husband were on deck, nine boats laden with slaves passed them, and at dawn they saw thousands of cattle driven along the west shore. Some days later, when the *Lady* appeared in sight of one of the villages on the shore, a multitude of negroes fled from their homes panic-stricken, the women carrying their infants in their arms and on their hips, and on their heads pitchers of water. The little ones able to run kept close to their mothers, but there were no skirts to hold by, so that they often stumbled and fell. The men brought up the rear, bearing shields and lances. It is pitiful to think of such terror-haunted lives. Now, sudden storms became frequent, and the *Lady* met with many accidents, trying to a woman's courage, with the elemental accompaniments of thunder and lightning. The other boats did not suffer so much, an exemption which one of Mr Petherick's secretaries, a pious Mohammedan, proposed to balance by nailing a written prayer to the *Lady's* mast, which was done. Mr Petherick frequently landed, for the purpose of trading with the unknown tribes, and was always well received.

Here is an account of a 'deal' with the Jangars, who, desiring beads, had conveyed to the consul that they were prepared to barter ivory. 'Petherick remained fearlessly with them whilst the attendant in advance came to assort the goods. Soon Petherick approached in the midst of his rude and new-made friends. They were armed with lances. Their bodies were covered with a powder, which they obtain from the ashes of wood-fires, which, when cold, they roll themselves in. Some had the hair stained red, and others had it covered with a coating of grayish clay, elongated at the nape of the neck. One tall youth, the chief's son, wore with an air of satisfaction a pair of garters. The Jangars seated themselves on the bank, forming a semicircle, Petherick fronting them. Our men advanced with baskets of beads, &c.; and the negroes, with great coyness, put down a small ivory tusk. The pipe of peace was smoked, and then a busy hum commenced. Three tusks were bartered for beads, lance and hatchet heads. The chief gave Petherick a goat, requesting that he would spit in the hand of his son, expressing a belief that if he did so, his son would be enabled to throw a spear with power. Petherick cordially did so, amid the acclamations of the tribe, and the youth received the congratulations of all.'

Presently, the little exploring fleet found itself in the lake called Bahar il Gazal, and during an entire week, vainly sought an outlet, during which time no one could land, owing to the density of the weeds. At length an outlet was found, and the *Lady* floated through it, and soon came in sight of two important villages, where the natives were reported friendly. The villages lay well inland, under the shelter of solitary palms and sycamores. Petherick went on shore; and presently two chiefs arrived, one of whom had his hair dyed red, and tousled about his forehead, just like a girl of the period, and wore a blue calico robe, which he carefully tucked up under his arms when he seated himself. The other chief was tall, and old, and wore a panther-skin robe. Their suite were tall, high-shouldered, spare men, their bodies covered with ashes. They behaved politely, and inspected everything with grave attention, sitting silent on the shore, watching Petherick, who was in sight, banging away at birds. The party was soon joined by a lady, whom Mrs Petherick describes: 'A magnificently formed young woman stepped on board, the second wife of the chief who wore the panther-skin; she brought to her husband his pipe. Her dress was a straw *rachat* descending from the waist to the knees; beads hung in profusion round her neck, completely covering her bosom; many iron bracelets, brightly polished, encircled her arms, and similar ornaments were worn round the ankles. Her hair was in short crisp curls, which clung closely to her well-shaped head. She tormented her husband and made him jealous by talking and laughing with the soldiers and crew.' A 'frisky matron' by the banks of Nile. She ran away from the panther-skin-clothed chief next day, and took refuge on board the *Lady*, declaring that she was ill-treated and starved, but her appearance was against her, and Petherick decided that she must go home, and had her carried on shore, kicking and screaming. When set down, she ran off, in a contrary direction to her village, hotly pursued by her husband, who threw off his panther-skin for the race. This scene was good fun, of which the Nile voyagers were destined to very little more. Troubles came thick upon them; contrary currents, adverse winds, rendering their progress intolerably slow; blinding rain, so that no fires could be kept alight, inhospitable shores, and no news of the expected travellers. And, worst of all, the boats they encountered, and with which they spoke and transacted exchanges, were, they discovered too late, crammed with slaves.

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The animals got into bad condition, the donkeys especially, and several died. Dr Brownell fell ill. But now the shore became beautiful, and in fine weather the travellers landed, and rode or walked long distances, under the palms, and through the various luxuriant grasses. In the river, exquisite creeping-plants clustered among the reeds, and gorgeous butterflies alighted on the *Lady's* rigging. Once a negro catches some flowers as they float by, and they are like, though larger and richer, the English heart's-ease and forget-me-not. Soon Consul Petherick had to sustain a severe trial, whose effects have lasted ever since. This was the discovery that a man in his employment, named Abd il Majid, whom he had despatched to Gondokoro with supplies for Grant and Speke, had disobeyed his instructions, abandoned his post, and actually engaged in the slave-trade, under the British colours. The discovery forms quite a dramatic incident in the narrative. One day the reis announces three boats carrying the English flag coming down the river. Surely they are the boats of the expedition, with Grant and Speke on board. The excitement is intense, and much powder is wasted in firing salutes. The boats are soon recognised as Petherick's own, sent for the relief; but no matter. Of course, they have fulfilled their purpose; of course, the explorers are there. Drums are beaten, and festive preparations made, and Mrs Petherick ponders how she shall tell the news, of death and of marriage, with which she is charged, to the wanderers. 'The coming boats anchored, and the agents and reises were soon on board, but not the travellers so ardently looked for. . . . . Abd il Majid entreated a patient hearing. He said that upon his arrival at Gondokoro from Khartoum in December 1861, he disembarked, leaving the boats amply furnished with grain, &c., there to await his return, or the advent of Captain Speke. At the Wayo, he was seriously ill, and unable to proceed. In consequence, he made over his mission to the agent at that place, a trustworthy man, named Mussad. Mussad, well supported, made a seventeen days' march south to a place called Warija, in Bakoa. A frightful famine was raging in this district, and for some days Mussad and his men subsisted only upon gourds and roots. His followers refused to proceed, and reluctantly he was compelled to return. Of the Speke expedition he had heard no tidings.' Mrs Petherick then relates that while Abd il Majid was making this statement to the consul, she was talking to a negress named Toto, who had left Khartoum in November, with the boats for Gondokoro, as a bread-maker. 'Her child was in her arms, and I remarked that the babe was ill and cold, and ran up a flannel shirt for it. Whilst I was thus employed, she looked at me tearfully, and at length exclaimed: "O sitté [madam], Abd il Majid is a bad man. He made us all promise not to tell, but I must. There are slaves in his boat. He did not think that he should meet the consul; and when your boats appeared in sight, he concealed them all." She then kissed my hands, and withdrew.

'I went on deck, and asking Petherick to refrain from expressing any surprise, lest, though the men with him could not understand a word of English, they should read his countenance, I said, averting my eyes from Abd il Majid's evil face: "That man has brought down slaves, and they are in his boat." "Impossible: are you sure?" was Petherick's rejoinder. I beckoned him into the cabin, and there told him all. We agreed that to disarm suspicion, he would continue his conference with Abd il Majid a short time longer. And so he returned on deck; and after chatting some moments more, he proposed to accompany Abd il Majid to his boat, to see in what condition she was. Anxiously I watched Petherick step on board the boat alongside, closely followed by Abd il Majid, who appeared gay and unconcerned: he was speaking of two panthers on board one of the other boats which he had brought, and made a proposition to visit the animals. I heard Petherick's assent: "*Badaen*" [by-and-by], and for a short time he remained on deck, examining the cordage, and speaking freely to all. He then went below, and remained, it seemed to me, an interminable time. At last he came up, Abd il Majid with him, and I saw by his face, pale with anger, that he had made a discovery; but he said calmly to the reis: "Take down your flag" (the union-jack). Then he called for a pair of handcuffs, and fettered the hands of Abd il Majid, who looked abject and livid, but made no resistance. And now from below stepped up one by one the discovered slaves (but slaves, thank God, no longer), giddy from excess of light, emerging from the dark hold, staggering as they were led, eighteen in number, to the *Lady of the Nile*. With outstretched hands and tearful eyes I received them.' The guilty Abd il Majid was imprisoned during the remainder of the voyage in the den whence the slaves had escaped, and ultimately handed over to the Turkish authorities for punishment.

The *Lady* is in constant trouble, and evidently wearing out; weather is bad, and progress very slow. Many leaks are sprung, hunting is dangerous and unprofitable, the animals suffer much from disease, and fever and ague begin to shew themselves among the sailors and hunters. The news from the shore is that there is a wide-spreading inundation, turning the country into a mere marsh. A plague of flies sets in, large, stinging, very beautiful flies, the body a bright yellowish brown, the head emerald green, the wings delicately tissued, with a black spot in the centre. They inflict much suffering on the men, and torture the horses almost into madness. Fever and ague gain upon the little company; every kind of supply is failing; the leaks are frequent; and the men are tired out; the towing-ropes are worn out; and the grain and biscuits are mouldy. The rains are beginning, and the mosquitoes are unendurable. They reach Lolum, where Mr Petherick hopes to find palm-trees, from which cordage may be made to help them forward: but there are no palm-trees, and the travellers despair, especially when the morning discloses another leak. The boat is unladen, and the extent of the loss is ascertained: books, stationery, powder, and stores of every description are spoiled. Then the travellers resolve to march to Gondokoro, through the Aliab and Bari territories—a direct route, but very dangerous and difficult, because of the inundation.

It was a dismal beginning to a terrible journey, when the soldiers brought the news that a lion was ravaging a neighbouring village, but there was nothing for it but to face the dangers of the land. The Nile would have no more of the travellers for

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the present. So Mr Petherick assembled his company on the 1st August, and addressed them, not making light of any of the difficulties which awaited them, and asked them: 'Now, men, are you ready to follow us onwards? My wife and myself go.' Their leaders replied: 'When a woman can venture, are we girls, or are we men, that you should ask us?' At noon they were ready. 'Then,' says Mrs Petherick, 'a gun was fired, and the first detachment marched, headed by one of the soldiers bearing on a lance a small union-jack I had made. The women accompanied them, and our liberated girls. When the thrilling *zachareet*, which they commenced as they moved on, was heard by me, I could not help but weep, we seemed so responsible for their wellbeing. A group of our people were assembled to offer their prayers for our welfare: we passed through them with many a fervent "God bless you," and were soon in the saddle.'

Thus began a journey full of danger, unbearable fatigue, exposure to terrific weather, physical suffering of many kinds, borne with truly wonderful patience and courage; full of interest too, and destined to add to the treasures of science, and to our national collections of natural history very considerably, but immediately productive of mortification and injustice to the travellers. They journeyed by strange ways, and among extraordinary people, noting the curious differences and degrees in savagery among them; sometimes their way lay amid much beauty, but generally it was gloomy and dangerous, and always difficult and fatiguing. The story of that long trial of a woman's strength of mind and body, of her patience, trust, and courage, extends in time to more than a year, five months of which were passed on board the floating home the travellers never saw again; for, on her return voyage, disabled, slow, and worn out, the *Lady* went down into the Nile.

A LIMITED HORIZON.

IN FIFTEEN CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER IX.—FALLEN VERY LOW.

Lalagé woke next morning with a dim, uncomfortable sense of 'something' having happened. What the 'something' was soon came to her with a vague sense of pain. She was so sorry about it all, that, as she lay in bed, the slow tears gathered in her eyes, and trickled down through her fingers. She had never meant to do him any harm. Ah, how sad it all was, and how lonely she felt!

And he was so unhappy, very unhappy, she knew. She wondered if at that very moment he was thinking of it as she was doing. 'Not crying, though,' said Lalagé, taking her hands from her face, and quickly brushing her tears away; and then she wondered: 'Do men cry?' Perhaps all that novels said about their inability to do so was not true, and they really did indulge in that weakness. There had certainly been tears in the curate's eyes yesterday; but instinct told her that, even if the popular delusion about men's tears were incorrect, they would not cry as women do, with great sobs that shake every nerve, and make every limb feel powerless, that come gasping up from the very depths, and reveal a world of possible suffering to the weeper. Then Lalagé exemplified to herself the sort of 'crying' she meant.

'And just for nothing,' she said after a while, making an indignant protest against herself.

But was it for nothing? It was not nothing that the love of a lifetime—'for,' said Lalagé, 'people can only really love once'—should be wasted, thrown away, poured out like water on the arid desert sand, that was in no way benefited by the gift. 'And a good man, too,' she said with fresh tears. She thought over all the scene, as women always do; and with the dim veil of a day cast over it, it appeared even more pathetic, more touching than it had done at the time.

She had had two 'proposals,' as young ladies say, before the outbreak of yesterday, which indeed was scarcely a proposal proper, but nevertheless she compared it with those former experiences, and found it very different from either. The first man who had sought her hand had been a well-known fortune-hunter, to whom all heiresses were alike dear, and who fancied Miss Lalagé Hesketh a better 'catch' than she really was. His proposal had been made and declined as a mere matter of business. With her cousin, George Wriothesley, it had been very different. He had come to her himself—which that other man had not done—saying to her words which, if he had only put into them one spark of fire, would perhaps have kindled a corresponding glow in the girl's heart; but the utter absence of any such spark annoyed, even offended her, as indeed was only right. A man with a *nonchalant* manner should renounce such before he makes an essay of this sort.

And yet George Wriothesley was good and true, his failure chiefly arising from that humble estimate of himself which he wisely kept to himself. He had never thought himself worthy of Lalagé, and so was too ready to acquiesce in the cold, decided refusal he received; whilst she was thinking he did not care, for his inward wound was only represented by outward coldness.

That he had suffered, Gertrude Cleather knew well, but Lalagé did not, and she felt only piqued when she recalled the circumstance. How different that cold question and answer had been to the piteous pleading of yesterday! Ah, after all, that poor big curate was the only one of the three who had ever cared for her; and at the thought she buried her face in her pillow, and sobbed afresh, for life was so sad, and love was so beautiful, and for that last to be wasted seemed to her, to whom the useless sacrifice had been made, just cause for tears.

Then she busied herself with the question which she had so often asked yesterday, but to which she had as yet received no satisfactory answer: Why, in that first break of the curate's eloquence, had she not at once answered him, and so put an end to his pleading? She recalled her feelings as she stood on the desolate hill-side, and she remembered the sudden soothed sensation that had stolen over her in the midst of her sorrow for the words he spoke. She had been very, very lonely, and life had seemed colourless and useless for her, when all at once she found that, without her, another life would lack colour and beauty, and that knowledge had come to her like balm.

But still, surely that could not be excuse sufficient for a silence which she felt had been cruel. Why had she not spoken at the very first opportunity? Why had she not as soon as possible cut short the words to which it was a dishonour to allow

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a full hearing, meaning to answer them as she did? Why had she not done so? She asked herself this question over and over again, wondering at herself more and more. To those two others, she had unhesitatingly administered an instant dismissal: what had made her more cruel, or more kind, to this man?

Suddenly she started up in bed with flushed cheeks and blazing eyes: 'Can I like him?' she asked in horror—'like him in that way, I mean?' She sat there, gazing forward into the future with terror, gazing into her own mind with bitter scorn, and ever and anon the question rose up: 'Can I like him?' Was not this the way to solve the question she had been so diligently asking herself? Was not this the cause of that culpable silence? Was not this the secret of her grievous pity? Did not this account for those foolish tears?

'I suppose I do,' she said slowly, after that bitter self-communing, and laid herself down rigidly, then grew suddenly angry. Pity for the curate died out. Did not she herself now need all the pity in the world of her heart? Not the soft, gentle pity which could shed tears; not the mild reproachful pity that had a tender, soothing charm of its own; but the bitter pity of scorn, of a self-despised heart. Intuitively, without acknowledging it to herself, she felt that she was, in many ways, this man's superior; and yet, 'I suppose I do,' she repeated to herself.

It had come to her then—that mystery, that wonderful revelation, that turning-point in a woman's life, of which she had read so much, and thought more; it had come to her thus. Love stood before her, but arrayed in no shining raiment, with no silver wings, and she turned away her face with shame and disgust. Before the high altar of her own soul she stood convicted of an unworthy choice; and though accepting without appeal the sentence of her own degradation, she was immeasurably grieved and indignant. That any such feeling was incompatible with real love, she did not know, poor child, and took this vicarious suffering upon her shoulders with no idea that it was an imaginary burden. She had pitied him; she had liked him very much; it had soothed her to hear his flattering words; she had grieved over his pain as she had done over that of no other suitor; she had felt desolate and lonely as never before in all her life; therefore—she loved him.

What would her father say? What would Belle say? What would any one say who cared for her? Nothing; for no one should ever know anything about it; no one, no one in all the world: she would keep her disgrace to herself. Least of all should he know it—that poor, big, unwise man who had brought all this trouble upon her; he had caused her to fall from her 'high estate;' but of any such fall he should studiously be kept in ignorance. She lay there in a silent rage, wishing she had never seen him—wishing they had never come to Grimswold—lay there, but not to start up gleefully, as she had done only seven months before, at the voice of the cuckoo. The cuckoo had gone; the time for the singing of birds was over; the beauty and brightness of summer were dead; and her poor human heart was fretting and chafing in its unrest and anger.

When she got up, she went to the glass, as though she expected some great change to have come over her 'bodily presence' from that inward revolution and commotion; but she only saw a flushed, angry face; violet eyes, which were blazing and burning, and from which all traces of tears were scorched out; and tangled gold-coloured hair, which had been terribly tumbled during that long consultation. She looked at herself accusingly, reproachfully, then said slowly: 'Yes, I suppose I am what people call "in love;"' and a fresh accession of anger and scorn came over her.

Did she think that that wondrous change ever came to the most leaden-coloured existence without one golden glimmer—without one thrill of irrepressible joy, however dark and impossible the accomplishment and fruition of hope may be? Did she think that 'fallen very low'—the words she kept saying over and over to herself—was the usual confession of a woman who finds that her heart has gone away out of her keeping? Of all this, she thought nothing and knew as little; only that her own fate should have come to her in a shape which she could not welcome, could only loathe and abhor, seemed to her so hard a thing that she thought she 'did well to be angry.' Of the curate, she thought scarcely at all, except with a dumb feeling of anger. One thing, however, she felt, or fancied was due to him; she had caused him pain, she supposed—it was wonderful how that estimate of pain had been lowered since she had discovered that she herself was not without scars—and for this she would formally ask his forgiveness, if ever it was practicable to do so; but of course all intercourse between them must now cease. Then a sudden grief—for herself, not him—made her heart soften a little for a moment. 'I have no friend now,' said Lalagé.

After all, that odious Mrs Verey had not been so far wrong. Had not the curate proved himself a very dangerous young man?

Of what was he thinking on this morning, which had brought such unwelcome revelations to Lalagé Heaketh? He too had waked up with the feeling that something had happened; but on thinking affairs over, no tears had come to his eyes—rather a feeling of rejoicing and self-gratulating arose in his heart. He had done his work well, and he meant to try again—ay, fifty times, if only he could manage it. The fervent expression of his love had a little worked off the pleasant sorrow of it; it was an acknowledged, outspoken thing now, but still very, very dear to him. He said, and truly, that he had never before known a woman so sweet and womanly as Lalagé; and thought, with a gleam of hope and joy, that perhaps this was to be the last trial of his susceptible heart; possibly, possibly—Then the unwise man went off into foolish dreams, and he 'lost his head' again.

He did not meet Lalagé for several days after this, and then she was distant and cold, and his easily impressed heart sank very low, and she seemed to him more than ever lovely and lovable, because farther from him. Live without seeing her, he could not, thought this weak, big man; and so he took to haunting her, going into the very houses in her district where he knew her to be, standing behind her whilst she taught her class at the school. But this she would not allow; so one evening, whilst darkness grew over the heavens, and deeper darkness gathered in Lalagé's face, she broke out. 'I will not have this,' she said; 'I have borne it till I was quite sure that all these meetings

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were not accidental; but I am certain now, and I will not allow it. It is very, very wrong of you.'

'I cannot help it,' he said, and the foolish bronze face bent down over hers with an appealing look. 'How can I get on from day to day without seeing you? If you only knew—but you don't care.'

'I do care,' she said: 'I care for anybody's being unhappy; but I do not see why that should make you forget what is right.'

'O Miss Lalagé!' he said.

'Yes, you do,' said the girl vehemently: 'you meet me constantly against my will; you stand behind my chair half an hour every Sunday, and it is horrible of you to bring thoughts and feelings like yours into work of this sort.'

'O Miss Lalagé!' he said again.

'I wish you would not say "O Miss Lalagé," so often,' she said; 'it does irritate me so. Sometimes I feel as if I were ever so much stronger than you, though you are so big. I can only tell you, if you come here so often, I will give up my district; if you stand behind my chair on Sunday, I will get up, and go home.'

'Oh,' he said, 'forgive me. What can I do? How can I help it? I can only think of you all day and every day; it comes between everything.'

'And you are a clergyman,' she said, turning upon him with a sudden flash, 'and yet prefer your —foolishness' (she could not bring herself to say 'love') 'to your work! I wish I were a man, and could go quite away from this place.'

'I did not say I preferred anything to my work,' he said humbly; and Lalagé could not help liking him better for not getting angry; 'I put that before everything; it is only rising earlier and going to bed later, so as to have a little time to watch for you.'

'Don't do it again,' she said more kindly; 'don't make me wish myself away. One thing more I have to say, forgive me, if you can, for having brought this trouble upon you; I am so sorry for it;' and again, to her own surprise, tears rushed to her eyes.

'Forgive you!' he said; 'what have I to forgive? Nothing. Why, all day I bless your name. If you only knew'——

'I do not wish to know anything more; you have already told me too much,' she said quickly.

'But Miss Lalagé,' he said, 'if I don't trouble you any more—if I keep it all to myself—will you let me be sometimes with you, just as I was before, neither more nor less, but just the same?'

She was very lonely; he was very earnest; there was no one at hand to guide and counsel her, and of the integrity of her own heart she was very certain; could she be less sure of his honour? After a moment's hesitation, she said: 'On one condition: that on *that* subject'—with a slight flush—'you know what I mean—you promise never to speak to me again; that you won't follow me about in this foolish way; and that you will treat me just as you do everybody else.—Do you promise?'

'There are three conditions, not one,' he said dejectedly; 'but a starving man cannot refuse half a loaf. I promise.'

'Then,' she said, 'we are friends again.'

He walked on in silence, wondering how he should be able to keep those promises; reticence was not his fort. Then he said: 'At least there is one thing I have to say that will not be unwelcome to you—you will be glad to hear that Mrs Cleather has returned.'

'Gertrude come home!' said Lalagé; 'indeed, I am very glad. But when did she arrive?' And she thought, with a softening heart, that Gertrude had liked the curate, and he had been good to her.

'Only this afternoon,' said Tom Mitchell; and by that time the Hill House was reached.

'Do come in and have some tea,' said Lalagé; and he accepted gratefully.

The evening was like one of the old pleasant ones; Lalagé was in high spirits at the thought of Gertrude's return, and felt that she had, for the time being, quelled the curate. Belle, looking on, thought, with a half-scornful satisfaction, the young man's devotion was abated; whilst he was at the very moment giving himself over to a mitigated season of foolish bliss.

The last thing before going to bed Lalagé looked out of her window, and rejoiced to see the dim light in the Cleathers' nursery.

'I shall not be lonely now,' she said.

CHAPTER X.—A TERRIBLE DREAM.

But, after all, Gertrude's return did not make so very much difference to Lalagé; her friend was so often engaged now, that she seldom had time even for the Hesketh. Once, too, Lalagé, waiting outside the door till the servant should open it, heard within the uplifted voice of an angry man, shouting out in rage and fury; she had been so frightened that she would not wait till her knock was answered, but fled away. What could be the mystery which hung over Gertrude's household? After this, she kept away from the King's House, and received no remonstrance from Gertrude on the subject, so she could only conclude that her friend was too busy to see her.

Mrs Cleather was altered, Lalagé thought; the calm sweet face had grown even calmer and sweeter, and gave a perpetual contradiction to the theory of her being an ill-used wife, but the serious brown eyes had a more wistful look in them, and seemed to see farther away than ever; only by so looking towards the Heavenly Hills, from which alone her help could come, did Gertrude Cleather in such steadfast patience possess her soul. The terrible trouble which had slowly grown into her life, had brought with it a wealth of endurance, for which, she felt, she could never sufficiently thank the Giver alike of the blessing and the curse.

Looking at her, Lalagé felt awed, and ashamed of her own feeble, restless life; but still the loneliness and dreariness would come back again and again, and the dark winter months passed slowly and heavily.

Mr Hesketh came down for Christmas-day, and wondered how Belle and Lalagé could endure the utter desolation of the place. 'But I suppose it does not matter to you where you are, as long as you have your books,' he said to his elder daughter. 'And this silly child is enamoured of the place,' he added, turning to Lalagé. 'Do you think you will be able to hold out sixteen months longer?'

'Of course, papa,' said Lalagé brightly. She could not find it in her heart to tell him how dreary it all was; besides, she was so glad to do him service in any way. 'But I don't say that we will stay longer than the sixteen months.'

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'You think by that time you will be wanting another change, eh?' said Mr Hesketh in his wisdom, with an oracular nod. 'I understand; you *can* get tired of even Grimswold.'

Then he patted her head, and called her a silly, changeable child; but Lalagé only looked up in his face with her loving eyes, and keeping him prisoner, by clasping both hands round his arm, said: 'One thing is, I never get tired of you.'

'Perhaps because you haven't the chance,' said Mr Hesketh almost bitterly. 'But hang me if I can stand more than a day or two of this place; by Jove, I can't!'

Her father's visit made a pleasant little break in that dreary winter, but it was only a little one, and the days, and weeks, and months passed wearily enough to the lonely girl.

'Why am I so unhappy?' she said to herself one day, after a terrible fit of depression. 'Oh, of course I know—because I am what people call in love;' and bitter self-scorn rushed into her indignant face.

That this fatal fact was an imaginary one, never entered her mind. Did she not like the curate very much? Was it not a great pleasure to her to talk and even walk with him? She made no allowance for her utter loneliness and want of companionship; no, the discovery made on that November morning had been treated as final ever since.

I fear my readers will think her a very imperfect woman for making so vital a mistake; a very imperfect woman she may have been, but, O Lalagé, they who knew you best never loved you less on that account!

Winter passed slowly, with halting, feeble steps, and spring arrived with its melancholy beauty—its variable, pathetic brightness—filling Lalagé's heart with infinite yearnings and sadness, coming to Gertrude with her matured soul and elder wisdom with a promise of future strength, and endurance, and even hope. Ah! thank Heaven! when the fervent season of youth is over, with its passionate capabilities of joy and sorrow, the calm middle day brings a juster estimate of all things, and refuses to be recklessly drawn into grief. The divine law of compensation spreads a levelling hand alike over the supreme heights of joy and the deep abysses of woe. Gertrude Cleather's youth had gone before its time, so in quietness she stood as usual that spring, content among her household, ready to meet the evils of everyday life, even though she knew they must necessarily be heavy ones. But a heavier than had yet befallen her was even then hanging over her head. It came about in this wise.

All through that bright, fitful April, Captain Cleather had been even more irritable and excitable than usual. At last things came to a terrible climax. One night he went to bed early, contrary to his usual habit; the moon was at the full, and the restless man went all over the house, drawing down every blind, and saying he hated the ghastly light. Ah! so did Gertrude. He shook up the sleeping children; bent his handsome flushed face over the boy, his especial darling; and terrified the nurse almost out of her senses by giving her a sudden furious lecture on her carelessness with the children. 'I will not have it,' said the angry man, and going to his room along the quaint old passages, he stormed as he went.

Gertrude followed shortly, and, to her surprise, found him quietly asleep in bed. She put out her candle quickly, knowing it would irritate him if he awoke, and, by the light of the moon, which would not be wholly excluded, smoothed the tumbled sheets in her baby's cot—the child always slept by her side—and, after a while, got into bed herself.

It seemed to her she had only been asleep a very short time, though in reality several hours had passed, when she awoke with a sudden sense of unaccountable horror. She had so trained herself, however, that she gave no evidence of being awake, and softly turned her head to the broad stream of light that now flooded the room, for her husband was not by her side, and she must find out why he had risen. She had not far to seek: there, with his head out of the open window, stood Captain Cleather; the moonlight was shed all over him, making every feature and even expression distinct; a cold blast of wind was pouring into the room, over him, over the baby's cot, over Gertrude herself, but he seemed quite unconscious of it.

He was softly chuckling to himself, and turning something over in his hand which he cunningly kept out of the light. 'I will make her,' he muttered, and gave a low laugh. An unutterable fear came over Gertrude; 'the baby, the baby,' was the one cry that wrung her heart, but still she kept very quiet, putting her head back on the pillow.

Presently he began calling her by name, but not loudly. 'Gertrude,' he said, 'Gertrude, I want you.'

She did not answer, but moved as if just waking from sleep. He called again: 'Gertrude, get up; I want you.'

'What is it, John?' she asked in a sleepy voice.

'Hush!' he said, turning round angrily; and as he moved she saw the Thing he held in his hand—a long glittering carving-knife. 'Hush! you will wake the baby; I won't have the child disturbed.'

One terror faded from her mind only to give place to another; but her baby was safe, and even in that awful moment the mother's heart gave a cry of thankfulness; it was not the child who was in peril, only herself.

'What is it?' she again asked more softly, and taking the opportunity to loosen the bedclothes with her feet, so as to be in no way hampered. But if the very worst came, whither could she fly, how could she escape? In all the whole wide world, was there no asylum for her in her hour of need?

'Get up,' said Captain Cleather, in a voice of gleeful cunning; 'it's a beautiful night, and we'll have a drive.'

'Isn't it a little late, John?' said his poor wife.

'There—I knew it,' he said savagely, and at one bound he had left the window, and stood by the baby's cot. 'I knew you would thwart me—I knew you would cross my path, and, by Heaven, if you do, I will kill you!' and he triumphantly brandished the knife he held.

'Hush!' she said; 'you will wake the baby.'

'You are not stirring,' he said: 'get up, I tell you; your life is in my hands.' And in the midst of his rage he gave a low chuckle.

'Shut the window then,' she said in the same low undertone, 'or I shall catch cold when I am dressing.'

He turned, and, as he did so, she sprang out of

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bed and flew to the door; she had hardly opened it, when she knew he had seen through her ruse, for a low sound of rage, like the growl of a baffled beast, smote upon her terrified ears.

She fled along, not knowing whither she was going, or why she had yielded to the human instinct prompting her to fly, fly, even though she had nowhere to fly to. Along narrow passages with countless turns and corners, but all possible place of concealment rendered bare, and open, and profitless by the glaring moonlight; past the rooms where her home-life had been spent for many months; where she had eaten and drunk, and sat in peace amongst her household, but which could give her no shelter now; and all the time with those terrible footsteps following her. Once she heard them stumble and fail as they came in their unnatural haste down a narrow flight of steps, and fresh speed came into her failing limbs—fresh strength into her quivering nerves. She flew with supernatural power along the familiar passages till she came to the drawing-room, then, with a flash of inspiration, she remembered the secret door which Lalagé Hesketh had discovered, and which had never since been opened or spoken of by her in her busy occupied life. After all, an unseen Hand had guided her along that terrible, purposeless flight.

She stood before the door gasping with terror, lest it should not yield to her efforts; she remembered how stiff it had been on that former occasion, which suddenly stood before her in sharp, bright relief, for she found herself picturing the whole scene: the sunshine, the warmth, the curate, Lalagé's bright hair, even the pattern of her muslin dress, all came with sharp, biting, photographic accuracy to the mind, which extremity of terror had rendered so comprehensive.

But such visions—forced as they are against the will—take no time; and they had scarcely begun to fade ere, putting forth all her strength, she found herself, as Lalagé had been, flung inside on the staircase. The pursuing steps were very near the drawing-room now, and she had barely time to get behind the awkwardly placed door and close it, before her husband entered. But the passive time of agony that followed was hardly less awful than that previous flight had been; she heard him walking to and fro in his baffled rage, cursing and swearing, searching under sofas, opening ottomans, and remembered that only a door stood between her and him. What if he found it out? That it was unfamiliar to him was her only hope of escape, but would that avail? She put up her hand in the darkness, and felt along the edge of the door—surely there must be fastening of some kind. She found two rusty old bolts; but the catch of one was broken off. She moved the other softly along its unused groove; but it was impeded and rendered noisy by the rust of years, and before she had accomplished this slight defence, cold beads of agony stood on her brow. Then she sat down; she had done her utmost, and could only wait the result.

The church clock struck one, two, three, and still Gertrude Cleather sat there in her dumb agony. She heard the glad chimes ring out the grand old Easter hymn, as was their wont every third hour, and slow tears came into her eyes as she heard the familiar sounds in the unfamiliar place; but then another sound greeted her ears, and made her start up in the darkness and stretch out her useless hands. It was her baby's cry. Her husband was still walking up and down, but not quite so fiercely as at first, and the savage words were abated; indeed, his mood had changed, for she heard him chuckling, and saying that he knew she was somewhere in the room, and would wait till she came out. But what if this fresh sound should revive all the fearful evil passions, and draw down on her baby the vengeance intended for herself? What should she do? What should she do?

She got up, turning her back to the door, and flinging herself against the wall in her speechless pain; and suddenly, noticing the thin ray of light that cut the darkness in two, she remembered the window fitted into the wall, and which had been behind her till the baby's cry had roused her. Had not terror stifled every faculty after that first supernatural energy, she must have thought of it before.

With eager but steady hands she took hold of the two bolts, which the curate had fortunately left unfastened, and gave one vigorous pull, steadying herself by placing her foot against the opposite wall: the shutter gave way directly; but, alas, the noise had attracted Captain Cleather.

'I heard you,' he said; and it seemed to her that the voice sounded close at her elbow; then, with a cry of rage, he recommenced the search he had left off.

She stood there, dazzled with the flood of light she had admitted, and wondering if she was so to be murdered, with the holy, helpless moon looking placidly down, and watched by the hundred eyes of the distant stars.

But her husband grew quieter, and evidently thought it was sufficient to be very watchful and cunning; so, after a minute's pause, she put down the shutter and climbed on the window-sill. She had said in the broad daylight that the descent before her was by no means impossible, but it seemed difficult enough in the ghostly night-season. A spouting ran down close by the window, and fantastic gargoyles stood out from the stonework; but these were all the aids on which she could rely. As before said, the gardener's shed was directly below this window.

She shut her eyes with a silent prayer, and then, putting both hands on the spout, began the perilous descent; she slid down, and thought it was nearly accomplished, when a straggling rose-branch tore her foot sharply: the sudden pain was so great that she nearly let go her hold. At last the roof of the shed was reached, and Gertrude, clinging to a gargoyle, looked up and saw great blood-drops hanging from the rose-leaves. And then she looked down, and wondered how she should reach the ground, when unexpected help presented itself in the shape of the gardener's ladder, which had been left leaning against the shed, just under the spot on which she stood; so it was comparatively easy to get down. She had expected to find this ladder inside the shed, and had intended by means of it to get into her room—which was at right angles with the one in which she had been imprisoned—she used it now, and in a very few minutes was back in her room.

She bound up her foot hastily, and then took up her child, hushing it, and carefully guarding it from contact with her icy hands. At last the baby was quieted; and what should she now do? Leave

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it again she could and would not. After a little thought, she got into the crib herself, cramping her limbs painfully, and covered and encircled both the baby and herself as well as she could with bed-clothes.

And there she lay, and watched, and waited, and thought for another long hour, at the end of which Captain Cleather came back with slow exhausted steps, and flung himself down on the bed in a sudden resistless sleep with heavy animal breathings. After a while Gertrude crept back into bed; she knew by experience that the danger was over for this time at least. After a violent outbreak, he would for days, even weeks, be unusually quiet and reasonable; she knew, too, that the waning moon would bring comparative peace to the poor troubled captain.

In the early morning, he woke again, and sat up in bed, burying his face in his hands.

'O my God!' groaned Captain Cleather, 'I am going mad.'

A sudden flash of truth and light had broken in upon the gathering darkness of the poor bewrayed brain, and wrung his heart with agony. Gertrude lay quite still in her feigned sleep till he put his arms round her and lifted her up.

'O Gertrude,' he said, 'my love, my darling, what is the matter? what has happened?'

'What do you mean, John?' she said, stroking his face as his children did. A puzzled look came into his eyes.

'Was it a dream?' he said, and then gave her a somewhat incoherent account of the events of the previous night. She only said: 'What a terrible dream!' and nestled closer to him. He was growing restless again, but evidently trying to keep calm and sane.

'Gertrude,' he said, 'whatever happens, don't leave me; I should be worse without you; indeed, I should, my love, my dear.'

'John, I will never, never leave you,' she said; 'haven't I promised you so before? But what should happen?' So she coaxed and soothed him. Ah, if only tears could come into the poor strained eyes she knew relief must accrue, but all moisture seemed to have dried up in the burning balls.

No; she would never leave him. Had she not known of this, and hoped against hope all the long years? Had she not kept the knowledge from all the world, his own family included, lest means should be taken to separate them? Happily, she thought, she herself stood alone in the world, so no one had authority to take her from her old, only love; but if his brothers placed him where she could not follow, she felt she would be desolate indeed. Thoughts such as these filled her heart, lying there by his side, followed her into the drawing-room, where she stole in the early dawn, and looked at the scene of her troubles. No one must know what had happened; somehow she must get the door open, and replace the shutter. How very slight an effort was necessary in order to accomplish this she soon found; her first essay was successful, the rusty bolt giving way, and proving how very frail was the defence behind which she had intrenched herself on the previous evening.

No; she would never leave him. But what should she do now? The bare fact that her life had been attempted, stood out before her in plain, horrible relief; she could not again risk the existence which might still be of use to her husband; and besides, her children were not safe. Help she must have—but from whom? The captain's two brothers, Scotch lairds, living up in the Highlands, were too far off, she said to herself, with a secret dread of them still lurking in her heart; besides, they had never shewn any great affection for this younger son of a wealthy house. No; she who was most deeply concerned would take the matter into her own hands, and seek assistance in her own way.

After breakfast, she wrote a long letter to an old college friend of her husband's, begging him to forgive the rudeness received two years previously from an irresponsible man. That excuse she could never bring herself to acknowledge before; but all the truth came out in that miserable letter, written with burning tears and many prayers, and which asked for help—help to be given secretly, and kept even from her husband himself.

'I know you will arrange some way of coming to my relief,' she wrote; 'and I will get him away from Grimswold next week, or even sooner, if possible. We will go to Sydenham, or some place equally near to London, so that it will be easy for you to come to me.'

With a great sense of relief, with a sure hope of assistance, she sealed and stamped her letter, addressing it to 'George Wriothesley, Esq.'

THE OLD BOOK.

Quaint poems of a far-off age,
In binding dark and old,
But strewn o'er each discoloured page
Sweet fancies sweetly told,

That seem, as though a child were I,
To take me by the hand,
And lead me through the years gone by,
Back to a much-loved land,

Where sunshine falls in golden bars,
Through woodland labyrinths;
And frail white wind-flowers lie like stars,
'Mid purple hyacinths.

Now, though I softly close the book,
The vision with me stays:
On green young leaves and rippling brook,
On flowers and sky, I gaze.

O poet! dead and gone thou art;
But this, thy magic lore,
Doth enter in the reader's heart,
And live there evermore.

O poet! that didst sing so sweet,
To gladden weary men,
Perchance some day we twain shall meet,
And I may thank thee then.

Early this month will be issued a Christmas Extra Double Number of *Chambers's Journal*, entitled

BEGUMBAGH,

Being an Episode of the Indian Mutiny.

The number will be issued at THREEPENCE, and will, besides, be included in the Monthly Part to be issued at the end of December.

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CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

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A POPULAR TOPIC.

THE oldest subject of conversation, and the one whose popularity shews the least signs of decay, is without doubt the Weather. In early times, there must have been scarcely anything else to talk about, and the importance of it to those who lived by agriculture only must also have been intrinsically much greater. During the period of the Deluge, the topic must have been paramount, even more so than we find it now during that uncomfortable quarter of an hour before dinner. Besides its general acceptance as a medium of conversational introduction, the weather in these times has also its special ministers — meteorological fanatics, who idolise it, and pay it scientific worship, not with incense and organ music, but with barometers and wind-gauges. These erect altars upon mountain-tops and other out-of-the-way places, to calculate the rainfall, and keep collections of instruments sacred to this Culture in their back-gardens. While other folks are content to rub their hands, and say: 'Cold, to-night,' these will tell you to a fraction how *their* thermometer has sunk, and what was its behaviour on the same date for the last ten years. I suppose there are hundreds of these devotees in the suburbs of London, whose waking thought is where the wind is, and whose last act before retiring to rest has been to look at the Bulb.

A full score of them are regular contributors to the *Times* newspaper, which, to meet the taste of this considerable sect, has of late years established a Meteorological Department. By means of this, the intelligence is communicated that the wind at Aberdeen is blowing from the north-east, which is at least so far interesting as being quite in harmony with human experience; and that the waves at Brighton are 3. Of course, there are more than three, but that is the figure by which a certain height of wave and roughness of sea are indicated. To discover this, with other enthralling phenomena, is quite an intellectual feat, from the abstruse abbreviations employed, and produces the same excitement as a perusal of *Bradshaw's Guide*, or the formation of a Chinese puzzle. In to-day's *Times*, for instance, there are twenty-one English, and eleven continental towns, from which these data have been collected, and a dainty feast is thereby spread for these weather epicures. The *pièce de résistance* is the force of the wind (which will stand a good deal of chopping); but there are many delicate side-dishes. '30·03 *r*,' for example, a slice from the under-cut of the barometer, is enough to make your mouth water; *c b*, though a garnished dish, is not the mere title of honour with which we are all acquainted, but means a beautiful blue sky with clouds detached; *p q* is a *suchet* of showers and squalls; *r*, a *purée*, all rain. Some cruelty (as in *paté de foie gras*, and other delicacies) appears to be practised in order to pamper the appetite. *T* means that the thermometer (which, like the salamander, delights in heat) is 'exposed in shade,' and it is served both Dry and Wet; while the barometer, which is wont to be somewhat intractable, is 'corrected and reduced' before it comes to table. There is no society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Scientific Instruments, at present; but the way in which the mercury is treated might come under the head of vivisection. This is too painful (as well as unintelligible) a subject for us to dilate upon, but *f* and *s* are the mysterious letters used in connection with it. The repast does not conclude with ice-pudding, but with *s* (again), for snow.

There is also an Afternoon Weather Report of a lighter character, which seems to be identical with Kettledrum. Yarmouth is considered an extra (just as a bloater, served immediately before the wine, is not in the *menu*), but has a report in very small type all to itself; and there seems to be always 'pressure' at this neglected spot. Large districts, however, are sometimes also very cavalierly treated. 'The lowest readings are in the south-east of England,' for instance. Is it possible that even our Penny Readings are underbid in that locality? The following statement seems to be a contradiction in terms: 'Pressure has risen somewhat, and storms in Ireland have subsided.'

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The above are all quotations from the ordinary reports, but these by no means satisfy the more advanced of the devotees of the weather. These write long letters dated from 'the Observatory, Tooting,' or from 'Aneroid Cottage, Camberwell,' calling the attention of the public to the most delicate vicissitudes of their scientific instruments; or now and then announcing some astounding behaviour of the same, which, it seems, is an omen of the direst significance. These last predict, with a confidence beyond that of Dr Cumming, the most alarming catastrophes, and that without giving themselves a sufficient interim to gain any reputation as prophets in their own country, much more in any other. The day of doom occurs, and nothing comes of it, before their warning has time to circulate; and we don't hear from Aneroid Cottage for the next twelve months. The Weather-sage of Tooting, however, takes care to make it known that his brother-philosopher has made a fool of himself, and publishes a tabulated statement of his own observations, which had led him to expect, with the calmness of certainty, the exact sort of weather which took place on the day in question. He then takes the opportunity of reminding us that 'yesterday was unusually' hot or cold, as the case may have been, and gives us a Selection from the readings of his thermometer for the last two-and-forty years. Also, happening of late 'to glance over the Temperature Table of the Royal Society, extending from 1794 to 1849,' he extracts for the public benefit the maximum heat recorded in London for the current month throughout that period.

These are the high-priests of the thermometer, the very ministers of the temple (of the winds); but there are also many amateur meteorological fanatics, to whom (especially in the long vacation) the editor of the *Times* is very complaisant. These are always on the watch for comets and shooting-stars, and probably only sleep in the daytime. 'Sir—It may be interesting to many of your readers to learn that while driving with my wife last evening from Diss in Norfolk towards Norwich, in a gig, we both perceived what had every appearance of a ball of fire descend in the western quarter of the heavens. It was also noticed by many persons to whom we mentioned the occurrence; and you will doubtless receive a report of it from more able sources; but if this should not be the case, the above is entirely at your service. I enclose my card (in accordance with your regulations) as a guarantee of good faith, and remain your obedient servant,

A Humble Observer of Nature.'

Again: 'Sir—I have the pleasure to inform you, that from nine till midnight on the 2d instant there was brilliant aurora borealis.—Yours obediently,

A Looker-on.'

These enthusiasts are all perfectly harmless; and it would be the height of cruelty to debar them from these simple utterances. But they are not affected by the moon alone, like other lunatics, but by every vicissitude of the weather—cold as well as heat forces them into activity; and even 'an unprecedented continuance of calm' will cause them to rush into small type.

But, after all, the weather has a great attraction for us all, and particularly when the occurrence of anything monstrous and abnormal is promised to us by its priests and ministers. For weeks, Mr Saxby, who predicted the great tidal wave, was a public benefactor; and more than one newspaper is probably indebted to his prophecy for its having survived the last Long Vacation. None of your namby-pamby dabblers in Weather matters, this man of science stood by his Wave to the very last; the railway companies sent excursion-trains to see it; the lodging-house keepers exhibited their prudence in providing for its reception; the comic journals made pictorial material of it for weeks; and, after all, it did no harm to any of us. In America, of course, the Tidal Wave rose to a colossal height, and submerging a cultivated area of about the size of Yorkshire, did a great deal of damage. There is a certain chivalry of imagination among that great people which causes them to embrace with enthusiasm all sublime ideas; while the immense extent and remoteness of their territory even enables the Portent to come to pass without much difficulty or fear of investigation. In England, from the crowded state of the population, anything satisfactory in the way of phenomena is exceedingly rare.

A good strong sensational work, such as *The Meteorological Prophet, or Weather or No*, would, however, be received with rapture in this country, since even the twaddle of old Moore and Zadkiel has great acceptance. In the meantime, we gladly welcome a sober, sensible little volume called *Weather Lore*,* a collection of Proverbs, Sayings, and Rules concerning the Weather, compiled with much carefulness and judgment. They are culled, of course, from very various sources—from the Bible, from Shakspeare, from the Shepherd of Banbury, who, in the last century, wrote a list of out-door signs of atmospheric change. The New Testament, indeed, contains some excellent weather lore; and in one instance, Christ himself has not thought it unworthy of Him to confirm a popular adage about a cloud rising in the west and producing rain, for after mentioning the saying, he has added, 'and so it is.' The writings of Job are also very rich in allusions to the winds, clouds, and tempests. In one case, however, Solomon flatly contradicts him. 'Fair weather cometh out of the north,' says Job xxxvii. 22. 'The north wind bringeth forth rain,' says Proverbs xxv. 23, Sharpe's Translation. So that, we see, folks began to differ about the weather at a very early period, just as they do now.

Well, Duncombe, how will be the weather?
Sir, it looks cloudy altogether;
And coming across our Houghton Green,
I stopped and talked with old Frank Beane;
While we stood there, sir, old Jan Swain
Went by, and said he knowed 'twould rain.

* * *

The next as came was Master Hunt,
And he said surely: 'No, it wun't.'
And then I met with Farmer Blow,
He plainly said he didn't know.
So, sir, when doctors disagree,
Who 's to decide it—you or me?

Again, it is generally understood that we have quite as much damp in England as is good for us; and there are many proverbs to that effect—as: 'A dry summer never made a dear peck;' and,

Whoso hath but a mouth,
Will ne'er in England suffer drouth.

* *Weather Lore.* By R. Inwards, Fellow of the British Meteorological Society. Tweedie: Strand.

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Yet there are also proverbs which assert the direct contrary, as:

After a famine in the stall (that is, bad hay-crop),
Comes a famine in the hall (that is, bad corn-crop);

And, 'A famine in England begins in the horse-manger.'

French, Scotch, and English, however, agree in many particulars, and notably with reference to Candlemas-day and the early part of February. 'It seems that, according to the notions of our ancestors, this part of the year could not be too cold; and no statistical evidence will ever make our farmers believe that a warm Christmas bodes well for an English harvest.' They also imagine it to be unhealthy: 'A green winter makes a fat churchyard;' to which assertion the doctors and the Registrar-general very strenuously oppose themselves. It is universally allowed, however, in Europe at least (for Egypt delights in an overflow), that flood is a great evil; and 'Under water, dearth; under snow, bread,' is a saying that is echoed even in Italy. It is generally held, too, that the year's crop will depend upon what weather we get in the first two months of it.

January or February
Do fill or empty the granary,

is a French proverb; and 'January commits the fault,' say we, with also a wise application to human affairs, 'and May bears the blame.'

The weather that is most popular is, upon the whole, what is considered 'seasonable,' no matter how disagreeable; as, 'A dry and cold March never begs its bread;' 'A peck of March dust is worth a king's ransom;' and,

A March without water
Dowers the hind's daughter.

Here is a wise precept for those who are in a hurry to exhibit themselves in the summer fashion:

Till May be out,
Leave not off a clout.

And, indeed, it is evident from many an old saw concerning this month, that it never was a warm one in England, or to be held as summer, in spite of all that the poets would have us believe on that point.

May; come she early or come she late,
She 'll make the cow to quake;

And again:

Shear your sheep in May,
And shear them all away.

Our author mentions as one feature of interest in these old sayings, that they 'give evidence of the slowly changing climate of this country;' but we do not see any proof of this in the examples quoted, and he has many a brother-meteorologist who will deny that it is changing at all. Weather-wise folks have always entertained fancies of this sort. Lord Bacon states that it is an old opinion that the weather changes repeat themselves after forty years; but there is no scientific condonation of that idea whatever. Most people believe that a change of moon brings about a change of weather.

A certain honest high-sheriff, finding himself shut up in his own coach with the late Justice M., whose reputation as a 'rough customer,' though a keen wit, had preceded him on the circuit, was rather at a loss for conversation; there was another judge, of course, in the vehicle; but he was a silent man, and so the poor sheriff was left to his own resources.

'My lord,' said he at last, 'the moon has changed, and so I hope that we shall have fine weather.'

'Are you then such a fool, sir,' growled great M., 'to believe that the moon has anything to do with it?'

Here the silent judge, who was a courtly man, interposed with: 'Really, Brother M., I think you are very hard upon our friend Mr High-Sheriff. I confess that I, for my part, believe that the moon has a very considerable influence on the state of the weather.'

'Then, all I can say is, brother,' rejoined great M., 'that you are as great a fool as the sheriff.'

The author of the present useful volume takes the same view as the crusty judge. 'One frequently hears,' says he, 'of the weather altering at the change of moon; but careful observers have been unable to detect any real differences in the state of the air at such times.' The sun, indeed, is a better prophet; but then his predictions only refer to the coming few hours. 'When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather, for the sky is red; and in the morning, It will be foul weather to-day, for the sky is red and lowring,' Matt. xvi. And this is corroborated by many a popular saw:

Sky red at night is the sailor's delight;
Sky red in the morning is the sailor's warning.

Most weather beliefs, however, notwithstanding that they may be both ancient and far diffused, are illusive and unfounded. There is a nautical proverb which arises from a supposed clearance of clouds which takes place when the full moon rises: 'The full moon eats clouds,' and there is also an Indian saying almost identical: 'The full moon grows fat on clouds.' Yet close observation has proved that there is no fact of the sort. Again: 'The west wind is a gentleman, and goes to bed' (that is, drops in the evening), says the proverb; but Cornish-men know better. It 'drops on' to their ships, and behaves in a manner anything but gentlemanlike. Weather proverbs are, in fact, as a general rule, only to be trusted when they are quite local; they are almost all empirical, and founded on insufficient data; and it is only on a limited area that anything like certainty can be attained. Thus: 'The glare of the distant Ayrshire ironworks being seen at night from Cumbrae or Rothesay, rain is expected next day;' and again:

When Largo Law puts on his hat,
Let Kellie Law beware of that;
When Kellie Law gets on his cap,
Largo Law may laugh at that:

which, when we are informed that Largo is to the south-west of Kellie, we may easily understand and credit.

The fact is, however humiliating it may be to own it, that many kinds of birds and insects know a deal more about the weather than we do; and indeed, 'since it is of much more importance to them, it would be wonderful if nature had not provided them with a keener prophetic instinct in this respect.' Utter destruction would occur, for instance, to the nests of some birds if

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the tenants were absent during a gale of wind, or a pelting shower; while *our* houses, even though 'run up' by the most enterprising of building speculators, will stand little shocks of that sort. To insects, again, 'the state of the weather for the fraction of a week may determine the duration of their span of life.'

'When the fieldfare, starling, swan, and other birds of passage arrive soon from the north, it predicts an early and severe winter.' This is really important, if true; whereas, unfortunately, these winged prophets can in general see but a very little way into futurity, however clearly.

'When sea-birds fly out early and far to seaward, moderate winds and fair weather may be expected; and when they hang about the coast or fly inland, we may look for rough weather.'

Similarly: 'If rooks stay at home, or return in the middle of the day, it will rain; if they go far ahead, it will be fine.'

'The drumming of the snipe in the air, and the call of the partridge, indicate dry weather and frost at night to the shepherds of the Garrow.'

Finally: 'A bee was never caught in a shower.'

The vegetable world has its not untrustworthy prophets; and especially the pink-eyed pimpernel (or ploughman's weather-glass), which so certainly closes before rain, that it is more credited, by those who know it, than any instrument. It is mentioned among the other natural signs in Dr Jenner's celebrated *Rain Forecast:*

> The hollow winds begin to blow,
> The clouds look black, the glass is low,
> The soot falls down, the spaniels sleep,
> And spiders from their cobwebs creep.
> Last night the sun went pale to bed,
> The moon in halves hid her head;
> The boding shepherd heaves a sigh,
> For, see! a rainbow spans the sky;
> The walls are damp, the ditches smell,
> Closed is the pink-eyed pimpernel;
> Hark how the chairs and tables crack!
> Old Betty's joints are on the rack;
> Loud quack the ducks, the peacocks cry;
> The distant hills are looking nigh;
> How restless are the snorting swine;
> The busy flies disturb the kine;
> Low o'er the grass the swallow wings;
> The cricket, too, how sharp he sings;
> Puss on the hearth, with velvet paws,
> Sits wiping o'er her whiskered jaws;
> Through the clear stream the fishes rise,
> And nimbly catch th' incautious flies;
> The glow-worms, numerous and bright,
> Illumed the dewy dell last night;
> At dusk the squalid toad was seen
> Hopping and crawling o'er the green;
> The whirling dust the wind obeys,
> And in the rapid eddy plays;
> The frog has changed his yellow vest,
> And in a russet coat is dressed;
> Though June, the air is cold and still;
> The yellow blackbird's voice is shrill;
> My dog, so altered in his taste,
> Quits mutton-bones on grass to feast;
> And, see yon rooks, how odd their flight—
> They imitate the gliding kite,
> And seem precipitate to fall,
> As if they felt the piercing ball.
> 'Twill surely rain—I see with sorrow
> Our jaunt must be put off to-morrow.

Dr Jenner's *Forecast* has truth as well as rhyme to recommend it; but, after all, what a small thing it is to predict, even with certainty, that it will presently rain, and much beyond *that* no meteorologist has yet got. All atmospheric predictions are still but gropings in the dark, as even our weather-wise author frankly confesses.

'The most learned Meteorologist, armed with the thousand delicate contrivances of modern science, is not more able to predict the weather for a week to come, than were the ignorant shepherds, who, in ages past, watched the spreading and drifting of the clouds from Chiltern or Cheviot top, while science was still in its cradle, and meteorology a thing unknown.'

FIELD-GARDENS FOR LABOURERS.

It is now twenty-six years since the subject of allotting small portions of land to the independent poor for cultivation upon their own account—in cases where no gardens were attached to their cottages—came before the country, in the Report of a Select Committee of the House of Commons. That committee reported strongly in favour of the system; but in the interval which has elapsed since the publication of their Report, the subject has been suffered to remain in abeyance. It is, however, one of the greatest importance to the labouring poor; and it will certainly be difficult for us to enable persons who have not read the vast body of evidence which Her Majesty's Commissioners appointed to inquire into the subject have succeeded in collecting, to realise the almost vital interest which it possesses for a large section of the agricultural poor.

In the early years of the present century, the experiment of allotting small portions of land to cottagers was extensively tried by the Earl of Winchelsea; and his lordship reported, as the result of his experience, that the labourers and their families were both vastly benefited thereby. They lived better, from the income which the produce of their little patch of land brought them, and also from the vegetables, &c., which they were able to rear in their gardens for their own consumption. They likewise became contented with their situation, and attached to it, and feeling the advantage of possessing a little money, their industry was thereby stimulated.

In the year 1830-31, Captain Scobell—the labours of whose life has been devoted to advocating the advantages of the allotment system to the poor, and who, from his self-denying labours in the cause, may fairly be termed the apostle of the movement—introduced allotments into the parishes of High Littleton and Midsomer Norton in Somersetshire. He carried the system into effect in these two parishes upon a large scale, and with great success, and from them it has spread into fifty adjoining ones.

Several acts of parliament have been passed in favour of allotments; but still they are not nearly so extensively adopted in this country, as the benefits which they confer upon the labouring poor would lead us to desire. By the provisions of these acts of parliament, the churchwardens of

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a parish are empowered, with the consent of the inhabitants in vestry assembled, to purchase or take on lease, on account of the parish, any suitable portion of land not exceeding fifty acres, and let any portion of such land 'to any poor and industrious inhabitant of the parish,' to be occupied and cultivated upon his own account, and for his own benefit, 'at such reasonable rent, and for such term' as might be fixed by the vestry.

As public attention has been little called to the subject since the inquiry by the parliamentary committee of 1843, we shall now state briefly the arrangements and regulations under which the allotment system is, according to the Report of that committee, most advantageously carried out. Firstly, as it is desirable that the profits of an allotment should be viewed by its holder rather as an aid to, than a substitute for, his ordinary income accruing from wages, the allotment should be of no greater extent than can be cultivated during the leisure moments of the labourer and his family. The exact size which will meet this condition must necessarily vary according to the nature of the soil, the number of his family, &c., but one quarter of an acre is the size usually adopted, and the one found to be best suited to average cases. Secondly, the allotment should be near to the dwelling of its occupier, because much of the benefit depends upon the man and his wife and children being able to devote spare moments to the care of their ground. Thirdly, though the land will yield larger profits under this mode of cultivation than under the usual method of tillage, the proprietor who wishes to benefit the poor man should not exact more rent than he would expect to receive if he let it out to be farmed in the ordinary way. Fourthly, tithes, parochial rates, taxes, and all other charges should be included in the rent, and be paid, not by the occupier, but by the owner.

The net annual profit of a quarter of an acre allotment has been found to be, for poor land L.4, and for good land L.5. The most profitable, as well as the most beneficial employment of the land is by growing vegetables upon it. 'I have known children,' said one witness to the parliamentary committee appointed to inquire into the subject of allotments, 'of ten and eleven years of age announce that they had tasted vegetables since they had these grounds, which they never saw on their father's table before; they go almost daily to fetch something for the dinner.' Nor is the benefit to the agricultural labourer of allotments to be measured only by the profit which he is able to make out of the sale of their produce; for, in the words of another witness, Sir Henry Fletcher, 'the good of them is seen not only in the money they put into the pocket of the labourer, but in the money they keep there, by inducing him to go and work at his allotment, instead of sitting drinking in the public-house.'

Some readers may be inclined to urge that any direct pecuniary advantage to the labouring man from his allotment would be neutralised by its value being taken into account in the rate of wages offered to him; but it was clearly proved by the evidence taken before the committee of 1843, that the allotments had had no effect upon wages, and that they had, in fact, been a clear addition to the labourer's resources. If this were the case in 1843, then assuredly it is much more so now, when there is a far greater demand for agricultural labour than there then was. One objection to allotments was formerly often urged by landlords—namely, that there would be great difficulty in collecting their rents from so many small tenants, and that they would have to suffer much loss from arrears. The evidence, however, which was taken before the commission of 1843, shews 'that the great desire felt by labourers to possess this means of adding to their income made them careful not to lose it.' One witness testified that 'during twelve years he had not lost a quarter per cent.' Another witness 'never had a difficulty about a farthing of rent.' A third states that his tenants 'bring the money on the appointed day without being called upon;' and a fourth says 'he has not had a defaulter to the amount of a penny.' Farmers also were afraid at first that the men would work in the early morning hours at their allotments, and so exhaust their strength, but this has not been found to be the case. It appears, too, that the farmers themselves are indirectly benefited by the allotment system, for the labourers are frequently kept off the poor-rates by consuming the produce of their allotments, and, moreover, they become, as labourers, more steady, more skilful, and, it may be added, more 'stay-at-home.'

Captain Scobell, R.N., recommends any gentleman who may wish to adopt the allotment system upon his estate to proceed in the following way: 'Announce your intention of letting field-gardens in your parish. Exclude no labourer for previous bad character; he may be reclaimed. Do not include any pauper. Let no parish officer have anything to do with the arrangements. The quantity of land (which should be good and fresh) to be granted to each family should be from 20 to 50 poles, according to the size and strength, &c. of the family. Divide the fields in strips from top to bottom, abutting against the highway. The fields should be as near as possible, and of easy access. A copy of your rules should be given to each tenant. The rent should be precisely that which a farmer pays for similar land, and should be paid in one payment in the autumn: condition—not to dispossess your tenants except on conviction by law of some crime, or on account of some wilful breach of the regulations. The effect of this guarantee will astonish you, even in those who have previously borne the worst characters. For the first year or two, contract, if you can, for some one to cart the manure provided by the tenants at the lowest possible price, making them pay by the measure of their field-garden, and not by the load. Cause an account to be kept of the quantity found by each; you will find it to be ample to uphold good or even fair land. Have no fear of the trouble; it will be but a light amusement.'

Not only are agricultural labourers deeply interested in the allotment question, but the working-men in many towns have shewn the greatest anxiety to avail themselves of similar allotments, whenever they have had an opportunity. From

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the evidence taken by the parliamentary committee of 1843, it appears that there were then about 400 gardens held under the corporation of Nottingham. The 'Northern and Midland Counties Artisans' and Labourers' Friend Society' had at that date caused 853 acres to be let in allotments in the neighbourhood of large towns. Societies were formed, each member of which put by a penny a week to form a fund to meet the outlay upon first entering upon the land. A large portion of the evidence taken in the inquiry of 1843 is devoted to pointing out the benefit which artisans derive in regard to health, comfort, and rational recreation, as well as in additions to their pecuniary means, from the possession of small plots of garden-ground on the outskirts of towns.

One great reason for encouraging the allotment system is to be found in the gravity of the fact that, during the last century and a half—and especially during the last one hundred years—there has been going on throughout England a gradual alienation of the class of agricultural labourers from the soil they till. The extent to which waste lands have been enclosed under the Enclosure Acts has without doubt greatly tended to prevent the agricultural labourer from acquiring little portions of land which he could cultivate upon his own account. Now-a-days, there is, unfortunately, scarcely any method provided for him whereby he may hope to bridge over the gulf which separates him from the great farmer. Since the passing of the first Enclosure Act in the year 1710, there have been, up to the year 1867, 7,660,413 acres enclosed—that is, above one-third part of the grand total of 25,451,626 acres which were under cultivation in England and Wales in the year 1867. Of this total of 7,660,413 acres enclosed since the year 1710, only 334,974 acres were enclosed between the years 1710 and 1760, thereby leaving 7,325,439 acres as those enclosed in the last one hundred and seven years. This statement of the total number of acres enclosed shews how large a portion of land has been removed from out of the reach (so to speak) of the agricultural labourer, and from which he now can derive no benefit except as a day-labourer upon it. It cannot be doubted that the enclosure of waste land is beneficial to the country at large, but it is equally certain that in many instances—we might almost say in the majority of instances—the enclosure has deprived the cottager of the benefits which he enjoyed from the waste land, without his obtaining any compensation. It is true that if the cottager be the holder of a freehold cottage, and if, as such, he had enjoyed rights over the waste, or if such rights had accrued to him by an uninterrupted user of twenty years, then by the General Enclosure Act of the 8th and 9th Vict., c. 118, a portion of such enclosed lands would be allotted to him, but he is immediately subject to the strong temptation to sell it to the farmer who may own the neighbouring land. It must also not be forgotten that the peasant who thus disposes of his plot of land is disposing not only of his own property, *but of that of his successors*. The right to have a pig, for example, upon such common lands is for ever after extinguished; and this may prove, and in many instances does prove, a serious loss to the successor of the agricultural labourer who has thus rashly sold his birthright. Those who are best acquainted with this subject know well that the higher wage which the agricultural labourer may have been able to earn upon a large farm (which has thus been enclosed) has not compensated him for what he has lost by the enclosure. It must not also be forgotten that higher wages are not a never-failing accompaniment of large farms, for many instances could be cited of large farms upon which the rate of wages paid was very low. No doubt, the enclosure of waste lands does afford to the capitalist a remunerative employment of his capital, to the agricultural labourer a wider market for his labour, and to the community at large an increased supply of food; but whenever such enclosure of waste lands takes place, care should be taken by the government officers to see that suitable gardens are annexed to the cottages of the commoners, and that a certain portion of the common should be allotted, wherever it is necessary, for the special purpose of providing the cottagers with fuel.

In the twenty-two years between 1845 and 1867, 484,893 acres of waste lands were enclosed in England and Wales. Of these 484,893 acres, the Enclosure Commissioners had power by act of parliament, in the case of 320,855 acres, to allot gardens to the labouring poor. Of these 320,855 acres, 259,136 acres were assigned to the lords of manors and other persons having titles to a portion of the land enclosed; 59,600 acres were declared by the assistant Enclosure Commissioners to be, for various reasons, ineligible for public allotments; and *only two thousand one hundred and nineteen acres were actually assigned as public allotments for gardens to the labouring poor*. When we remember that waste lands were originally granted to lords of the manor, not for their own benefit, but for the benefit of those who held lands within the manor, the difference between the number of acres (259,136) allotted to lords of the manor and others, and the number of acres (2,119) allotted to the poor, becomes even more suggestive and startling. Mr Cowper, M.P., wisely said upon the second reading of the General Enclosure Bill of 1844: 'In former times, every cottage almost had some common rights from which the poor occupants derived much benefit: the privilege of feeding a cow, a pig, or a goose on the common was a great benefit to them; and it was unfortunate, when the system of enclosing commons first commenced, that a portion of the land was not set apart for the benefit of every cottager who enjoyed common rights, and his successors; but the course adopted had been to compensate the owner of the cottage to which the common rights belonged, forgetting the claims of the occupier by whom they were enjoyed.'

Considering the great advantages which, as we have already pointed out, these allotments are to the labouring poor, and considering also that something like three million acres of waste land yet remain to be enclosed in England and Wales, is it too much to hope that henceforth, in the case of every such enclosure, a portion of land shall be reserved to every cottage of the parish in which it takes place? Is it likewise too much to hope that the day is not far distant when every labourer in England may have a means of bettering his condition afforded to him by his being allowed an opportunity of cultivating an allotment or field-garden? Landowners who may wish to benefit agricultural labourers may rest assured that, by setting apart a small portion of their

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estate for the purpose of its being divided into allotments, they are assisting the agricultural poor in the best possible way—namely, by helping them to help themselves.

UNDER THE FIRS.

'BETTER, decidedly,' said our doctor. 'You'll be all right in a day or two.'

'Thank goodness!' said I.

'I want a rubber of whist,' said our doctor smiling, 'so I shall put you to rights as soon as possible.—Down, *Hec.!*—I say, Scribe,' he continued, patting the head of his great dog, 'I ought to apologise; and I would, if I had brought him up; but he slipped in unseen.'

'By the way,' said I, 'how did you get that animal?'

'Patient of mine—death-bed legacy—thereby hangs a tale.—But, my good sir, what are you scrabbling that note-book from under your pillow for?'

'To take notes, to be sure,' I said: 'tales are scarce in the market.'

'Didn't I say that you were to stop all work for the present?' was the severe apostrophe.

I fell back with a groan.

'Stop a few days, and I'll tell you all about it—that is, if you will condescend to get well first under my treatment.'

'I'll do my best,' I said; and I really did; so that, a week after, my friend the doctor was sitting with me, ready to relate the promised tale, while I was all attention.

'I had a patient down in Surrey some time since,' he said, 'with a complaint that regularly baffled me. He was a bailiff, or something of that sort, living entirely alone as to human society; but he had for companion that great white dog—now mine, you know. Well, I attended him for weeks; and then one day I said to him: "Now, frankly, it's a regular robbery for me to keep on coming here when I can do you no good. The long and the short of it is, medicine won't touch you—your mind's diseased. You have something upon it. Now, what is it?"

'The poor fellow was silent for a few minutes, and then rising upon his elbow, his pale, drawn face all wild and scared of aspect, he caught me by the arm, whispering: "How did you find it out?"

"By your manner," I replied; "and, depend upon it, you would be all the better if you relieved your brain of the stress."

"Master," he said, with a wild look, "it's that dog;" and he pointed to the great animal.

"That dog?"

"Yes, and something else. He knows it all, and I'm afraid of him; but, before I go, I'll tell you all about it."

'He seemed to be struggling for some moments with a great emotion, and then fixing his eyes on mine, he began, pointing as he spoke towards the dog:

"I tried to kill him again and again, sir, but I couldn't, and I'm sorry now that I ever tried, for he was always a good and a faithful beast.—Come here, *Hec.*;" and the great dog came up to the bed-side, and licked his master's thin white hand. "I'd ask you to forgive me, *Hec.*, old fellow, but you are only a dog, and would not understand me; but though I'm a man, and you're but a dumb beast, I'd be glad to change places with you this moment.—You know, sir, when my wife went away, and she was supposed to have gone to her father and mother?"

'I nodded.

"Well, sir, it was not my poor wife, but her sister, who had been staying with us, whom I saw into the train that morning, at Hindley Station; and it was directly I reached home that a tiny spark, that had been pricking and tingling in my heart for months past, suddenly burst out into a fierce flame—so fierce that I could not quench it—and I did a deed that no one ever suspected. I need not go into all that now, but I had had little suspicions for long enough—suspicions that I know now to have been false; while, when I returned that day, I fancied something more, and angrily accused her. I don't even know now myself how it happened, more than that she retorted fiercely, and ran up-stairs, where I followed her; and then, more words passing, I struck her brutally with my fist—a cruel, cowardly blow—and with a loud cry, she pitched backwards from top to bottom of the stairs; and then, after the heavy dull crash with which she fell, all was quite silent, for I stood still listening, till old *Hector* there burst into a low, whimpering howl.

"Then, all trembling, I went down slowly to find her lying in the little passage, quite motionless, with the dog licking her face; while, when I drove him away and spoke to her, she did not answer. Then I went down upon one knee to alter her position, for she was lying, stunned as I thought, with one arm bent under her, and her head turned in a strange, awkward way. I trembled violently, for though I thought her only stunned, with possibly an arm broken, all the time there was a dull, horrible, black dread coming up like a cloud to cover my soul, though as yet I could not understand what it meant.

"I shuddered, though, as I moved her, for her head hung back horribly, while, when I fetched a chair-cushion to rest it upon, her neck seemed to give way too easily. But I saw the next moment that her arm was broken; and laying it in what I thought to be an easy position, I fetched water, and began to bathe her face and temples, stopping once to threaten the dog, who kept on howling in the kitchen.

"Being a bailiff, ours is a lonely place, and there was no one near, or I should have called in help; for, as time passed on, and she did not revive, the strange black feeling seemed to grow thicker and more dense, though I would not give way to it as yet. I tried salts, brandy, burned feathers, chafing her cold hands, every remedy that I could think of, persevering for quite an hour; when all at once the black cloud seemed to cover me, and I jumped up, trembling worse than ever, for I knew that she was dead—that I had murdered her!

"I've suffered since, sir, every torment and pang that can come from a man's conscience—such stings as I could hardly have thought a human being could bear, and not go mad; but they have all been as nothing, compared to the horrible feeling that came over me when I first knew the dreadful truth. First knew it! I had known it all along, from the moment after I struck the blow; but there was something within me that kept beating it off till now, when it came upon me like blasting lightning.

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"At first, it was a frightful feeling of remorse and sorrow, and I would have given my own life to have brought her back, as I threw myself down by her side, calling her by name, begging her to forgive me, and kissing the face that was fast growing colder and colder. Then came a sense of fear, and I shrank back, scarcely daring to be near her, and glad at last to lay my handkerchief over her face; while that soon changed to a cowardly feeling of dread—not of her, nor even of future punishment for my unthought-of deed, but for the present, and the time when it would be found out.

"For a few moments my head swam, and I nearly fell, while thoughts crowded into my head of the police, the handcuffs, the prison, the judge, and last of all, of the gallows. What could I do? How could I hide the deed? Could I not say that she had fallen from top to bottom of the stairs, and would not that have been sufficient? Quite, I thought; and putting on my hat, I was about to run off to the town for a doctor, when I recollected that it was more than two hours since she had fallen, and that she was growing cold; while as soon as the medical man began to question me, I knew that I should betray myself.

"I dared not go; I dared not stir from the house; I dared not stay; and in my dread I got the dog close to me, and struck him when he looked in my face and howled. At least a dozen times I went and looked at the body lying there, so horribly still, but, in its very silence, speaking to me in a tongue, ignorant man that I was, that I could readily comprehend. But now a profound feeling of selfishness had taken possession of me, and I was pondering as to how I should conceal the deed. I had been a great reader, living so much in a quiet retired part, and I tried to recall whether I had ever read of any man being in a similar position to my own, fixing at last upon Eugene Aram.

"Whenever the dread seemed greater than I could bear, I kept telling myself that I had never meant to do the deed; and having spirits in the house, I drank—drank deeply; but without producing the effect I wished.

"Towards evening, first one and then another person came to the cottage, and as I heard their steps I trembled; for it seemed to me that some one was coming to ask me the question: Where is your wife? But no: I faced them one by one—the baker, the woman who brought us yeast and milk, and a hawking gipsy.

'I saw you and your missus at the station this morning, sir,' said the woman who left the yeast. 'Is she goin' to stay away long?'

'Yes,' I said; 'for some time;' and my heart gave a great leap, as these words suggested to me that other people might have made the same mistake, and it would be generally supposed that she had left home on a visit.

"But about the body—what should I do with it? I tried to think what I should do; but now there came a fresh struggle—a new horror to contend with. Something was urging me; voices seemed whispering to me, guiding me to the place where I kept my guns, and then, trembling in every limb, I loaded one—two barrels, and sat down thinking for a while. It seemed the best thing I could do; but I rose to take one more look at her as she lay in the passage so cold and still. I laid down my gun, and crossed the room, but for a long time I could not remove my handkerchief from her face, while, when I did, it was but for a moment, and I dropped it again shuddering. Then I seemed to have heard voices outside, and I ran out, and looked up and down the lane, and round the house, but I was alone; and once more I entered, closed the door, and took up my gun.

"But I dared not: I was a coward, and I feared to meet the future. I wanted to live on and repent; to try and make amends, if it were possible; and thus I waited hour after hour—hour after hour, always haunted by the dread of voices which seemed whispering round me. Twice I thought she called, and I started and answered trembling, going each time as far as the passage, to come back shaking like a leaf, after touching the hand, by this time cold as marble.

"I had put the gun back in its corner, merely keeping the ramrod in my hand, with which from time to time I struck the dog, to keep him quiet, for the poor beast would go to the room-door and howl dismally, till I forced him to lie at my feet; while now he seemed afraid of me, and I of him, for he kept looking in my face, and whining, and then looking towards the door; and had I not struck him, he would have kept by it, tearing to get it open.

"The dim light of evening came at last, with the dread growing more and more upon me as the darkness increased. I dared not light a candle—I don't know why; but I felt a sort of fear that I should see more than was really in the house, and besides, I should have had to go in the dark along the little passage to the kitchen, though I tried to persuade myself that it was on account of the dog, and a dread that he should get out of the room.

"And then came the night, windy and stormy, with the rain riding upon the gusts of wind, to be beaten against the window-panes. There was but little moon, and the clouds were heavy, and drove quickly along the sky; while, now, in the intervals of the gusts of wind, it seemed to me more and more that there was a voice calling me, as if from a great distance off, so that the sound came faintly upon my ear. I listened again and again, opening the door, and standing bareheaded in the rain; but I could hear nothing.

"Hours passed, and then I had made up my mind what to do. I locked the door of the room where I was sitting, went round to the back, so as not to pass through the passage, and locked the back-door. Then going back to the front-room, I found *Hector* whining, and tearing at the door to get to his mistress; and I called him away, but without effect; when, after a fierce battle, I dragged him out of the house to the shed, where I locked him in, after taking out a spade.

"The dog began to howl as soon as I had closed the door; but I knew that there was no one to hear him; so I went back to the house, closed and locked the door, and carried the spade to a spot I had determined on; after which I again returned to the house, hesitating at the door, however, half afraid to enter. *Hector* was quiet now, only scratching restlessly at the door of the shed.

"After waiting perhaps a quarter of an hour, passed in listening, I roused myself, and went in, drank furiously from the brandy I had in the closet; and then tearing open the inner door, I stooped, seized the body, which seemed like lead, and staggered with it out into the lane.

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"I can't tell now how I got along, with the long low howl of the dog ringing in my ears, as he heard my heavy staggering footsteps. I seemed, as I went on, to have the strength of ten men, and the fears of a hundred. The bramble tearing at my coat was some one staying me; the bole of a tree, some one watching over the hedge; every gust of wind bore cries of fancied pursuers; and, half-mad, I pressed on, reeling from side to side of the road, till I reached the gate which led to the path I had chosen; and after getting through, I was obliged to stay here and rest.

"Rest! What a word! Rest!—that which I was never to know again. I dared not place my dreadful burden upon the ground, but stood leaning on the gate for a few minutes, before I turned and pressed on along the narrow grass-grown path for a few yards, striking then into the great fir-wood, where the path was slippery with the fallen needles, and save here and there, where there was a tuft of green moss, all bare. Trees everywhere—tall straight fir-trees, like the pillars of a great temple, and close together, so that I had to thread my way carefully as I slowly climbed the rising ground, the darkness being at times so intense that I had to hold one hand stretched out in front, to prevent striking against some trunk.

"Up still, higher and higher, a long toilsome walk with so heavy a load, my feet slipping from under me as the ground sloped more—the pine-needles making the path at times seem like glass; while once I tripped over a pine-stump, and fell heavily. But I was now close to where I had laid my spade, for I knew the ground well; and leaving my burden where it had fallen, I hurried to the spot I had fixed upon—an open space where a few trees had been thinned out—and then, seizing my spade, I carefully scraped the needles into a heap, ready to spread over the ground again, and then began to dig.

"At times there was such a lull of the storm, and all was so still, that the strokes of the spade echoed back to me, and then directly after I would stop, shivering, as the wind seemed to shout and wail amongst the tree-tops, roaring and hissing, and making branches creak and groan as they ground together. It was horrible; for the one word Murder, Murder! seemed to ring in my ears as though ten thousand voices shouted it; but I toiled on, digging furiously, throwing out spadeful after spadeful of earth, till I stood knee-deep in the black earth, making the heap at my side higher and higher.

"How the wind thundered in those fir-tops, and what a strange, ghastly gloom there seemed around! Now it would grow pitchy black, and the rain would come hissing and pattering down; then there would be a pale light steal through the tall trunks of the trees, so that I could see for some little distance round. At one of these times I turned cold, the sweat stood in a chilly dew upon my forehead, my hair was wet, and I dropped the spade, for there, in the strange gloom, was something white, staring horribly at me; and then I saw it apparently steal away, and melt into the darkness amongst the trees.

"As soon as I could sufficiently recover myself, I seized the spade again, and dug on to deepen the rough hole I was making, when again my blood seemed to freeze as I saw the same white figure indistinctly in the dim distance, before I made out that it was *Hector*, seated now, as I could tell, where I had left the body, and howling most dismally.

"Relieved of my fears, I hurled a piece of earth at the dog, when he disappeared once more; and after a few more strokes of the spade, while trying the blade too strongly against a pine-root, the handle snapped in two.

"There was nothing else for it; so, tearing off, I ran back to fetch another, and found, as I expected, that the dog had broken the shed window, and leaped out; while upon once more reaching the pine-wood, I stopped short, for there came a dreadful cry from its depths—a horrible, long-drawn, echoing cry, which was repeated twice before I knew it to be *Hector*, whom I found sitting by the body.

"Could I have reached him, I should have killed him with the spade I carried; but my approach drove him away, for he knew me, and would not come near, though I tried hard to get him within reach, calling him again and again.

"It all seems like a dream, a horrible nightmare, that night: the strange whisperings amongst the trees; the voices; the shouts, wails, shrieks, and cries; the rushing noises; the echoing sound of my spade; and the occasional lulls, when all was as still as death. But I deepened the hole, dragged in the body, covered it level with the surrounding soil, beat it down frantically, to hide my crime from the sight of men, and then laboriously scattered about the spare earth, before I again spread the pine-needles over the spot.

"Day was faintly beginning to break before I had finished, for from time to time I had to leave my task to drive away the dog, who came first on one side, and then upon the other, to watch me, so that I felt afraid of him, lest he should betray me by coming back as soon as I was gone, and tearing up the earth until he had laid bare my dreadful secret.

"And now that all was hidden from sight, I turned to go, when, shivering with fear, I remembered that I had not got the broken spade-handle, and felt that it must be covered up in the grave, ready to tell its own tale of the murder, and who was buried there, for my name was branded on it in full. But, found or not, I could not—I dared not attempt to dig it out then; but calling to the restless, watching dog, I strode through the wood, and back to the shed, where I hung up the spade, and found, to my great relief, that the broken handle lay upon the floor, where I had cast it down with the blade.

"*Hector* had not followed me, but I dared not go back, though there was not the slightest likelihood of my meeting any one; so, cleansing my hands, and changing my clothes, I threw myself dressed upon the bed, and tried to sleep.

"Tried, but tried in vain, as I lay there listening to the glad song of the birds, and saw the bright sunshine reflected into my room, for the morning had broken as beautiful as the night had been rough. But sleep was not for me; and at last I sprang up, and unable to resist the inclination, walked into the fir-wood, when, upon nearing the spot, I turned cold once more with dread, on seeing *Hector* tearing away at the earth.

"But he ran as I approached; and after carefully looking round, I once more levelled the ground, trampled it, and scraping up a capful of pine-needles, sprinkled them over the place.

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"Twice that day I returned to find my work to do over again; and the last time I brought my gun, and would have shot the dog, could I have got within reach; but as soon as I was in sight, he fled. This went on for weeks after: either *Hector* had scratched up the soil, or it had settled down a little, so that I was always in dread lest the spot should be discovered. More than once, I determined to dig the body up, and bury it elsewhere, but I dared not; and besides, I felt sure that the dog would either be watching me, or else would scent out the fresh place. I tried again and again to shoot him, but he never let me get within range, and the poisoned fragments of meat I laid about for him were never touched. How he lived, I never knew, but there he always was, wandering about the wood.

"I gave out that my wife had gone to visit friends at a distance, and I contrived that a black-edged letter should be sent to me, and then I left the town for a few days, to come back in deep mourning; and people were satisfied with my lame tale—such few as knew me—for mine was a solitary life in a wild part among the Surrey hills, and heaths, and pine-woods.

"That *Hector* seemed to lead a charmed life; and at last I came to the conclusion that his visits to the spot in the pine-wood were now paid only by night, for I seldom used to see him; and it seemed likely that getting to live after so wild a fashion, he followed the habits of his fellows, and slept the greater part of the day. But though I scarcely ever met with him, I constantly found proofs of his recent presence; and one night, when I went purposely to try and see him, as soon as I reached the gate I could hear his doleful howls, and I knew that he must be seated upon the grave. The night was perfectly still, and every howl came echoing back from the sandstone cliff where the martins built; and as I looked through the long alleys where the moon was casting hundreds of shadows, there was something so solemn-looking in the scene, that I had not the courage to proceed.

"I went on, though, at last with a strange trembling in every limb; but only to stop once more as a long echoing howl came ringing through the tall fir-trunks, when leaning my gun up against the one nearest to me, something seemed to draw me towards the old spot. But there was no fierce rage now against the dog, for a feeling of pity for him was making its way to my heart.

"Could the dog have known that? Who can say. But as I crept slowly nearer and nearer, till I could see him, there was no movement; and at last I was close to him where he lay—his muzzle resting upon his paws, save at times when he lifted himself a little, and gave out one of those long doleful howls—and the next minute, sobbing like a weak child, I was down upon my knees watering that poor unsanctified, but solemn grave with my tears.

"Repentance? If at that moment I could have changed places with the dead, I would have done it gladly; and then it was that, for the first time, something like prayers for forgiveness were muttered by my cracked white lips.

"I don't know how that night passed; but it seemed to me in one great awful stillness. *Hec.* howled no more; and he was quite forgotten, till all at once I started, for there was a touch upon my hands; when, as I looked up, day was breaking in a weird solemn way amongst the fir-trees; and, afraid of me no longer, *Hector* was licking my hands.

"Then I laid one hand upon his shaggy head, looking into his great honest truthful eyes; and as I said to him: '*Hec.*, old fellow, you won't betray me!' he raised his muzzle, and gave one low whimpering howl, and it seemed to me that we made friends, for with a last longing look at the grave, I stood up, and began to walk away, with the great dog following close to my heels.

"We seemed to understand one another then, and to feel that we had a great secret to keep. He did not shrink from me, even when I took up my gun all wet and rusted with the night-dew, but followed me home. We had become friends once more, and, as it were, made a solemn compact over the grave; but, you see, sir, he has borne the secret better than I. He'll want a master soon, sir, for you are right—your medicine is useless for my complaint. Time back I'd gladly have killed him; but now I think I should be easier if I knew he would have a good master when I'm gone; and I know no one more likely to make him one than you."

'He ceased speaking; and having several other patients to visit, I rose to take my leave, promising to call again. And the next time I did so, he was dead; while *Hector* followed me home.'

'But that seemed rather an easy way of taking leave of a man who had just confessed to the perpetration of a horrible murder,' said I.

'Well, yes, it does,' said my friend; 'but how would you have me end it?'

'Do you know,' I said, laying down the pencil with which I had been taking voluminous notes, 'this sounds not only very improbable, but uncommonly good language for a man who was only a poor bailiff or gamekeeper. Now, how much of the story is true?'

'Ask *Hector*,' he said; 'there he lies at your feet.'

I looked at the great white dog, my friend's favourite, and then at the slight raising of my *vis-à-vis*' eyebrows.

'Why, what was the good of humbugging, when I asked you to tell me how you obtained your dog?'

'Did you want it to be true, then?' he said with pretended surprise. 'I invented it, every bit, myself.'

'More shame for you!' I exclaimed, indignant at having had my sympathies aroused upon such false pretences. 'I hold Truth above all things.'

Still, you see, I have written the story.

SAILORS' SHANTIES AND SEA-SONGS.

I ONCE heard an old salt remark, that a good shanty was the best bar in the capstan; and he spoke truly. A good voice and a new and stirring chorus are worth an extra hand on board a merchantman, which, as a rule, is manned with the least possible number that the law allows, and often goes to sea short-handed, even according to the parsimonious calculations of its owners. The only way the heavier work can be done at all is by each man doing his utmost at the same moment. This is regulated by the shanty, the true song of the 'toilers of the sea.' It is not recreation; it

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is an essential part of the work on shipboard. It is the shanty that mast-heads the topsail-yards, when making sail; it starts and weighs the anchor; it brings down the main-tack with a will; it loads and unloads cargo; it keeps the pumps going; in fact it does all the work where unison and strength are required. A good shanty is to the sailor what the pibroch is to the Highlander—invigorating, soul-stirring. At the capstan, on the topsail-halliards, in port and at sea, in calm and in storm, the ropes run smoother, the work is done quicker, when some twenty strong voices sing:

Haul the bowline, the fore and main top bowline;
Haul the bowline, the bowline haul;
Haul the bowline, the bully, bully bowline;
Haul the bowline, the bowline haul.

I remember well, one dirty black night in the Channal, beating up for the Mersey against a stiff breeze, coming on deck near midnight, just as the ship was put about. When a ship is tacking, the tacks and sheets (ropes which confine the clews, or lower corners of the sails) are let run, in order that the yards may be swung round to meet the altered position of the ship. They then must be hauled taut again, and belayed, or secured, in order to keep the sails in their places, and to prevent them from shaking. When the ship's head comes up in the wind, the sail is for a moment or two edgewise to it, and then is the nice moment, as soon as the head-sails fairly fill, when the main-yard and the yard above it can be swung readily, and the tacks and sheets hauled in. If the ship is short-handed, or the crew slow at their work, and the sails get fairly filled on the new tack, it is a fatiguing piece of work enough to 'board' the tacks and sheets, as it is called. The crew are pulling at one end of the rope; but the gale is tugging at the other. The best plan in such cases is to put the helm down a little, and set the sails shaking again before they can be trimmed properly. It was just at such a time I came on deck as above mentioned. Being near eight bells, the watch on deck had not been over-smart, and the consequence was that our big main-course was flying out overhead with a might that shook the ship from stem to stern. The flaps of the mad canvas were like successive thumps of a giant's fist upon a big drum. The sheets were jerking at the belaying-pins, the blocks rattling in sharp snappings like castanets. You could hear the hiss and seething of the sea alongside, and see it flash by in sudden white patches of phosphorescent foam, while all overhead was black with the flying scud. Our second-mate, a Yankee, was stamping his feet with vexation, and without any regard for his As, was storming away at the men. "An'somely the weather main-brace there; an'somely, I tell you! Now, then, what the —— are you all standing there for? 'Alf-a-dozen of you clap on to the main-sheet. Here, look alive! Down with 'im. 'Andy there! 'Aul 'im in.' But although he ran through all the most forcible expressions in his vocabulary, the sail wouldn't come. 'Give us a song, boys,' cried out our old skipper, who had just come on deck. 'Pull with a will, boys; all together, boys.' Then a strong voice sang out:

Haul the bowline, the bowline, the bowline;
Haul the bowline, the bowline haul;
Haul the bowline; Polly is my darling;
Haul the bowline, the bowline haul.

At the last word 'haul' in each couplet, every man threw his whole strength into the pull—all singing in chorus with a quick explosive sound. And so jump by jump the sheet was at last hauled taut. I daresay this description will be considered spun out by a seafaring man; but landsmen like to hear of the sea and its ways; and as more fresh-water sailors read this *Journal* than sea-water ones, I have told them of one shanty and its time and place.

The above is what we call a hauling shanty. Shanties are of two kinds—those sung at the capstan, and those sung when hauling on a rope: in the former, the metre is longer, and they are generally of a more pathetic nature. To those who have heard it, as the men run round the capstan, bringing up the anchor from the English mud, of a ship outward bound for a two years' trip, perhaps never to return, what can be more sad or touching, although sung with a good-will:

To the Liverpool docks we'll bid adieu;
To Suke, and Sall, and Polly too;
The anchor's weighed, the sail's unfurled;
We are bound to cross the watery world.
Hurrah! we're outward bound! Hurrah!
we're outward bound!

More stirring is the following:

Steer, boys, steer, for California O;
There's plenty of gold in the land, I'm told,
On the banks of the Sacramento.

There is an air of romance about California, the Brazils, and Mexico, that has a peculiar charm for Jack; and he has made them the subject of many a favourite shanty, as *Rio Grande*, *Valparaiso*, *Round the Horn*, and *Santa Anna*. *Rio Grande* is perhaps the greatest favourite of this description of songs, but all the beauty lies in the mournful air:

To Rio Grande we're bound away, away to Rio;
Then fare you well, my pretty young girls;
We're bound to the Rio Grande.

The deeds of the bucaniers of old are held in great admiration by sailors—ballads descriptive of piracies, of murders by cruel captains, and of mutinies, with a sprinkling of sea-fights, dating from the last war with France and America.

There are many more capstan shanties, which I can only mention by name, such as *Oceanida*, *Johnny's Gone*, *The Black Ball Line*, and *Slapandergosheka*. The last mentioned, with the incomprehensible title (repeated at the end of every line), is addressed to 'All you ladies now on land,' and may seem rather egotistical; it commences—

Have you got, lady, a daughter so fine,
Slapandergosheka,
That is fit for a sailor that has crossed the line?
Slapandergosheka, &c.

I remember once hearing a good shanty on board a Glasgow boat; something like the following was the chorus:

Highland day, and off she goes,
Off she goes with a flying fore-topsail;
Highland day, and off she goes.

It was one of the most spirited things imaginable, when well sung; and when applied to the topsail halliards, brought the yards up in grand style.

We now come to the hauling shanties. First, there is the hand-over-hand song, in very quick

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time; then the long-pull song. When there are a number of men—perhaps twenty or thirty—pulling on a rope, the reader will perceive that, to be effective, the pull must be made unanimously: this is secured by the shanty, the pull being made at some particular word in the chorus. For instance, in the following verse, each repetition of the word 'handy' is the signal for a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull all together:

Oh, shake her up, and away we'll go,
So handy, my girls, so handy;
Up aloft from down below,
So handy, my girls, so handy.

For heavier work, or when hands are few, one of longer metre is used, such as *Land O, Boys, Land O; Haul away, my Josey; O long Storm, storm along, stormy.*

These are some of the working-songs of the sea. They are not chosen for their sense, but for their sound; they must contain good mouth-filling words, with the vowels in the right place, and the rhythmic ictus at proper distance for chest and hand to keep true time; and this is why the seaman beats the wind in a trial of strength. The wind may whistle, but it cannot sing; the sailor seldom whistles at sea, but always sings.

Besides the working-day songs, there are others for the forecastle and dog-watches, such as Dibdin's, Barry Cornwall's, Tom Campbell's, Allan Cunningham's, Gay's, Shield's, Stevens', and others.

There is no doubt that the inimitable sea-songs of Charles Dibdin have done much towards keeping up the *esprit de corps* of our British sailors; they are, in fact, an inheritance which the nation will never, it is to be hoped, undervalue. Whatever form naval warfare may hereafter assume, however the technicalities of the maritime profession may be altered, the spirit of the English seaman will be unchanged. He will be the same hearty, fearless, generous, and simple being that Dibdin describes him. He will love his country and his flag with the same ardour; reverence his ship in the same way, whether it is propelled by wind or steam; and adore his *Bonny Kate* or *Charming Nancy* in the same enthusiastic fashion. Not only, however, have these songs been popular with seamen, but they have obtained a deep hold on the national heart. There are few who are not familiar with some at least of Dibdin's songs, fewer who have not at least heard of those pathetic ballads, *Poor Tom Bowling*, *'Twas in the Good Ship*, or that famous ditty, *'Twas post-meridian half-past four.* How thoroughly wise, good, brave, and gentle are the sentiments expressed in the ballad of *Poor Jack:*

I heard our good chaplain palaver one day
About souls, heaven, mercy, and such;
And, my timbers! what lingo he'd coil and belay:
Why, 'twas all one to me as High Dutch!
But he said how a sparrow can't founder, d'ye see,
Without orders that come down below;
And many a fine thing, that proved clearly to me
That Providence takes us in tow:
For, says he, do you mind, let storms e'er so oft
Take the topsails of sailors aback,
There's a sweet little cherub that sits up aloft,
To keep watch o'er the life of Poor Jack.

And yet the whole is so mixed up with frequent and quaint technical phrases and expressions, as to render it perfectly characteristic and inimitable. The following is also sweet and tranquil, and a great favourite in the forecastle:

And on that night when all the crew
The memory of their former lives,
O'er flowing cans of flip, renew,
And drink their sweethearts and their wives,
I'll heave a sigh, and think on thee,
And as the ship rolls through the sea,
The burden of my song shall be:
Blow high, blow low, let tempests tear
The main-mast by the board,
My heart, with thoughts of thee, my dear,
And love well stored,
Shall brave all danger, scorn all fear,
The roaring wind, the raging sea,
In hopes on shore
To be once more
Safe moored with thee!

Had Dibdin written merely to amuse, his reputation would have been great; but it stands the higher, because he is always on the side of virtue, humanity, constancy, love of country, and courage; these were always the subjects of his song, and the themes of his praise. Most of Dibdin's songs have become permanent favourites both in the navy and the merchant-service, and there is not the least doubt but their influence is still strongly felt, and is one of the chief means of supplying her Majesty's navy with seamen. When a ship leaves any British port, for the first week we hear bits and scraps of songs and chorus, such as *Champagne Charley*, *Tommy Dodd*, and such fast shore-songs, that the men pick up at the singing-rooms in port; but they soon die out at sea, and give way to the old favourites, such as, *The Anchor's Weighed*, *Isle of Beauty*, *Heaving of the Lead*, *Minute-gun at Sea*, *Slave-chase*, *Death of Nelson*, *Sailor's Grave*, *The Storm*, *Black-eyed Susan*, *White Squall*, *The Sea*, *The Pilot*, and many other good old songs of this class, that have braved the storm by sea and land for the last half-century.

A LIMITED HORIZON.

IN FIFTEEN CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER XI.—A 'LAST APPEAL.'

THE Cleathers were going away again, so Gertrude came in to tell the Hesketh's one bright May morning. It was just a year since the Hesketh's had come to Grimswold, and she could not help noticing that it had told upon Lalagé, the girl looked so white, and her former peculiarly bright expression had given way to a yearning unsatisfied, serious look, which was quite pathetic. Those dreary months had left their mark upon the woman who was not wise enough to find occupation for herself. Gertrude was quite touched by it, and by the blank look which came into Lalagé's face when she had told her news. Belle noticed the look too.

'I wish you would leave little Dinner Bell under our charge,' she said.

'O do, Gertrude,' said Lalagé, with a grateful look at her sister. 'I should like it so much; and we really would take great care of her.'

'You are very kind,' said Gertrude slowly, thinking over what was best for the child, 'and it would be a great help to me. Her papa will miss her terribly at first, but I think I may as

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once accept your offer. You won't find her troublesome, she is getting such a helpful little woman!'

'I am so grateful to you,' said Lalagé, as she bade her friend good-bye.

So the following week, little Isabel Cleather took up her abode in the Hill House. She came without any attendant, being now four years old, and 'big enough to put herself to bed,' as she boasted to Lalagé, though she was never allowed to make good her words.

This little girl's advent was a great boon to Lalagé; she required such constant attention, and was able to walk so far on those sturdy little legs, that she in no way hampered her guardian's movements. The bright summer days, too, cheered the girl's heart, though she no longer found the wonderful beauty which daily unfolded itself before her eyes sufficient for her. She regained somewhat of her old gaiety, and no longer felt the oppressive awe of the overhanging hills.

The big curate noticed the change: she seemed happier than she had been all the winter; and he, who was impervious to all atmospheric influences, could make nothing of the alteration; he could not account for it by the presence of a little child, and the coming of brighter weather. 'She is getting to like me less,' he thought with a superhuman sigh, and resolved to make a gigantic effort to recover his lost ground.

He did not exactly forget the promise that bound him, but he put it aside for a while; at least, he said to himself that if a sudden impulse came upon him, why, a man could not always resist impulse. So he went out one day to seek an impulse. He soon found it, in the shape of Lalagé and her charge wandering slowly down to the 'Bottom,' as the poor people called it—the green valley lying at the foot of the hill on which Grimswold was built; they were in a soft, green-lined lane, Dinner Bell gathering flowers and weeds alike as she dawdled along, babbling incessantly, as did the brook at their side. A few of the curate's big strides soon brought him up to them.

'You mustn't walk so fast,' said Lalagé with a smile, when she found he intended accompanying them: 'you forget that this young lady is not so richly endowed with walking materials as you are.'

'Will you have a ride, Dinner Bell?' he said to the child, who had recklessly flung her arms round his legs in a close embrace.

An eager assent was given, and she was soon perched on his shoulder in great content. But after a while she got tired, and tried to slide down; so the curate released her. She strayed apart from them, either in front or behind, talking to herself with great satisfaction, whilst the other two conversed more soberly, and walked more discreetly. All at once, the curate said abruptly: 'I am going home in a very few days, Miss Lalagé.'

'Are you?' she said, with no tremor in her voice, no quickening at her heart. 'You did not take your holiday till much later last year.'

'No; I could not bear to leave the place,' he said; 'and, for the matter of that, I hate the idea now, and wish I could put it off as I did then, and make such a short business of it; but I shall be away fully a month this year.'

'That is a long time,' said Lalagé, looking behind to see if Dinner Bell were safe.

'A very long time it seems to me,' he said with a sigh; 'but my mother and sister want me. They fancy I am unhappy.'

'Do they live far off?' she asked.

'Down in Devonshire,' said the curate; but he was determined not to be baffled in this way. 'They think I am unhappy,' he went on, 'and I don't know that they are so far wrong. I am very, very unhappy.'

'I am really very sorry to hear it,' said Lalagé coldly.

'You are not sorry—you do not care,' said the curate, irritated out of his usual placidity; 'and you are the cause of it all.'

Then he broke out again—this unwise man—saying in the fair summer light all he had said in the gloomy autumn darkness, and not saying it so well either. She was perfectly silent, but that silence was very different from the soft speechlessness that had been hers on that former occasion. The stern stillness of repression was on her face now; but to him, who was no quick reader of human tablets, it was all the same. She had not been angry then, she would not be angry now; and so he went on with his foolish outpouring. She heard him out to the very end, till he had nothing left to say, till he stood speechless, though unabashed, before her, and then she turned and looked him full in the face.

'You have broken your word,' she said, bitter anger and scorn flashing so plainly into her face, that even he could read the characters; 'you have spoken as you promised never again to speak.'

His foolish eyes fell to the ground, as those accusing ones met them.

'I could not help it,' he said weakly; 'it is for the last time. I am going away; and I am very wretched.'

'And does your wretchedness destroy your honour, your truth, your manhood?' she said with a blaze of passion. 'You have thrown all away to-day.'

'I do not care,' he said, with the recklessness of a weak man. 'If only I can get you to like me, as I believe in time I could, I would risk anything, everything!'

'Hush!' she said, repressing her anger with a great effort; but her caution came too late.

Little Dinner Bell—forgotten by both in the heat of the discussion—ran forward, fully equal to the occasion, and thoroughly appreciating it. She caught hold of the clerical trousers of her pastor, and thus armed, addressed Lalagé.

'Will you mally him?' said the child, looking up. 'Do mally him. Nurse says you must—always walking, always talking, must mally at last, nurse says.'

Lalagé turned to the poor curate. 'You see what you have brought upon me,' she said.

He lifted the child in his arms. 'But you are to be my little wife, Dinner Bell.'

'And Laladyee your big wife,' persisted the child; 'and live in one house, with my Noah's Ark, and hens and chickens outside the door. Only'—with serious, wide-opened eyes—'you must not go swarring, swarring all over the house, like poor papa, when his head is bad.'

'No; I don't do that,' said the difficultly-placed man.

'Come, Dinner Bell,' said Lalagé, 'you and I must go home; and Mr Mitchell has to walk ever

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so much farther: run and pick that big blue flower for me.'

The child struggled out of the curate's arms, and ran off; then Lalagé turned to him. 'I have already told you my opinion of your conduct to-day,' she said stiffly; 'I have only to add that, if it is once more repeated, I shall complain to my father. The "walking and talking," as nurse says, are all at an end.' She paused, but no answer came. Looking up in his face with proud, indignant questioning, she found there no expression of anger or resentment, only bitter, bitter pain.

'I am really sorry to speak to you in this way,' she went on, a little softened; 'but what can I do? No words can be too harsh for what you have done to-day, no condemnation too strong.'

'Forgive me,' he said; and turning his back to the child, who was now some yards ahead, he put one big hand over his face: 'then there is no hope for me?'

'No hope,' she said firmly; but she could not bear the sight of his sorrow, for, though feeling he was very weak, she was too nearly concerned to perceive how utterly unworthy a grief it was, suffering without strength.

In that moment, standing there by his side, a temptation arose. Something said to her that it would be only fair to tell him that she too had been wounded in the battle which seemed to be unfavourable to him alone. Such a confession would have been so utterly repugnant, so unspeakably painful, that the chivalry of youthful self-abnegation declared loudly in its favour; but feminine instinct would not, could not suffer it, so she turned and walked away. No; that unworthy love of hers—never felt to be more unworthy than now—should be locked up in her heart all her life. She chafed over it in silence; it galled her spirit and fretted her pride; but still she acknowledged the shadowless existence which had come to her, as she fancied, so joylessly.

She turned away and left him, taking the child with her, never again to meet him till the current of both foolish hearts had been utterly changed; till he had grown content and satisfied with his fate; till she had cast from her the error under which she was now labouring; till new scenes, and wishes, and hopes had come between them.

But that future comfort was far from her now; and as she walked up the hill-side, with the hot sun behind her, she felt her old wretchedness come back to her. Albeit he had been so wrong—she was so sorry for him—poor pitiful Lalagé; and all the sorrow, all the pity, were only, as she scornfully told herself, fresh proofs that she was 'what people called in love.' She grew angry at the iterated thought, and wondered what the curate had meant by words which were still keeping up an indignant echo in her heart.

'If only I could get you to like me, as I believe in time I could,' he had said.

What had he meant? Could he guess the secret she had so jealously guarded? Anger alone, to the exclusion of every softer feeling, filled her mind at the bare idea.

But no; she would not let this torment her; he could not have meant it; he did not know what he had been saying; for surely no man, with ever so faint a hope on which to build, would have accepted the verdict she had pronounced. In her secrecy at least she was safe.

CHAPTER XII.—A CHANGE IN THE MINISTRY.

The big curate's heart was very heavy. There was 'no hope' for him, Lalagé had said; and she had reproached him with being dishonourable, with having broken his word, and he could not help feeling that there was truth in her words. He was not stung by them—he was not a man capable of being stung—but he thought them over slowly, and came to the conclusion that she was not altogether wrong.

He was very sorry; he could not bear to do wrong; and yet all his life, in almost all his foolish, susceptible 'affairs,' he had been doing wrong—sinning in the blindest ignorance, but still sinning. That his easily involved and variable affections might be the cause of suffering to any of the goddesses whom he by turns worshipped, never entered his short-sighted and really humble mind.

For he was humble, with the provoking humility which thinks its possessor free to act as he chooses, being of so little consequence in the world, and which often does more harm than the most offensive conceit.

Most of the curate's goddesses had indeed escaped scathless as he himself, quickly learning the real value of his changeable love. Only in one case had the iron entered the soul of a woman, and branded her heart with life-long scars. Down in his native Devonshire, five years before meeting Lalagé, he had been engaged to a certain wealthy brewer's daughter, whose charms had found him an easy victim. Her father, not so sure as herself of the stability of the ardent, unwise young man, had determined to test it by an eighteen months' engagement. Alas, the big curate had not proved equal to the trial. Before one half of the time was over, his *fiancée* heard from good authority that he was sighing at the feet of another. She wrote to him accordingly, breaking off the engagement very gently, but firmly. There was not one word of upbraiding or of her own pain in the letter; she was too deeply wounded for that. The curate accepted his doom meekly, feeling rather that he had been injured than that she had been. He answered her note, humbly acquiescing in her decision, but asking no questions as to what had induced it; and with that letter the matter had come to a conclusion with him.

But not with her. Year after year she brooded over that first love of hers, and slowly grew to the knowledge that it would likewise be her last. And his letter had been a mystery to her: he had attempted no justification—had in no way palliated his conduct. Perhaps, after all, it had only been a mistake, and she had sacrificed the happiness of her life to a rumour. Ah, if only she could see him again, thought poor Mary Hope, it might all come right even yet. But he had gone up into Gloucestershire, and been buried in the wilds of Grimswold; and during his brief visits home, fate had always found the brewer's daughter absent from the scene of action.

Then her father had died, and left her, a wealthy heiress, without kith or kin in the world except a cross old aunt at a distance, with whom she was to take up her residence. She must leave the town where Tom Mitchell's mother and sister lived, and this was a great grief to her, for another Mary, Mary Mitchell, had taken the keenest

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interest in the affair, and knew all her friend's mind on the subject. If only she could bring 'It' all right again, she felt she should not have lived in vain.

She kept her brother steadily before the mind of the poor, lonely girl who loved him; said fifty times a day: 'I daresay it was all a mistake;' talked much of the depression ('unhappiness,' she called it) of which Tom was complaining, and finally begged the brewer's daughter to stay with them a month or so just at the time that the curate was expected.

Such was the combination of circumstances into which the unwise man walked one day in the June of this same year. He had written to say by what train he would arrive, but Mary Mitchell had kept this knowledge from her friend, and so managed that the brewer's daughter should be alone in the tiny drawing-room when the curate arrived, his sister and mother—who was in the plot—being out. So the unsuspicious man with his burdened heart turned the handle of the well-known door, and went in his ignorance to meet his fate.

But once inside the room, he paused. Sitting in the low window-seat was a woman in deep mourning, with a good, sensible face, which was not without a charm of its own, and soft, smooth, brown hair. She rose with a bright blush as he entered, and went forward to meet him; she thought it was diffidence that kept him hesitating at the door, whilst in reality he was vainly striving to remember who she was.

'Tom,' she said, holding out her hand, 'the past is all forgiven.'

And then he knew her, and said: 'Thank you,' not quite knowing what she had to forgive, and stupidly put his large carpet-bag on the small table, and sat down by it.

She sat down too, and then there was an awkward pause. Presently she said timidly: 'You have been very unhappy, I know.'

'Very unhappy,' he said; and then the thought of it all came over him, and putting his arm on the table, he rested his hidden face on it. Speak out he must, just to relieve that foolish heart.

'I have been very unhappy,' he repeated slowly; 'and what is worse, I am afraid I have been very wrong.'

She got up and stood by him. Tears broke her voice as she said: 'Not wrong: you shall never say that to me or any one else. Perhaps you have been a little foolish and mistaken in your feelings, but not wrong; no, not wrong. And you have come back now, and all the past is forgiven, as I told you before.'

Slowly, into his unwise heart, the full meaning of her words penetrated: the silence that followed helped to reveal it to him ere his attention was claimed again. He was thinking of Lalagé; she was speaking of herself. There was no mistaking the tender grandeur of that forgiveness. She, then, had suffered from that former episode in their two lives, which had seemed to him but a slight and passing thing; she had suffered, and through him. The thought pierced his soft, foolish heart, and he felt glad that his face was hidden, for he was ashamed as well as sorry. But then, why had she written that renouncing letter? He would have given years of his life to know, for then he could better have understood his situation; but instinct, dull as it was with him, told him it was not the time to ask. He still kept his face hidden and was silent.

In that silence, seeming to her so full of pathetic repentance, she went closer, and put her hand on his shoulder. Then he looked up.

'You are very good to me,' he said.

'I mean to be only good to you,' she answered.

'And you have suffered too,' he said, taking the hand which had dropped to her side.

'Suffered!' she said with a shiver. 'O Tom, it was terrible; but it is all over now. And what does it matter? I have you back again.'

What could he answer to this—the man who bore Lalagé Hesketh's image in his heart? Happily, reply was spared him, for the door opened, and Mary Mitchell, who had been sobbing on the staircase for the last five minutes, and could restrain herself no longer, burst in.

'Oh,' she cried, 'it is all right, and you two are together again, and I 'm sure I 'm as happy'—with a sob—'as I ever was in all my life.'

If she had known, as she afterwards did, that the train had been very late, and the interview consequently a very short one, she would probably have allowed them more time, and possibly would have been too late to prevent the curate's committing himself. The one thing for which she blamed herself in the day's proceedings was the one thing which probably saved the whole affair in which she was so deeply interested; but, as she herself said: 'What did it matter, now It was all right?'

'It' was all right to every one but the poor dazed curate, who stumbled up-stairs in his awkward fashion, and wondered how it had all come about, and what was to become of him; for dearer than any former love was the image of that bright, sweet Lalagé, the golden glint of whose sunny hair dazzled his eyes as he looked into the future, and found he could not yet put any woman in her place. But still, whilst getting ready for the early dinner, he could not but acknowledge to himself that time had before this done much for him.

But how had all this come about? Not daring to ask, he yet longed to know; and gradually the desired knowledge came to him. He gleaned it from the loud boasts of the sister who had brought 'It' all right, and who told the story fifty times a day; he gathered it from the fond reproaches of his mother to a son who, she told him, had been too shy to come forward long before, as he should have done; last, and most surely of all, he learned it from the calm acquiescence in a past, long sorrow, with which the woman, with regard to whom he stood in so strange a position, met his awkward questions. It was a revelation to him, but one which admitted of no doubt, he quite felt that, when, three weeks later, Mary shewed him an entry in her diary, made the day after his return home: 'Happy once more.'

'My poor Mary,' said the curate.

Yes, it came to that; the days and weeks did so much for him that he could call her his 'poor Mary.' Still, Lalagé's image kept floating before his dazzled eyes; but she was absent, and Mary present; and his heart was very weak, and Mary's love very strong.

And this wisdom the unwise curate had—never to let her find out how matters had really stood when he turned the bolt of the drawing-room door

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on that eventful day; he locked up the secret in a heart which happily grew more torpid as the years went on. He alone knew that his every thought was not loyal; that a fatal, fair face—a memory of 'ancient grace'—would at times come between him and his present, and bewilder him with unforgotten loveliness, and he had the grace to be ashamed of such visions; for, after all, he was only a weak man: perhaps the worst that can be said of him is the moderate comment which Mr Froude passes upon Henry VIII., in some such words as these: 'In his relations with women he was singularly unfortunate; it would have been well for him if he could have existed in a world where they were not.'

Yes, the days and weeks did much for him; Mary was always with him, soothing and calming his heart, shedding a sanctifying influence over him, and accepting, with no possibility of doubt, the relation between them which so bewildered him. Was he engaged to her, or was he not? Or was she engaged to him, without his being engaged to her? Formally engaged to her he could not be; it was impossible to take so decided a step without informing Lalagé of his intentions, and yet he was daily treated as only an engaged man is treated. Then he ought to be engaged. But how was it to be done, how could it be managed? In what manner, in what fashion, with what words could he inform his late—and yet not his late—goddess that she was dethroned, and another reigning in her stead? So short a time had elapsed since he had stood before Lalagé, pleading earnestly for her regard, that it was almost impossible to tell her without insult that that regard would be no longer acceptable. How should he do it? Was ever poor man so plagued and worried before? thought the big curate.

And yet the thing must be done; the letter must be written; for the days were slipping by, and each one found him more deeply involved, and Mary kinder and dearer. He used to sit up at night, beginning countless epistles, only destined to be burned, and left in thin, gray, unsubstantial piles on his fireless hearth; using long pieces of candle, which made his sister shake her head over the diminished columns, and say: 'See what comes of being in love!' with an oracular nod. As indeed it did, though she knew nothing of the discordant duet which was being performed in the curate's susceptible heart.

Not till a month had passed—not till he had obtained a fortnight's extension of leave—was that unhappy letter posted. When it was fairly off, his spirits rose, and he quite entered into the enjoyment of the hour. After all, it was not his fault; circumstances had been too powerful for him; a groove had been set for him, and who was he that he should refuse to run in it? Mary was good and sweet beyond expression; no difficulties of position or rank came between him and her; and this union would make both his mother and sister very happy. 'Kismet,' said the curate, and devoted himself to his new, yet old love, and was very moderately happy.

Then came the answer to his letter, and woke up the old feelings, for Lalagé was generous and delicate, and could not help shewing it even in that short stern note. 'Fair, and good, and sweet,' sighed the curate, 'but not for me;' and a sea of regret rushed through his heart, sweeping away the landmarks which Mary had so carefully piled. However, she was there to build up new ones with patient unconsciousness, so he addressed himself manfully to the present, and found it very soothing.

He had begged that Lalagé's letter might be addressed to the post-office, so no one but himself knew of its arrival; he had felt that anything touched by or belonging to her must bear some distinctive mark, and in this he was not so far wrong; a violet monogram and scented paper were certainly unusual at the widow's cottage, and might have provoked comment.

At last, his time was up, and he left his mother's house a re-engaged man.

He was whirled back into Gloucestershire, and none but he knew of the trepidation in that foolish heart. 'How shall I meet her?' he constantly asked himself, and the 'her' was not his betrothed.

MY SECRET.

Bend your heads, ye tall trees, above;
Listen, O listen, sweet flowers, below—
He 's mine for ever—my love, my love!
My secret of secrets now you know.
Gaily rustle the leaves as I pass;
All the blossoms smile in the grass;
Carol the birds upon every bough:
'Happy,' they all say—'happy art thou.'

Dear little birds, throughout all the land,
Ye will tell this secret of mine ere long,
But none will be able to understand;
They will only say: 'How sweet is the song!'
And the flowers will whisper my tale to-night
To the fairies that come in the clear moonlight;
And the leaves will murmur it soft and low
To the summer-winds that among them go.

O birds, will you leave us when days are cold?
Will the flowers wither, the leaves grow sere?
Little brook, will the frost your wavelets hold?
Will the earth be sad, as it was last year?
To the world shall winter come by-and-by;
But when leaves shall fall, and when flowers die,
And the woodland singers are over the sea,
This summer-time still in my heart shall be.

Early this month will be issued a Christmas Extra Double Number of *Chambers's Journal*, entitled

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DRAWN FROM THE LIFE.

HUNTING EXTRAORDINARY—A PERSONAL REMINISCENCE.

It was my misfortune in early life to have to go a-hunting three days a week. My father kept a pack of harriers (or, as the *Times* alone correctly spells it, hariers), and I was bound in filial duty to perform this penance. I had a pony of my own, called *Lightfoot*, and it was only proper that I should make use of him. My brothers were all sportsmen—or sportsboys—and even my mother was famous as a horsewoman, and especially gifted with an eye for seeing hares sitting. Forty hares might have sat under *Lightfoot's* nose; and their cunningly contrived 'forms,' with that sloping roof of grass above them, would have hidden them all from me; but my maternal parent never missed one. Often and often would her uplifted hand call the attention of her degenerate son, and at a nod from her I would gallop off to the huntsman, and tell him *I* knew where poor puss was in hiding. But I never was able to deceive that man.

'You mean your mamma knows, Master Jemmy,' he used to say; and then he would chuckle in the brutal manner so characteristic of his profession, and with a 'Come up, will you!' addressed to his old roan, lead the dogs to their victim. I see him now 'tooting' away on that battered horn of his, while his horse's hoofs cast up the wet soil of the turnip-field behind him, and very often into my eye.

It is impossible that *every* boy can take delight in hunting, and be so devoted to horses and dogs as they pretend to be. Of course, many are honest enough in this predilection; but because it is un-English not to like such things, a good many of them fall into another un-English habit, and tell lies about the matter. I was a sharp boy, but I can't believe I was the only sensible one that ever was. As we grow up, there are many amusements about which everybody is more or less of a hypocrite. It is permitted to profess an attachment beyond what is actually felt for the legitimate drama, for 'a little music after dinner,' for the sermons of a popular preacher, and for truffles: but in early life, Hypocrisy is surely to be deprecated. Why, then, is the Youth of this country compelled by public opinion to affect an interest in horses and dogs, which may not be felt, and in some cases may be even repugnant? For my part, I greatly preferred cats. At nine years of age I was a student, so far as exciting works of fiction were concerned, and I found relaxation in teaching the nursemaid cribbage.

Why, at least in so unimportant a matter as recreation, should not everybody be permitted to follow his own line? It was surely hard that, on account of my simple and inexpensive tastes, I was stigmatised in the family circle as Molly. It was a marvel that this inconsiderate treatment, combined with the private opinion which I could not help entertaining of my friends and neighbours and their tastes, did not make me a Cynic.

Imagine a dark day in late November, half-fog, half-mizzle, and evidently designed for the perusal of the *Last of the Mohicans* over the school-room fire, or a quiet little rubber with pretty Susan, while the younger children took their peaceful morning's sleep around us—imagine, I say, on a day like that, having to mount *Lightfoot*, and trot through the damp woods or over the wet turnips in search of a poor animal, whom Nature (and, I may add, good sense) had taught to lie snug and warm at home in her form. She was not easy to find, even by my accomplished mother, and our situation in the meantime was melancholy in the extreme. All soon felt cold and dreary, and I, for my part, having a rapid digestion, was very quickly hungry. I used to take an immense piece of cake with me, so large that it seemed (at first) that I could never get through it, and some of it I would share with the young puppies. But this was objected to. In spite of their pretended fondness for dogs, I never saw one of my people give them a crumb, and they even found fault with me for my humanity. I kept it to myself, of course, for the dogs' as well as my own sake; but there were one or two of the younger hounds who always preferred hanging

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about in my neighbourhood to poking among the wet turnip leaves after a creature that was invariably caught, if it was caught at all, by their seniors. When I say 'invariably,' there was one exception. *Grudgeon*—a wise dog, who would have been a turnspit, if he had had his choice—and I were once in a solitary spot together, and found a hare all by ourselves. I forget the technical term of reproach for his conduct, but *Grudgeon* snapped her up in her form, and ate her, body and bones and fur and all. It is my belief that all those dogs were half-starved, but I must confess that *Grudgeon* had acquired his name from an exceptionally healthy appetite.

When the toad has swallowed the duck's egg in Mr Dumaurier's never-to-be-forgotten picture, it is with a very distended appearance that he replies to the agitated and inquiring mother: 'How should *I* know?' and this was just poor *Grudgeon's* case after he had bolted that hare, which was within an inch or two as large as himself. He sat down and whined in my face with a look of pain and penitence which it was pitiful to witness. It was evident he wished, too late, that he had shared that gorgeous banquet with another. I did my best for him, but I was young and inexperienced. I rode up to my eldest brother, and asked whether I had not better take poor *Grudgeon* home, because I thought he was —well, in an interesting situation. Of course I was wrong, in every way; and I got no credit, not even from *Grudgeon*, who, I verily believe, imagined that I had told upon him, and got him his beating, for after that time he never hung about me as before, with an eye to lunch.

Well, I say, until the hare was found all was despondency: when she was started, there was madness, a helter-skelter of ten minutes, during which I almost always lost my hat. I never fell off *Lightfoot*, unless I wanted to do so; but often and often I would guide him away, despite his efforts, from the maddening crowd, and in a solitary spot dismount, and put clover in my hair, to shew that I had been pitched off, and then ride home, with a good excuse, to the *Mohicans* and Susan. It was Duplicity, I own, but she is the natural (if not the legitimate) daughter of Oppression; and was not *I* oppressed? It was indeed attempted to shew that I ought to be thankful to my tyrants, to welcome the whip and the chain—that is, the hunting whip and the curb-chain. 'There is many a boy of your age, sir,' urged my father, 'who would jump at a pony such as *Lightfoot*, and hail your three days a week with my harriers as the highest joy.' 'Very good, papa,' said I cheerfully; 'give *Lightfoot* to some poor boy, and make him happy.'

At which very reasonable and benevolent reply, my father was exceedingly irritated, and muttered something to mamma which implied a doubt of my parentage, and made *her* angry. He couldn't believe I was his own son, it seemed, because I didn't like 'thistle-whipping.' If I had been an impertinent boy, I could have made use of that sarcasm, for I knew very well what hare-hunters are thought of by fox-hunters. Perhaps stag-hunters in their turn have some depreciatory epithet for the infatuated followers of Reynard. The littlenesses and jealousies of Sporting folks are beyond belief.

Sometimes, by-the-bye, as *a great treat*, we boys went out with the fox-hounds, which was a much more serious matter to me than going with papa's pack, and, as it were, in the family way. The meets were much farther off, and the fox would generally take an opposite direction from home and Susan. They might call me Molly; but nothing could exceed the effeminate vanity which distinguished my elder brothers upon such great occasions; they were never tired of looking at themselves in their highly polished top-boots; and they took as great delight in their spotless cords as any girl in her first ball-dress. They did not sport scarlet (though they wanted to do so above everything); but my father exhibited a weakness, exactly the reverse of theirs, for wearing the oldest and shabbiest red coat, with the tails looking—though, as a general rule, I doubt whether fox-hunters use pens—as if he had wiped his pen on them.

Those meets, indeed, struck me, even as a boy, as a ludicrous exhibition of dandyism and conceit; young gentlemen in velvet caps riding their hacks, though it might be but two miles to cover, and exchanging them for their glossy hunters; and ladies in carriages smiling upon them, and affecting the most absorbing interest in their bays and browns, not without an eye for becoming that sort of gray mare themselves which goes by the name of 'the better horse.' Of course folks may dress in red if they please, and spend a thousand a year apiece in riding after a useless beast, whose evil smell is its only recommendation, and these remarks would never have been penned, if I had not been, so to speak, dragged out to swell their pageant. But as it was, my indifference to such a spectacle became in time contempt. It was impossible that I could retain my respect for 'the county,' or even the chairman of quarter-sessions, when I saw them under such circumstances as these. I often think, when I read the radical papers, that certain editors in embryo may have been treated in their youth as I was, and hence their bitterness against the unpaid magistracy. I picture one, in particular, mounted upon a donkey, following, or attempting to follow, the X. Y. Z., as that famous pack ran round and round in their courses. Foxes almost always run in a circle, and, in my opinion, a vicious one.

Dear me, what discomforts I suffered in those days; partly from vexation, and partly from hunger (for we did not get home till I don't know what time), I used to eat the fingers of my gloves. I had sufficient good taste, however, to affect to share in the pleasure of these good people, and I remember the high-sheriff coming up to me on one occasion, and after a favourable criticism upon *Lightfoot* (for these folks always put the cart—I mean the horse before the man), saying: 'Well, young gentleman, this is your third season with us, is it not? You seem to enjoy life as much as most people.' He was a good-natured man, and we were all sorry when he dashed out his—I mean broke his neck at a stone wall.

I never took a jump myself—not if I knew it; but once *Lightfoot* took me in and out of a sheep-fold, over the hurdles. 'How well your young un sticks his horse,' observed one who witnessed this involuntary feat to my father; and he was so pleased, that he bought me a new hunting-whip, which, by-the-bye, I could never crack, though I often got the thong round my neck and the lash in my eyes. Of course my dear father meant everything that was kind, but I could never forgive him having *Lightfoot* clipped. They laughed at

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me when I expressed my fears that he would catch cold; but, in reality, my apprehension was, that they would cut his mane, which was of the utmost consequence to me to take hold of at a crisis. I should never have got in and out of that sheepfold but for *Lightfoot's* mane; and when this cruel edict was put in force, I had to remain indoors—from indisposition—until his mane grew long again. Nothing would have induced me—no, not all Scott's novels bound in morocco—to go out hunting on a horse with a clipped mane (such as they wear in the Elgin Marbles), unless I had been tied on like Mazeppa. The pommel, as an element of adhesiveness, is greatly overrated, though, of course, a drowning man will cling to a straw.

It is not my habit, however, thus to dwell upon my own wrongs, and I have only done so as a fitting introduction to the circumstance which has given the title of 'Hunting Extraordinary' to this unpretending paper. There was one occasion on which I thoroughly enjoyed a day with my father's pack. We had been led rather farther afield than usual, and the family, consisting of my mother and two brothers, my father, the Huntsman and Whip, were returning home, after what *they* called an indifferent day's sport; only one mad scurry of ten minutes. The 'field' had melted away, and we were jogging along a lonely lane, all, with one exception, rather disconsolate and crest-fallen, when suddenly poor puss started up from a ditch in the roadside, and Babel and Bedlam at once broke loose together. I had got in my studies to somewhere in the fifth volume of the *Mysteries of Udolpho*, and was endeavouring to evolve the dénouement out of my own head, when *Lightfoot* suddenly plunged forward in pursuit, and dissipated my dreams. Of course I lost my hat; but if I had stopped for it, and was left behind, I might also have lost my way, for we were in an utterly strange country, and the hare, being fresh, was inclined to shew us a good deal of it. She presently led us by a bare cottage, on the skirts of a large coppice, or spinny, at the door of which there stood a woman, wringing her hands and weeping bitterly. The hunt, of course, went on; human misery is not to be considered, where the chase is concerned; but my quick ear was always open to tale of woe, and, besides, this poor woman would probably direct me home by a much shorter route than a mad March—no, January hare was likely to take me. So I pulled up *Lightfoot* by a superhuman effort, and inquired What was the matter.

'Oh, good young gentleman,' cried the widow, for such her cap and threadbare but decent suit of mourning announced her to be, 'I have just been robbed of all that I have in the world by a villain. He has taken everything worth having out of my little cottage, and has run away into yonder wood.' Now, an incident of this sort was worth more to me than all the hares in the world. My mind at once recurred to Rudolfo of the Redhand, the Bandit of the Black Forest, and how he was hunted down and slain by the heroic young villager of St Goar and his faithful retriever.

'Upon my faith and honour as a kni—I mean as a gentleman,' cried I, 'you shall be avenged;' and with that I dashed the rowels—but no, I was much too sagacious to wear spurs; I laid my hunting-whip about *Lightfoot* in a manner that must have astonished him beyond all measure, and flew after the hare-hunters like a fireman who sees flame about my Lord's mansion, and knows that whether he is really wanted, or it is only illuminations, he will get well paid for making his engine speed. 'The family' rode well, however, and it is doubtful whether I should have caught them up, had it not been for that most delightful of hunting incidents called a check, which happened to have just occurred; they had overrun the poor creature, I believe, and the huntsman was about to make a cast—an expression borrowed from the art of statuary—as I galloped up.

'Papa,' cried I, 'there's a robber in the wood, and you must catch him;' for, being a magistrate, I knew he would not dare neglect the interests of justice for the excitement of the chase; nor, indeed, did he evince any wish to do so. We all galloped back to the widow, and heard her story. The villain, she said, had beaten her cruelly, and run off with a bundle, in which he had rolled her clock, her teaspoons, her only pillow, and even her wedding-ring. My father had a great objection to villains, grudging me even the few biographies of them which I possessed, on the ground that they should be neither seen nor heard of, and took up the poor woman's cause with the utmost enthusiasm. He stationed mamma, my brothers, and myself on the skirts of the wood, while the dogs with himself and the two men went in to draw the place, exactly as if they were after their natural quarry. 'As for you, Master Jem,' said he, 'don't go "heading" the wretch, as you did the fox the other day, to the eternal disgrace of your family; but if you see him, let him get well out before you give the view holloa.'

I never was so excited in my life, nor certainly so happy since I had been on horseback; and I willingly promised obedience. The poor widow locked her door, for fear the creature should take to earth in that direction, and, retiring up-stairs, kept watch at her bedroom window. It was a pity that the field had left us, as we were obliged to place ourselves at such a great distance from one another, but we all determined not to miss the gentleman. It was my good fortune first to catch sight of him. The hounds had been in the cover about five minutes, and got about half through it, when the game was started so near to *Lightfoot* and myself that we both started too. I think I see him now. He was a big burly man, with a billycock hat slouched over his evil face, and with a large blue bundle slung over his shoulder. Seeing only a boy on a pony, he took no notice of us beyond giving us a wicked scowl; and in accordance with my instructions, I let him run off across the field for about fifty yards, and then I gave the view holloa with a will. Instantly the villain turned, and made at us, probably in the hope of getting back to the wood, but, as I imagined, in order to wreak his vengeance with clasp-knife and bludgeon. For the second time that day did *Lightfoot* feel the unaccustomed whip-lash, and off I galloped to my 'supports.' Neither mamma nor the boys would have been much good against so formidable a ruffian; but just as he reached the edge of the spinny my father and the huntsman sprang out of it, on horseback, and Rudolfo surrendered himself, without conditions. I remember, as though it were yesterday, his *wrist* being tied to the thong of the huntsman's whip, and thus secured, his sullenly accompanying us to the little country town, to be placed in durance; while

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the dogs sniffed about his heels (and especially *Grudgeon*), as though they had been robbed of a perquisite, and would have enjoyed a change of diet exceedingly.

That was the only day's hunting which I ever really enjoyed, and it was almost the last; for very soon afterwards, it fortunately happened that we became reduced in our circumstances, and those family harriers were 'put down.'

THE BULGARIAN RAYAHS.

BULGARIA may be reached from England in six days; but it is nevertheless a country so little known, that almost any information beyond the fact of its existence, and the vague notions concerning it which people derived somehow, from somewhere, at the time of the Crimean War, has at least the interest of novelty. Two gentlemen,* who have resided for three years among the hills of the Balkans, where they have become intimately acquainted with the Bulgarian Rayahs, have combined, in a jointly-written book, their common experiences; and it is undeniable that these are calculated to create some surprise, and to upset the vague notions already alluded to, which comprise a belief in the patient virtues of the Christian, and the ferocity of the Mussulman populations. The writers, perfectly understanding the severity and unpleasantness of the shock which they are about to administer to British prejudice and preconceived opinion, are careful to advance their claims to credibility. Their stay in the country has thrown them into close (and, in most cases, very pleasant) relations with the Mussulman populations—Turks, Tartars, Circassians, and Arnaouts. Not requiring the aid of an interpreter, and trusting to their guns as escort, they have had opportunities of hearing the unvarnished truth from Mussulman and Christian, such as would scarcely fall to the lot of a traveller accompanied by a dragoman or an escort of soldiers. They arrived in Bulgaria, and started on their mission of investigation, with strong prejudices in favour of oriental Christianity and its professors; and anything more complete than their conversion, it would be difficult to find in the annals of change of opinion.

The Bulgarian Rayahs are much more amusing to read about than to live amongst. It is to be hoped there are not many races, outside the circle of the acquaintance of the noble army of African explorers, so utterly good for nothing, so swinishly ignorant, and so preposterously self-sufficient as the Christian Bulgarians, who are complacently supposed by some persons in England to be the salt of that part of the earth. There is not much variety in the aspect of their villages; the description of one will stand for all. 'A sandy ravine sloping down to the Lake of Varna between ranges of low hills, covered with the remains of once magnificent forests; some three-score of mud houses, or rather huts, each surrounded by irregularly shaped enclosures of hurdle-work in every stage of dilapidation; two or three fountains; many wild cherry, plum, apple, and pear trees; buffaloes, pigs, and innumerable cur-dogs of every size, wandering about listlessly in search of food.' Such, making the necessary allowance for difference of position, is the aspect of every Rayah village in the Bulgarian Balkan. The main road is the resort of such of the village pigs as are not out on the pasture-land, and of the disgusting but useful scavenger dogs. The huts are surrounded by crazy fences, which also enclose in each case a clumsy structure 'resembling a child's Noah's Ark, immensely magnified, and upon raised wooden legs.' This is the granary, in which the Bulgarian peasant stores a small quantity of wheat or Indian corn, reserved for the use of his family. A rude plough, unaltered in form since the earliest days of agriculture; some equally primitive tools; a heap of logs for firewood; a ladder; an *araba*, or springless cart; a few melancholy turkeys; and a brood of famished chickens, are invariable appendages of every house. Each village boasts two or three public-houses, or *bakals*, in front of which the men sit cross-legged on the ground, drinking, smoking, and gossiping. The following is a droll description of a very common incident in these neighbourly gatherings: 'As the drugged wine produces its effect, a dispute arises, and they start to their feet, abusing one another with all the facile eloquence of Slavonic vituperation, and draw their knives with more than Italian gesticulation. The Italian *coltellata* is, however, rarely given in these public quarrels; for woman, the universal peace-maker, appears upon the scene, armed with persuasive words and a thick stick. But though her verbal or manual arguments may stay the impending strife, she shares the proverbial fate of "those who in quarrels interpose;" for wives are as soundly thrashed in Bulgaria as in Lancashire or Clerkenwell. There is another reason which prevents these drunken quarrels from ending in bloodshed upon the spot: the Rayah, instead of trusting his cause to the *jugement de Dieu*, as manifested in a duel with knives, prefers to stab his adversary at an advantage, or to adopt the more silent vengeance of poison, one always safe in a country where the police, seldom seen outside the walls of the town, is looked upon by the Christian as his natural enemy, and therefore rarely appealed to, and where *post-mortem* examinations are unknown.'

A general air of desolation pervades these wretched villages in the daytime; but in the evening the men return from the forest, and the oxen, goats, sheep, and pigs arrive from the pastures. This sounds pretty and pastoral, but it is in reality dreary and savage, for the men are little above the beasts they drive in intellectual faculties, and not nearly so harmless. The picture of domestic life is singularly uninviting; and the huts in which it passes away are extremely wretched, and, even among those of the wealthier peasantry, very small, never consisting of more than three rooms, of which two are bedrooms, entirely destitute of furniture, which serve as sleeping-apartments for the junior members of the family, no separation of the sexes being considered necessary. 'Bedsteads,' says the author, 'are

* *A Residence in Bulgaria, or Notes on the Resources and Administration of Turkey, &c.* By S. G. St Clair, late Captain 1st Fusiliers, and Charles A. Brophy. London: John Murray.

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unknown; a mat is placed upon the floor, the peasant thrusts his sheep-skin cap over his eyes, makes the Greek sign of the cross, covers himself up with a rug or two, and goes to sleep without further preparation.' A peculiar gloom is imparted to the Bulgarian villages by the absence of windows, of which the houses are entirely destitute; the only channels of light and ventilation being the large chimney, and the chinks and crannies of the ill-joined door. The reason assigned for this is, the universal dread of brigands, who might come at night and fire through the windows (if they existed) at the sleeping peasants, to whom the simple expedient of using strong wooden shutters, such as they may see in any Turkish village, has never occurred. The authors conclude their repulsive account of these people's domestic arrangements by a passage which places them in strong and unfavourable contrast with the cleanly and civilised Turkish peasantry. 'The atmosphere produced by these habits, and the presence of a dozen people who do not take off their underclothing four times during the year, and who are, moreover, redolent of garlic and raki, is not agreeable to the stranger in Bulgaria; for the Rayah, like the negro, diffuses around him a peculiar aromatic odour, by no means Sabæan, which makes one feel inclined to apply to the whole race Dante's description of Geryon: 'Ecco colei che tutto il mondo appuzza;' more particularly as this aroma extends itself in some subtle manner even to the cookery, so that it is easy for any one who has eaten food with both Christian and Mussulman to distinguish, both by taste and smell, the victuals of the one creed from those of the other.'

The ingenuous traveller, cherishing the traditions of eastern hospitality, has them rudely dispelled by the avarice, rapacity, and exorbitant cheating of the Rayahs, and, if he went no further than their villages, would be likely to regard them as myths indeed. But let him extend his exploration to a Turkish village, and he will find that the mere fact of his being a stranger insures him food, shelter, and a hearty welcome. A Mussulman may not receive travellers into the sacred precinct of his own house, but in every village there is a cottage built for their reception, and thither you will be directed. Arrived there, 'you enter a little room, kept scrupulously clean, and furnished with matting and a few cushions; shortly after, some one comes in with coffee and the apparatus for making it, salutes you, and in a minute or two offers you a tiny cup of coffee, such as few but Turks, of the country, can make. Then other villagers come in, each with an offering of bread, cheese, cream, butter-milk, lentils, honey, eggs—in short, to use their own words, as they excuse the poverty of the meal, "what God has given to them." No questions are asked until you have eaten and are satisfied, and are then put in a tone far different from the Prussian-frontier manner of the Bulgarians. No one who has mixed with the true Turks—those of the provinces, uncontaminated by a sojourn at Perá or Paris—can help being struck with their innate tact, refinement, and *gentlemanliness*. In the morning, you are offered a frugal breakfast, and of course coffee; when you leave, no payment will be asked for; and if you offer money in return for the kindness you have received, you will insult your entertainers: the only way of compensating them is to give some small sum towards the maintenance of the mosque or the school, and even this may not be accepted if it be given undisguisedly as payment for hospitality.' The authors think it fair to state that, though, in an extensive series of rambles among the villages of Bulgaria, they have *never* found a Mussulman who would accept payment from his guests for anything his house afforded—they have met with but one instance of a Christian who at first refused money, but even he finally took it without much pressing.

As this contrast between Mussulman and Christian is frequently and forcibly put, and as it extends to everything in the constitution of their lives—to their morals as much as to their manners—as the former are held up to admiration for their enlightenment and civilisation, and the latter are represented as incredibly degraded, it is necessary, in order to avoid imputing to the authors an invidious preference for the Mohammedan faith, to examine what the so-called Christianity of these people really is. The fairest evidence on this subject is that supplied by their own formularies, from which it appears that all the superstitions of the western religions have been tacked on to the ancient paganism of the Bulgarians, and that the moral influence of the combination is of an excessively degrading kind. The clergy of the orthodox Greek Church are very ignorant, and entirely indifferent in matters appertaining to religion, and they openly encourage the ignorance of their flocks. For instance, the authors adduce this: 'When the Papas finds his prayer to St John the Baptist for rain utterly ineffectual, whilst the spells of the village witch (the crudest forms of sorcery prevail among these people) are followed by a plentiful shower, which revives the drooping cabbages, he, being without any belief in the religion which he professes, and yet feeling the necessity of believing in *something*, comes to the conclusion, that certain occult forces are really the appanage of the sorceress, and instead of opposing himself to the powers of darkness, he thinks it better to make a compact of mutual aid and toleration. So, if the Papas's fields suffer from drought, or his wife or children are ill, he sends for the village witch, who performs certain incantations, addressed to the Spirit of Evil, for the benefit of the weather or the sick people, and who carries out her part of the treaty by paying the Papas's exactions, and taking her own infant to be sprinkled with holy water every month.' The practical religion, constructed of the old Slavonic Pantheism, which reigns supreme, combined with the outward observances of the Greek Church, is of the most extraordinary kind. Their festivals are utterly heathen. Thus, on All Souls' Day, the women go from house to house with lighted candles, in order 'that the souls of the dead may have good appetites, and be well fed in the place where they are.' There is no doubt that their only idea of a condition of life after the death of the body is entirely material, and they adhere pertinaciously to the horrid superstition of the vampire, which takes various forms, some ludicrous, and all disgusting. Then there is the Feast of Serpents, the Feast of old Mother March, and a horrid custom of ushering in Lent by catching all the village dogs, and beating them, to prevent their going mad during the year. On the Feast of the Panagia, lambs are sacrificed, in order that the children of

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the house may enjoy good health throughout the year. On the Feast of St Demetrius, lighted candles are placed in the stables and the place where firewood is chopped, to prevent evil spirits entering into the domestic animals. The confession of a Bulgarian peasant is not an easy matter, for he has to make a mental review of the commands of the clergy, of which one of the latest is, that he must not give alms to a gipsy or an 'infidel.' But the most convincing testimony to the degraded condition in which the Bulgarian conscience is kept, is contained in the following authentic catalogue of 'sins,' which is a popular catechism. It is a sin: '1. To give a child a spoon to play with. 2. To give away or sell a loaf of bread without breaking a piece from it. 3. Not to fumigate with incense the flour when it is brought from the mill (particularly if the mill be kept by a Turk), in order to prevent the devil entering into it. 4. To wash a child before he has come to the canonical age of reason—that is to say, seven years. 5. To sell flour before making a loaf from it. 6. To clean a stable, sell milk, or fetch water from the fountain after dark. 7. To allow a dog to sleep on the roof of the house, as this gravely imperils the soul of any defunct member of the family. 8. Not to throw some water out of every bucket brought from the fountain, as some elementary spirit might otherwise be floating on the surface of the water, and, not being thrown out, take up his abode in the house, or enter into the body of any one who drank from the vessel. Finally, it is a sin to fail in the observance of any of the hundred superstitious practices approved or tolerated by the Papas.' From which it is sufficiently manifest that a pious Rayah cannot have an easy time of it in this world, at all events. They have not the slightest idea of moral responsibility, or even self-respect; they are as abjectly afraid of evil spirits as any African tribe; and their superstitions, entirely devoid of any poetical element, are as gross as those of the Abyssinians, which indeed they resemble in certain unmentionable respects. The Bulgarian vampire is not in the least like the creation of romancers and dramatists, but a creation of fancy as coarse and foul as it is morbid. Here is an account of an occurrence which took place in the village where the authors resided. 'Thirty years since, a stranger arrived, established himself, and married a wife, with whom he lived on very good terms, she making but one complaint—that her husband absented himself from the conjugal roof every night, and all night. It was soon remarked, that although scavengers were and are utterly unknown in Bulgaria, a great deal of scavenger's work was done at night by some unseen being, and that the dead horses and buffaloes which lay about the streets were devoured by invisible teeth, much to the prejudice of the village dogs; then the mysterious mouth drained the blood of all cattle that happened to be in any way sickly. These occurrences, and the testimony of the wife, caused the stranger to be suspected of vampirism: he was examined, found to have only one nostril, and, upon this irrefragable evidence, was condemned to death. In executing this sentence, our villagers did not think it necessary to send for the priest to confess themselves, or to take consecrated halters or daggers; they just tied their man hand and foot, lit a big fire of wait-a-bit thorns, and burned him alive.'

A faith in fountain spirits is universal; and the peasantry are possessed with an invincible belief in the existence of buried treasure, and also with an insatiable desire for finding it, which alone gives them courage to go out after nightfall. The authors have known many who, though they would not do two hours' work to earn a shilling, or to improve their fields, would dig for three or four consecutive nights, with their hair standing on end, and the cold sweat of terror on their brows, in the hope of finding some treasure supposed to have been buried by Alexander the Great. In all the customs of the Bulgarians, there is a monotonous ignorance and degradation; the witch presides at every ceremony; the sole popular notion of enjoyment consists in eating and drinking; the social position of women is very degraded; and the marriage and funeral customs are ludicrously like those prevalent in Africa. Sir Samuel Baker can hardly present his readers with a more absurd and pitiable picture than this: 'At the moment of death, all pots, pans, kettles, and other utensils are turned upside down, in order to prevent the soul of the departed taking refuge in one of them, and therefrom commencing a system of annoyance against the family; candles or tapers are lit around the body, and the head is dressed with flowers: the body is dressed in its best clothes, and the family run outside and scream a lamentation to the following effect:

O Tanaz! Boze! Boze!
Who will cut wood for us now?
Who will kill the sheep?
Who will take care of the poor buffaloes?
Who will carry the corn to the mill?
Who will beat us as you used to do?
O Tanaz!'

Alliteration and bosh.

As the dead are buried before their bodies are cold, it is presumable that premature burial is not uncommon; indeed, the authors knew that it occurred in two instances, and were told of another in which the buried man contrived to escape from his shallow grave, and returning home, gave his wife a tremendous beating, in acknowledgment of her precipitation in getting rid of him.

The political, commercial, and labour systems in this most unattractive country, are execrably bad, for very different reasons than those usually supposed. The Rayahs have too much time, too much liberty, too much land. They abuse all these gifts, having no idea or ambition beyond a life of sluggish idleness; and they are, together with their priests—who rule them in all actual and social respects—sunken in apathetic, contented ignorance. The resources of the country are both shamefully wasted and undeveloped; the farming operations are deplorably insufficient; but little hay is made; turnips are utterly unknown; and the authors believe that if snow were to lie on the ground for two consecutive months, there would probably not be fifty cattle or sheep left alive in the whole of Bulgaria. European Turkey occupies a fifth of the wheat-producing surface of Europe, but thanks to the idleness of the Rayah, upon whom the eastern grain-trade is chiefly dependent, it produces less than one-third of the amount of grain which should be grown upon it—a fact which justifies the authors' denunciation of the interesting Christian of the East as not only a social good-for-nothing, but as an active instrument of evil to Europe.

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The three years' experience of Bulgaria detailed in this volume, cannot fail to convince the reader that the Christians of the East need a great deal of Christianising.

WASTE NOT!

One of the blessings of modern science presents itself in the form of economy, frugality, utilisation. Things which were formerly thrown away as waste are now applied to man's purposes, to an extent far beyond our general supposition. Dr Lyon Playfair and Mr P. L. Simmonds have frequently drawn attention to this subject, chiefly in illustration of the wonders of chemistry. Mr Simmonds has recently collected a new budget of instances, which he has brought under the notice of the Society of Arts.

Before touching on these, let us refresh the reader's memory by a summary of results already recorded. Beautiful perfumes are produced from substances not merely trivial, but in some cases fetid and repulsive. Fusel oil, putrid cheese, gas-tar, and the drainage of cow-houses, are thus transformed; the result is a triumph of chemistry; but it is commercially shabby and unfair to call perfumes thus obtained by such delightful names as 'oil of pears,' 'oil of apples,' 'oil of pine-apples,' 'oil of grapes,' 'oil of cognac,' 'oil of bitter almonds,' 'eau de millefleurs.' Blue dyes are made from scraps of tin, old woollen rags, and the parings of horses' hoofs. Old iron hoops are employed in ink-making; bones as a source of phosphorus for tipping Congreve matches; the dregs of port wine for making Seidlitz powders; the washings of coal-tar for producing a flavouring condiment for *blanc-mange*. Old woollen rags are the foundation of the prosperity of Dewsbury and Batley in Yorkshire: these musty, fusty, dusty, frouzy fragments being ground up into shoddy and mungo. Other relics of old woollen garments are made to yield flock for wall-paper, padding for mattresses, and Prussian-blue for the colour-makers. Chemicals are employed to destroy the cotton fibres in old worn-out balzarines, orleans, coburgs, and other mixed fabrics for ladies' dresses, and to liberate the woollen or worsted fibres for a new career of usefulness. Woollen rags, when even the shoddy-maker will have nothing to do with them, are choice materials for the farmer as manure. That bones are used for knife-handles we know very well; but it appears they are also used for bone-black by colour and varnish makers, for size by dyers and cloth-finishers, and for manure by farmers. Horns and hoofs are a very magazine of useful products in the hands of the scientific chemist. Whalebone cuttings yield Prussian-blue; dogs' fat is (shamefully) made into sham cod-liver oil; wool-scourers' waste and washings reappear as beautiful stearine candles; bullocks' blood is used in refining sugar, in making animal charcoal, and in Turkey-red dyeing; ox-gall or bile is used by wool-scourers and by colour-makers; fishes' eyes are used for buds in artificial flowers; bladders and intestines are made into air-tight coverings and into musical strings; all the odds and ends of leather and parchment dressing are grist to the glue-maker; calves' and sheep's feet yield an oil which is doctored up most fragrantly by the perfumer; stinking fish is always welcome as manure to the farmer; and a brown dye is extracted from those small bedroom acquaintances whom few of us like to talk about, and none like to see or to feel. At least fifty thousand tons of cotton-waste, the residue and sweepings of the mills, are annually utilised, by being worked up into coarse sheeting, bed-covers, papier-mâché, and the commonest kinds of printing-paper. Sea-weed is used as a material for paper, as a lining material for ceilings and walls, and as a source whence the chemist can obtain iodine. Various kinds of seed, when the oil has been squeezed out of them, are useful cattle-fatteners as oil-cake. Grape husks yield a beautiful black for choice kinds of ink; raisin stalks constitute a capital clarifying agent for vinegar; bran or corn refuse is valuable in tanning, calico-printing, and tin-plate making; brewers' and distillers' grains are fattening food for cattle. Bread-raspings are in France sometimes used as a substitute for coffee, and as a tooth-powder. Tan-pit refuse is valuable for the gardener's hothouse. Damaged potatoes, and rice and grain, are made to yield starch. Ground horse-chestnuts are not unknown to the makers of cheap maccaroni and vermicelli. Cork cuttings and scraps are eagerly sought for stuffing and for buoyant purposes. Pea-shells are used as a food for milch cows, and spirit may be distilled from them. Sawdust is now applied in a prodigious number of ways, for making paper, distilling oxalic acid, smoking fish, clearing jewellery, filling scent-bags, stuffing dolls, &c. Tobacco-ashes are made into tooth-powder. The coal-tar from gas-works is made to yield sulphate of ammonia, sal-ammoniac, printers' ink, lampblack, disinfectants, naphtha, benzole, paraffin, and the magnificent series of aniline colours for dyeing and calico-printing. The sediment in wine-casks is made into cream of tartar. Old kicked-off horse-shoe nails yield the best of all iron for musket-barrels. As for the shops in which gold-workers, jewellers, and goldbeaters work, not only is the very dust on the floor precious, but a refiner will gladly give a new waistcoat or apron for an old one, for the sake of the auriferous particles thereby obtained.

Mr Simmonds's new batch comprises many instances of substances recently transferred from the domain of waste to that of utility, and many suggestions for a similar transference in other quarters.

First, for the animal kingdom. Horse-flesh is certainly not waste so long as dogs and cats eagerly feed upon it; but the French say that we ought not to leave it to the dogs and cats, by reason of the excellent qualities it possesses for human food; however, we must leave this matter to the hippophagic admirers of 'chevaline.' Fish are applied to many more useful purposes than was customary a few years ago: shark fins are prized as food by the Chinese; shark liver is boiled down by them for oil; shark skin is dried and used for polishing wood and ivory; dried shark heads are given by the Norwegians to cattle as food; smoked and dried dog-fish is eaten as food, as are also the eggs, while the skin and the liver are applied to the same purposes as those of the shark. The French procure useful medicinal oil from the liver of the skate, which used to be thrown away, but which is now found to be nearly as efficacious as cod-liver oil. A French firm, Messrs Souffrie, make large quantities of useful tallow or fat out of the pickings and waste of slaughter-houses, the dead cats and

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dogs found floating in the Seine, and the used-up grease of railway wheels; when doctored by means of steam and hydraulic pressure, this fat becomes available for stearine manufacturers. Leather scraps are made into 'shoddy leather,' by grinding and macerating them into a pulp available for the inner soles of shoes and such-like purposes. There is another leathery composition much used in America under the name of 'pancake.' Thin bits of leather, the odds and ends cut off by the tanner and currier from whole hides, are interlaid with paste until they accumulate to an inch in thickness, and then heavily squeezed between two iron rollers; the mass comes out as an oblong pancake twelve inches by four, and half an inch thick, looking very much 'like a cross between a sheet of gingerbread and a cake of tobacco;' it is used for inner soles, heels, and stiffeners. The albumenised paper used by photographers is subject to much waste in its manufacture; this waste, instead of being consigned to the pulp-vat, is now converted into beautiful marbled paper, by a peculiar application of aniline colours to the albumen.

Next, as to the vegetable kingdom. We are told that the using up of what was formerly considered waste, in the textile manufactures, now reaches the enormous quantity of a hundred thousand tons annually, in the three forms of cotton, flax, and hemp waste. If we include animal fibres, such as shoddy wool and silk waste, the aggregate becomes largely increased. The French make firewood or fire-lighters of the cones of pine-trees and the waste cobs of maize, saturated with any cheap resinous substance. Messrs Souffrie (already named) buy all the waste and pickings of vegetables from the twenty-five hospitals of Paris, cook them by steam, and feed a piggery of seven hundred head of swine —the vegetables being enriched with the greasy slops from the same hospitals. The same firm also produce beautiful white fat from the black residue left after purifying colza or rape oil; and another residue from the treatment of *this* residue gives them a useful varnish for cheap out-door purposes. The oil retained in olive oil-cake is now extracted by chemical means, and converted into capital stearine; and by this improvement it is expected that seven million pounds of olive oil, now annually wasted at Marseille, will be utilised. Old account-books, letters, invoices, envelopes, cheques, insurance policies, and other kinds of *writing* paper (not *printing*), are now bought at about twelve pounds per ton, and worked up with other materials into pulp for the penny newspapers. Besides linen and cotton rags, cotton-waste, old writing-paper, straw, and esparto or Spanish grass, wood is also now much used for making into paper. Large factories for this purpose have been established in Italy, Würtemberg, the United States, and other countries; the wood is rubbed down into dust by friction against rapidly revolving roughened wheels, and then treated by chemical processes until it forms a pulp suitable for paper-making. There is one wood-pulp paper-mill in Pennsylvania that can work up thirty thousand pounds of wood or of sawdust per day. Nearly all the German newspapers now have a percentage of wood in the paper on which they are printed. The *New York Daily Tribune* is said to be printed on paper made of bamboo; and other American journals are printed on paper made chiefly of a kind of wild cane that is found in vast abundance on the shores of the Mississippi. A German chemist has found a mode of distilling spirit out of a residue left after chemically treating wood-pulp for paper. A French manufacturer converts sawdust, by intense pressure, into beautiful little boxes and other ornamental articles. The seed in the cotton pods or tufts, which used to be an annoyance to the cultivators, is now most usefully employed as a gas-fuel, as a source of oil for lamps, as a chief substitute for olive oil, as oil-cake for cattle-food, and as a source of good hard grease or stearine for soap and candles. The refuse molasses from beet-root sugar, formerly used only as pig-food, are now distilled to obtain alcohol, and the residue crystallised to obtain potassium salts. Spent dye-woods, after the colouring matter has been extracted from them, are sold in France to a large manufacturer, who mixes them with tar refuse, and forms them into compressed cakes for fuel, which has a very large sale. The acicular leaflets of the pine-tree are converted into what is called tree-wool, in France, Sweden, Holland, and other parts of the continent; this wool is used for wadding, stuffing for mattresses and other articles of furniture; a cloth made from its fibres is used for inner vests, drawers, hose, shirts, coverlets, and chest-preservers; the membranous fragments and refuse are compressed into blocks for fuel; the resinous matter contained in them is distilled for gas; while by various modes of treatment there are produced an essential oil for rheumatism and skin diseases, an ethereal oil useful as a curative agent and as a solvent, and a liquid for a medicated bath—all useful substances from a material which not long ago was utterly disregarded.

And now for the mineral kingdom. Mr Mill and other thoughtful men are cautioning us that, as our stock of coal cannot last for ever, we should do well to utilise the thirty million tons of small-coal and dust which is allowed to go nearly to waste annually at the pit's mouth; and attention is drawn to what Belgium is doing in this matter. Near Charleroi, eight hundred thousand tons of coal-dust had accumulated, a burden to the colliery owners, and an injury to the health of the workpeople. Whereupon a Company was formed expressly to utilise this refuse. The coal-dust is sifted, mixed with eight per cent. of coal-tar, heated to a paste by steam at a temperature of three hundred degrees, and pressed into blocks and cylinders about twenty pounds weight. These blocks form excellent fuel for locomotives and steamboats, productive of great heat and very little ash. In various foreign countries where paving-stone is scarce, the slag from iron-furnaces is brought into use, by being run into pits eight or nine feet in diameter, and cooled into slabs for paving. The cuttings of tin-plate, and worn-out tin kettles and saucepans, are subjected to processes which yield pure tin, good weldable iron, ammonia, Prussian-blue, and stannate of sodium; and as the make of tin-plate in England and Wales amounts to more than half a million tons annually, there must be a very large store of material available in the old tin-plate which is replaced by the new. The waste flux, such as borax, used in galvanising metals, finds a ready market among refiners and for making paint.

But there are mounds of things still waiting to be utilised, waiting for the day when some clear practical minds will find out what to do with them.

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The Cleveland iron sells for a comparatively low price in the market, because it is contaminated with phosphorus. Now, the iron would be worth seven shillings per ton additional if the phosphorus were out of it, while phosphorus itself is worth sixty or seventy pounds per ton; what would not be the national gain if the two could be easily and cheaply separated! Nearly a hundred thousand tons of sulphur a year are wasted in our alkali manufactures; means have been discovered for recovering this sulphur, but the system has not yet been sufficiently adopted to prevent the sad waste of a vast quantity of spent liquor in which the sulphur exists. Cinders from refineries and puddling-furnaces, and scale from rollers and hammers, contain from thirty to fifty per cent. of good iron; it is known that the metal can be obtained from them, and converted into good iron and steel; and iron-masters are now waiting anxiously for chemists to shew how such extraction can be managed cheaply. Mr Frank Buckland has pointed out that we destroy millions of wholesome fish every year, by poisoning the waters of the Tees, the Wear, and the Dovy with lead refuse, the Dee with petroleum refuse, the Usk with sulphuric acid refuse, the Camel and the Fowey with mud from the Cornish clay-works, the Exe with chloride of lime from the paper-mills, and many of the rivers of the northern counties with waste from the chemical works. As to substances useful for food, there can be no doubt that enormous waste occurs. We will conclude with a few observations by Mr Warriner (teacher of cookery to the army) concerning this important subject: 'The refuse grease and kitchen stuff in Paris is utilised to a great extent; but in London, there is an immense amount of waste. I have been studying this subject for the last three years, and can therefore speak with confidence upon it. I am quite sure that as much material is wasted as would feed *one million pigs*. There are sanitary laws telling people to burn their potato-peelings and cabbage-leaves, simply because we lack municipal regulations which would provide for the removal of these things every day. To shew the loss which is thus sustained, I may mention that at Aldershot each regiment of about five hundred men get about four pounds per month for their refuse of this description. I calculate that from every family of twelve individuals, living at the rate of three hundred a year, there is enough refuse to keep two pigs.'

A LIMITED HORIZON.

IN FIFTEEN CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER XIII.—A SECRET DISHONOUR.

'My dear Miss Lalagé,' the unwise curate had written, 'I don't know how to begin this letter, for I am afraid what I am going to tell you will make you very angry; but I couldn't help it. You yourself told me there was no hope for me as regards the subject on which I spoke to you some time ago. I now write to say that my feelings are changed—at least, I don't know that they are really changed, for never in all my life shall I think any woman half so sweet and beautiful as you are; but at anyrate I must try and keep down all that, for I am engaged, or as good as engaged, to a lady to whom I stood in the same position some time ago; but she and every one else went out of my head when I saw you.

'She gave me up four years ago; but has been good enough to reconsider her verdict: so she has given me to understand; but I cannot make up my mind to take the final step without writing to tell you. Don't be angry with me. I have been very unhappy, and am now, as I believe, only doing what is best; and you know you said there was no hope.

'Mary is very good—too good for me, I feel—and she does not know I have ever cared for any one but her; she fancied so once, and that made her break off the engagement; but now she thinks it was all a mistake, and I have not the heart to undeceive her: she would be so unhappy, and is so good, and has had so much trouble all her life. Do be kind enough to write and tell me you are not angry; and may I ask you to direct your letter to the post-office here?

'My substitute has promised to let me have another fortnight at home, so I shall be here till the middle of July.—I am always, dear Miss Lalagé, yours faithfully, T. Mitchell.'

The bright summer morning that brought this letter to Lalagé found her in the garden with little Isabel Cleather. She was in quite high spirits, holding the child in her arms, and running with her to look for the postman. It was a daily excitement of which Dinner Bell was very fond; Lalagé was more careless about it, having few correspondents.

At last the man came up in his leisurely country fashion, and delivered two letters: one, a big blue envelope, directed to Belle, Lalagé gave the child to take to her sister; the other, she put quickly into her pocket with a faint angry flush. With amazed eyes she had recognised the big curate's small hand, and a dark presentiment of evil came over her. What business had he to write to her?

With all her gaiety dashed to the ground, she went back to the house, and looking in at the drawing-room door, asked Belle if she would take charge of Dinner Bell for the morning.

She went up to her own room; with slow, unwilling fingers opened the unlucky letter, and read it through once, twice, three times, her quick, faint flush coming and going over her face all the while. Then she crushed up the envelope in her angry fingers, and flung herself on her knees by the bed—not to pray, only to keep down with hidden face and stifled sobs the passion she felt she must suppress.

She was very angry, very angry indeed. That she, Lalagé Hesketh, should have received such a letter from any man, was a humiliation, an insult. And what should she do? How should she resent it? Where should she turn for help? She had hitherto been protected, guarded, defended from the outer world; but this bitter arrow reached her standing alone and helpless on the terrible hill of isolation on which she had placed herself, and there was none to draw it out, and prevent the poisonous wound from festering. Her first impulse was to rush down and tell her sister everything; but this was instantly rejected. She could not bring herself to do it. 'Belle would only despise me,' she thought, in her blind misunderstanding of superior wisdom; and self-scorn was easier to bear than the scorn of that other, dearer one.

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And this was not a thing to be prayed about—an insult which, she said to herself, had been brought about by herself; it could not be well to lay such a petty humiliation before the awful throne on high. No, there was no comfort anywhere. But a sudden divine impulse came over her, and she stretched out her hands, poor Lalagé, and sobbed out: 'Make haste to help me, O Lord!'

A little softened, she got up, and smoothed out the envelope and replaced the letter; then put on her things hastily, and went out. Up the hot hillside, Belle saw the light figure moving swiftly on, goaded by the inner pain, and followed her with fond wishes and tender fears.

'She shall not stay here much longer,' said Belle to herself; 'Grimswold is too dull for her.'

All through the burden and heat of the long summer day, Lalagé wandered with quick unconscious steps, seeking rest and finding none, repeating to herself that she had been insulted, and bearing about her the curate's written testimony of his own instability and unworthiness. At four in the afternoon, she found herself back in the little wood, through which she had passed in the morning. She did not yet feel tired out, and was still very angry; but she sat down at the foot of an old brown trunked tree, and leaning her head against it, looked like a white withering flower in the gloomy shade of the wood. Near that very spot, only eight months before, she had heard the curate's steps as he came up to her on the day when he made an appeal which had touched her very heart. Nothing touched her now but a sense of outrage and insult, which made the brightness of the day, the beauty of the trees, the songs of the birds, a mockery and a bitterness. So only had the fair summer landscape spoken to her on that day when the smallest ray of comfort would have been a godsend. The beauty and brightness had thrown her back upon the heart in which was neither, only blackness and anger.

She heard footsteps approaching, but did not open her eyes to see who caused them, telling herself she was out of the way of any passer-by. But they paused when they reached her, so she turned and looked up. In her highly strung, unnatural state of excitement, it would not have seemed strange if the curate himself had stood beside her, so it was with no expression of surprise that her eyes met those of her cousin, George Wriothesley.

'Lalagé!' he cried, startled out of his usual nonchalance by her strange, ghastly appearance. 'What is the matter?'

In the shadow of the trees, with the marks of the day's heat and weariness upon her pallid face, she looked more like a fading white lily than the bright, assured girl who had been his old love.

To her, the sympathising human voice, breaking for the first time the silence of many hours, came with a comfort and appeal that she was not strong enough to resist. She looked up at him, standing there in his cool, carefully arranged summer dress, with his regular features, and long fair whiskers and moustache, and compared herself, suddenly worn and weary, and faded and bedraggled, with the well-appointed figure before her. But even that disparaging contrast could not repel the flood of pain within her which strove for utterance, and which had been invited to confidence.

'George,' she said with a sudden burst of tears, 'I have been insulted.'

There—it was over; the words had been said, the confidence had been given beyond recall, and she was glad of it. Some one stronger than herself was near to guide and help her, some one whom she knew to be good with the best goodness; her sudden prayer had already been answered.

'Insulted, Lalagé?' he said; 'who has dared'—

She interrupted him.

'O George, it was all my fault. But you had better read the letter.'

She took it out and gave it to him, crumpled and worn like herself. He read it through, and then returned it in silence.

After a pause, he said: 'The fellow hopes you won't be angry, and you tell me it was all your fault. Am I to understand that you liked this man?'

'Of course I liked him,' said Lalagé with bitter self-scorn. 'I suppose I was what people call in love with him; I used to walk with him, and talk with him, and I liked him very much.' Her manner suddenly changed, and she looked at him with eyes which grew questioning and wistful. 'Don't you think I must have liked him very much if I did all that?'

He was startled, confounded. Was Lalagé, his ideal woman, wanting in all delicacy—in all feminine reticence? Abashed, he turned away his face. In that pause, she was having hard measure dealt out to her. He felt that, man as he was, he could never have so openly spoken of his feelings on a subject of this sort. At last, he said slowly: 'I suppose if you chose him out as your companion from all the world, you must have liked him very much indeed.'

'Chose him out from all the world!' she said, with wide-opened eyes. 'There is no world here; there was no one but him to speak to, not one human being, except a wicked woman whom I detest, and I was so lonely! I know I was very wrong; I am not excusing myself; I know I ought to have stopped him more firmly the very first time he spoke so foolishly; but I can only say the old thing over again—I was so lonely, so lonely!'

He was silent, not well knowing what to say. She looked up.

'George,' she said, 'you do not understand; you do not see that the insult lies in his having written to me on what he calls "that subject." I had desired him never to allude to it again; I had told him I would appeal to papa if he did, he made me so angry with his foolishness. I had forbidden him to speak to me at all, and then he goes away and takes advantage of the post to make me read words to which I would never have listened; telling me'—with a throb of wounded vanity—'he must give me up! Give up what he never had!'

'But if you liked him so much,' said George, 'why was all this so distasteful to you?'

'Because I knew him to be unworthy,' she said; 'he had broken his word before, speaking when he had promised to be silent; and though in liking him I had fallen very low, there was no reason for falling lower by encouraging him.'

'Does he know you liked him so much?'

'Of course not!' said Lalagé, getting up and standing before him in a blaze of passion. 'What do you take me for? Oh, I wish I had never

told you; you don't understand; and you don't care, you don't care!'

She was stung and angry. The unworthy man, who, as she thought, would have been faithful to his hapless love all his life, had turned from her, and written to tell her that her regard was no longer a thing to be desired; the worthy man, to whom in her need she had looked for help, stood aloof coldly, only seeming shocked and bewildered. Ah! he had a right to be shocked—she herself was shocked, thinking of the position in which she stood. But why should he be bewildered, and helpless, and stupid? However, her last words roused him.

'Lalagé,' he said—and she was forced to acknowledge to herself that his voice was earnest and kind—'I do care very much; so much, that I do not know how to help you, or what to say, till I have thought it over. But that I will help you I give you my word. I will write to the man myself, as soon as I see my way clearly. Will you give me this evening to think it all out?'

'Yes,' she said, as one who did not much care, for all at once she became exhausted; the active exercise and the long fast were telling upon her.

'Now, we must get home as soon as possible,' he said gently: 'you are quite overdone.'

They walked through the wood and down the hill, he all the while accommodating his steps to her feeble ones, as that other man had certainly never done. When they were about half-way home, he made her stop and rest for a minute or two, mounting guard over her jealously, and looking to the right and left, not knowing, as she did, how very rare were passers-by. He was kind—yes; but somehow she felt as though she were a prisoner under humiliating circumstances. Slow tears, which she was too weak to resist, came to her eyes, and through them she saw her cousin move away with his foot a black impeding log which was fretting the course of a fair little brook.

At last home was reached. George told Belle he had found Lalagé quite tired out, and advised her going to bed early; so, soon after dinner, she got away to her room. She had meant to think it all over, and come to some conclusion as to the answer to that fatal letter; but she was so tired that her head had scarcely touched her pillow before she fell asleep.

Down-stairs, Belle and George spent a very quiet evening; he was silent and preoccupied, and very early returned to the homely old-fashioned little inn in which he had taken up his quarters. Going through the streets on his way thither, he could not help noticing the utter desolation of the place. 'She must have been very lonely,' he said.

Late into the summer night he sat in the tiny inn parlour, smoking a contemplative cigar, and gazing out into the summer darkness, not in the least looking hurt and wounded, as he really was. Yet Lalagé had disappointed him sorely that day, and, besides, an unacknowledged hope had been stifled ere it rose to life.

The whole affair which he had promised to think over was very vague, but he was resolved to help her—help her he would. A dull anger burned in his heart against the foolish weak man who had written that letter, and who was, he found out from Belle, the curate of Grimswold. But he was the man whom Lalagé had liked very much, so he must not be too hard upon him. And yet she had never pleaded for any such leniency; she had only been angry, and outraged, and insulted, and had always spoken of it in the past tense, never in the present. Was that all the love of which she was capable? he asked himself with a sigh. Love which could be destroyed at a single blow—however deadly that blow might be—was to him a mystery.

No flush had risen to her pale face when she had uttered that scornful, self-condemning sentence; no tender reticence had made the words falter on her lips. Then he remembered the questioning eyes that had met his when she had startled him with the query: 'Don't you think I must have liked him very much if I did all that?' Her face, her attitude, as she had said those words, came back to him, and suddenly it seemed as though a child, whose heedless feet had carried her where she would not, and who wept over her wanderings with bitter, undue lamentations, had stood before him then, asking that strange question, instead of a conscious woman, who was incapable of reticence or delicacy.

A sudden revelation laid bare the truth before his delighted eyes, and, taking the end of his cigar from his mouth, he flung the red-hot spark far into the landlord's peaceful kitchen-garden, where it lay for a few seconds before it went out, hissing and seething on the top of a bedewed cabbage.

'By Jove!' said George Wriothesley, 'it is all a mistake; she doesn't like him in that way, poor innocent child, and she doesn't know the difference. And she must have been very lonely, very lonely indeed; poor little Lalagé, poor little child;' and the 'Thank Heaven!' which he uttered in his brief, soldierly fashion, was no mere exclamation.

Then, to make up for all the hard thoughts he had bestowed on her, he gave himself up to the recounting of her various good qualities—not a difficult task, and one on which he had been engaged at intervals ever since she had really been the 'little child' he was now calling her.

It was a strange mistake for a woman to make; but then she was hardly a woman in mind yet, he said to himself, and had been placed in a very trying position; utterly without friends or acquaintances, she who had been all her life accustomed to society. He rejoiced over his discovery with a great joy.

'The truth shall make you free,' kept running in his head betwixt pitiful mental glimpses of her whom he had wronged in thought; yes, the truth should make Lalagé Hesketh free, and no selfish joy marred the beauty of his exultation.

Before he went to bed he wrote a short, stern letter to the curate, to be copied and sent, or destroyed and not sent, just as Lalagé liked.

'Sir,' it ran, 'surprised I was at the letter received from you on the —th instant. I have no comment to make on the contents, which in no way concern me, but beg that no repetition of the offence be committed, or I shall feel obliged to take more severe methods of enforcing your silence.—With every wish for your future welfare, I remain, &c.'

This epistle concluded and approved, he went to bed, feeling happier than he could have believed possible eight hours before.

'Poor little Lalagé, poor little child,' was his last thought; in her weakness and helplessness, she seemed dearer than ever to him.

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CHAPTER XIV.—SET FREE.

And how had George Wriothesley found himself in Grimswold just at this particular juncture of Lalagé's life? She asked herself this question next morning, thinking, with a little shame, that she had never made any inquiries on the subject on the previous day. It had not seemed strange to her to find him standing by her side in the wood; but looking back, after the pause and calm which sleep had brought to her excitement, it did appear very odd.

She grew more and more ashamed, as she remembered how suddenly and abruptly she had forced her troubles upon him, and marvelled at his having been so ready to receive her confidence. How long ago it seemed! Was it indeed only a day, a single day since she had received the curate's letter? Both in body and mind she felt as if the wear and tear of weeks had gone over her head. And how strange it was, that just when he was so much wanted, her cousin should have come to her aid! How had it all come about?

To answer this question, we must go back for a while, and shall then be able to tell the reader more than George confessed to Lalagé in reply to her subsequent queries. He had answered Gertrude Cleather's letter immediately on its receipt, and appointed a suburb of London which would be easily accessible to him, to which he begged her, if possible, to repair at once. Thither he had gone to see her, accompanied by an attendant from a lunatic asylum, dressed as his groom. He and this man went and returned from the Cleathers' house several times, so that the captain grew accustomed to the supposed servant, without suspicion of any sort. Happily, too, all memory of the insulting way in which he had treated George last time they met had faded from his failing mind; so the two were on moderately friendly terms, though Captain Cleather confided to Gertrude that he hated men about him—any one of them might be an infernal doctor, for anything one knew—for they, doctors, were equal to any mean subterfuge or disguise. But Gertrude reassured him, giving him her word of honour that neither George nor his groom was a medical man; and he believed in her more than in any one else.

After a few weeks had elapsed, George begged to be allowed to leave the man at the Cleathers, whilst he took an imaginary journey.

'These fellows are always in the way when one is travelling, Cleather,' he said; 'and I don't want to dismiss him, he's such a good servant.'

'I don't mind keeping him,' growled the captain, 'if he'll only make himself useful.'

'That I'm sure he will,' said George, and went his way, leaving the man behind him.

Either this man's presence exercised a beneficial restraint over Captain Cleather, or he 'managed' him without the patient's cognizance; for certain it is that Gertrude's husband was quieter and more reasonable than he had been for many months. He constituted himself Captain Cleather's body-servant, and soon the poor irritable man could not do without him.

Once, indeed, he could do nothing right in his master's eyes, and storms of rage burst upon his head. Such high words were spoken, and such terrible threats uttered, that Gertrude, in alarm, wrote for George, who answered her summons instantly. He was met at the door by the infuriated captain.

'You've come back, have you?' cried the angry man. 'It's quite time, I can tell you. That man of yours is downright insolent; you'd better take him away.'

'I wish you'd let me have a few words with you,' said George; and Captain Cleather, gratified by the confidence implied, willingly assented.

'The truth is,' said George, as the two paced up and down the small garden-walk, 'the man is insolent—an overbearing fellow, almost too much for me to manage. I wish you'd take him in hand for a year or so, and keep a sharp look-out upon him; it would do him all the good in the world, for he's too good a servant to be got rid of.'

'Why don't you do it yourself?' asked the suspicious man, but in a calmer tone.

'I'm such an awfully soft fellow,' said George with a laugh; 'besides, you are more fit for that work than I am; higher up in the service, and all that.'

'But I never was in the Guards,' said the pacified captain.—'Well, I'll see about it: he wants a tight hand over him.'

This new view of the subject afforded him much gratification, and, to Gertrude's surprise, he proposed that evening that the man should take up his quarters for the night in the dressing-room adjoining his own room. This had actually been the case ever since the keeper's arrival, but without Captain Cleather's knowledge; so Gertrude's path was now comparatively smooth.

Only comparatively, however, for she knew that her husband was not radically better—never could be radically better—and the future lay before her black with horror and pain. Into its gloomy recesses, however, she would not let her spirit dive, simply receiving each day, with its endurance, trials and anxieties, from the merciful heavenly hands, which would never inflict on her more than she was able to bear.

George asked many questions about the Hesketh, whom he had not seen for a year; and Gertrude's account of Lalagé by no means satisfied him. 'She was looking very delicate,' her friend had said, and the thought haunted George.

He had now fairly established Gertrude's protector; so felt at liberty to follow his own inclinations, and pay his cousins a visit. He called on his uncle previously, and heard from the blind busy man that his daughters were both well, and Lalagé charmed with the place.

'I am thinking of running up to see them,' he had said, and Mr Hesketh had answered: 'Ah, do!' hence it was that the day which had brought Lalagé the curate's letter had found George Wriothesley standing beside her in the little wood, whither he had followed her, according to Belle's directions.

The next morning, he went over to the Hill House, and found Lalagé alone in the drawing-room. Belle, contrary to her usual habits, had gone out for a drive, taking little Dinner Bell with her. She thought something was going on between her sister and George—as indeed there was, though a different 'something' from what she imagined—and resolved not to be in the way.

Lalagé was lying on the sofa, white and exhausted, with the traces of the dead passion of the day before on her face.

'I am afraid you are very tired,' he said.

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'Very tired,' she answered; 'so tired, that I can scarcely think of anything.'

'I am sorry for that,' he said, 'for there is something I want to ask you to think about. Do you know, Lalagé, I fancy you have been making a great mistake?'

'About what?' she asked, lifting her clear wistful eyes to his face.

'What an awkward business it is to talk about,' thought George to himself; 'but it must be said out somehow;' so he went on in his straightforward fashion, though his very forehead was red. 'About your feelings with regard to this man—I am very sure that you do not care about him in the way you have been imagining.'

'That is what I said to myself when that dreadful letter came,' said Lalagé eagerly. 'I said: "It is all a mistake; it is not true that I ever cared." But then I sent it away as a mean, wicked thought, shewing I was anxious to escape from all the trouble I had drawn upon myself; and, George, I think it still, for I was so sorry for him, more sorry than I have ever been for any one else.'

'That may be,' said George Wriothesley, turning away his face. 'Some men shew their feelings more than others, and find it easy to enlist ladies' sympathy in that way; others can't. But, Lalagé, that has nothing to do with it; the real thing goes deeper than the deepest pity, and has nothing to do with anger, and yesterday you were angry.'

'Very angry,' she said.

'You could not have been angry if *that* had been the case,' he went on; 'only hurt, and sorrowful, and wounded.—You see,' with a forced laugh, 'I know all about it, and you don't, and that was why you made the mistake.'

'If it only were so,' said Lalagé with tears, burying her face in her pillows. 'But I don't deserve to escape in this way, and I am not sure you are right.'

'Indeed, I am right,' he said earnestly: 'your very saying that proves it. If I were wrong, you would not wish to escape, thinking those chains dearer than liberty.'

'But oh, I am so ashamed!' she said with a sudden cry. 'If a mistake, it is such a dreadful mistake for a woman to have made.'

'I daresay lots of women have made it before,' said George sententiously; 'only they have kept it to themselves, instead of acknowledging it, as you have done.'

'I wish I had kept it to myself,' she sobbed.

'Don't say that,' he said gently, though he could not help liking her the better for the sentiment. 'It has been such a happiness to me to help you to a knowledge of the truth; besides, if you had gone on thinking you had that fancied pain, it would have been so hard upon you—nearly as hard as a real sorrow, I think.'

Her distress touched him, but not to the extent to which it would have softened the curate, for he was a just man, and could not help feeling that it was only natural, and even deserved. She felt that he was judging her righteously—not passing over her weakness, as though it were utterly guiltless, but still pitiful and kind; and this made her trust to him, and give his opinion due value.

Presently she said: 'I hope it is as you think, but I don't deserve it.'

'I am sure I am right,' he said heartily; 'and as for not deserving the freedom, poor little Lalagé, you have not been very wise; but no one can say worse of you than that; and few women have been placed in so trying a position.'

She, a tall, slender girl, considerably overtopping the average height to which women attain, had perhaps never been called 'little' before; and somehow the epithet, acknowledging her weakness and unwisdom, did not displease her: it was true she did feel very little just then.

'I was very lonely, George,' she said.

'I am sure of it,' he answered; 'and you felt it so much that it was pleasant to have any one to speak to: isn't it so?'

'Yes,' she said; 'and he was a clergyman, and really is so good.'

'I don't know about that,' said George illiberally.

'Yes, he is,' said Lalagé; 'only weak and foolish: he is very good to the poor.'

'Then he should confine his attentions to them,' said George loftily.—'By the way, Lalagé, will this letter do?' And he drew the document from his pocket.

She read it over, and then said, almost with a laugh: 'O no. I will write to him in a day or two, and you will see that my letter will answer the purpose better than this, which would frighten him nearly out of his senses.'

'Well, just as you like,' he said, more careless about the curate now that Lalagé had been brought to look upon her freedom as a possible fact; and then both left the unwelcome topic, and talked about George's coming to Grimswold, and other indifferent subjects.

'O George, isn't it a lonely place?' she exclaimed. She could not help saying the words over and over again; it was so pleasant that that which had caused her so much suffering should be acknowledged as an evil.

'Very lonely,' he said. 'But did you never try to give yourself some special home-task—work, or something? What do women always do?'

'Needlework,' said Lalagé; 'and I hate it. And they read; but I am not clever, and don't care for reading more than two or three hours a day, and every day is fourteen hours long, you know. But I am trying to be better,' she added with earnest humility. 'Ever since Dinner Bell has been here, I have done every single thing for her: mended her clothes, put her to bed, dressed her in the morning, taken her to walk. It has been such a pleasure.—And besides, I must shew you something,' she said, jumping off the sofa, and opening a chiffonier drawer. 'I made all these myself;' and she displayed five or six little blue print pinafores, over which she had painfully laboured for as many weeks: 'these are for my district.'

'I think you have been very good,' he said, examining the work minutely, as if he knew anything about it.

'But I only did all this quite lately,' she said. 'At first, I did nothing all day, when I could not go out, but sit at the window and watch the rain, and feel so wretched and lonely; and then that horrible business came on. O George, I wonder why it all happened: it did no good, and is such a humiliation.'

'Little Lalagé,' he said, 'perhaps you needed humiliation.'

'I hope it will make me better,' she said softly.

Then Belle came in, and had to be told all about George's adventures in Grimswold; and they all

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talked and laughed in a way to which two of them were hardly accustomed, till it was time to take little Dinner Bell up for her noonday sleep.

'Lalagé is not looking well,' said George to Belle.

'Not at all,' was the answer: 'I am anxious to get her away for a little change.'

'I don't suppose you will be here much longer?' asked George. 'I should think my uncle had economised enough to set him up for life.'

'I don't know about that,' said Belle; 'but papa's affairs are much more favourable than he at first supposed, and Lalagé, poor child, has spent next to nothing on dress.'

'She has had no temptation to do otherwise, I suppose,' said George; 'and you are just as blue as ever, Belle.'

'Just as blue,' she said with her rare sweet smile; 'only I hope my petticoats are long enough to hide my stockings, as somebody says.'

'I think they are very pretty stockings,' said George affectionately.

He was very fond of Belle, and she quite reciprocated the feeling. Women older than himself generally liked George Wriothesley, being able to give him his due value; those of his own age, or still younger, did not appreciate him. He was perhaps a little dogmatic, and almost obstinate in his freely spoken opinions; and to girls in all the one-sidedness and illiberality of youth, this just, righteous man seemed only cold and hard.

In general society, he did not shine, being one of those people who require a wide margin of their own, so as to do justice to themselves, and give their peculiar characteristics due value. Iron cannot float; no more could George Wriothesley adapt himself to the froth and foam of society, as women—even though they be the best and wisest—so easily do; consequently, he was only silent and *nonchalant*, or, when he spoke, seemed cynical and disapproving. All this had tended to make Lalagé, bright and brilliant as she was, rather dislike him than otherwise, though she respected him to what she called a terrible extent; but in her trouble she found the qualities of which she had thought so little the very ones which helped and comforted her. He was just and truthful, so she could safely trust her cause in his hands, and with trembling joy accepted the verdict he had pronounced, for her own heart told her it was a true one.

She was free; at her own expense to be sure—for she had made a mistake of which it was a humiliation even to think—but still, that greater trouble, that deeper humiliation was spared her, and she was grateful to the cousin who had shewn her a truth to which she would scarcely have dared to open her own eyes.

In that brief visit—he was only with them ten days—she learned to know and like him as she had never done before; he was very kind, listening with keen interest to all the petty details of her uneventful life, and admiring the surrounding landscape with such artistic appreciation, that they had new charms for the girl, who had looked on them so often and wearily that she had forgotten they were beautiful. And in those brighter days, the curate's letter was answered. It ran as follows:

'Sir,—With much surprise I received your letter of the —th instant, and you must forgive my saying that it was not an honourable letter. You, who were, as you say, "as good as engaged," should never have written such, as it was quite unfit for the eyes of the lady to whom you are betrothed. However, I at once beg to assure you that its contents shall never come to her knowledge; and I sincerely hope both she and you may be very happy. That your feelings in regard to that other subject—on which, if you remember, I had forbidden you to speak—are changed, can be only matter of rejoicing to me; and yet, at first, your writing to acquaint me of the fact seemed so unjustifiable an intrusion that I was very angry. However, you are now fully forgiven; and with every wish for your welfare, I remain, faithfully yours, Lalagé Hesketh.'

When this letter was fairly despatched, Lalagé felt more light-hearted than she had yet done; but soon after an event occurred which again shadowed her horizon.

One bright July day, whilst the small party at the Hill House was seated at luncheon, a boy came leisurely up the drive, where the broad shield ferns were standing bolt upright in the sun, and the glowing peonies were drooping their heavy heads; coming up to the door, he handed in an envelope, and asked for sixpence. The telegram—for it was nothing less—was directed to George, who opened it quickly, his thoughts flying to Gertrude. It was from her, and ran: 'Come to me at once; my husband is very ill; bring Dinner Bell with you.'

This missive spread consternation all round.

'Poor Gertrude,' said George; and the two women were eager in their inquiries as to whether either or both had not better accompany him.

'I think not,' he said decidedly: 'it is a peculiar case; but I will write immediately, and tell you if you are wanted.'

There was just time to catch the two o'clock train; so he went to the *Raven* to make his few preparations, whilst Lalagé got the child ready. Great tears fell on her hair as she brushed and smoothed it for the last time. 'I shall miss you so, Dinner Bell,' she said.

'Dear Laladyee,' said the child, flinging her arms round the girl's neck.

'We must make haste, Dinner Bell,' said Lalagé, disengaging the soft hindering hands; 'poor papa is so ill, you know.'

'Yes,' said the child; 'and he will be swarring and swarring—he always does when his head is bad.'

When Dinner Bell was ready, Lalagé took her down-stairs, and found her cousin George alone in the dining-room; the child ran out to see if the pony-carriage was coming, and he went up to Lalagé at once.

'Lalagé,' he said, 'there is something I want to say before I go. Do you remember something I asked you on the 5th of December, year before last?'

'I do not remember the date,' she said, flushing; 'but I know what you mean.'

'Is there any change in your feelings?' he asked. 'Will you try to think more kindly of me than you did then?'

'George, how can you ask it?' said the girl, turning away her head; 'it is not like you. I am only just getting free from a dreadful mistake;

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how can you expect me to be able to think of anything else? I have been weak and foolish enough to justify your asking this, but indeed I am not weak and foolish enough to be able to turn round so quickly.' Her voice shewed that she was pained.

'You are right,' he said: 'I have made a mistake.'

Then an awkward five minutes followed, broken at last, to the infinite relief of both, by the arrival of the pony-carriage.

'Good-bye,' said Lalagé, holding out her hand. 'Thank you for being so kind.'

Bitter thanks they were to him; and all the way down to the station, he upbraided himself with his stupidity for that inappropriate appeal, which had burst from a man who was not wont to act upon impulse. 'I shall never win her,' he said with a sigh. And Dinner Bell, by his side, prattled of the father whom she expected to find with his head 'very bad.'

But the poor captain was not 'swarring and swarring,' and would never more offend with his lips. Late that night, when George reached Eastbourne—whence the telegram had been dated—he found his old friend lying white and speechless in a living death. The eyes, more sane and quiet than they had been for very long, wandered about with a pathetic wistfulness, but further power of expression there was none. Paralysis had laid its iron bands upon him, and he was never more to be released till Death, the healer, had touched him. By that awful bed, whereon was stretched, in such dire extremity, her first, last, only love, Gertrude Cleather watched—calm, gentle, ministering as of old. To her, this death in life seemed but the step to another, larger existence, where God, the recompenser, would make good to the poor captain all that had been wanting in this world. The wistful eyes grew more contented when they rested upon her, and a glimmer of intelligence seemed to come into them when she spoke of that calm fair heaven whither he was preceding her.

'I shall try to come to you, John,' she said, 'and I believe I shall.'

For him, of course, there was no doubt, only for her to whom remained further trials and a greater length of journey.

There was little to tell George. The poor bewrayed captain had, a fortnight before, wandered again to the sea, drawn thither by the irresistible attraction which the mighty ocean—yet more restless and unquiet than himself—always had for him, and there he had been 'very good,' as Gertrude said. There had been one slight outbreak the day before, and he had gone out for a long, hot drive; shortly after his return home he had been struck down by the foe who was yet waiting to give his final blow.

It was not long in coming: in the gray, early morning, when the first chill rays of the sun fell upon his dying bed, the spirit of Gertrude Cleather's husband passed away, to be 'made perfect' by One who, when on earth, healed them that were lunatic and sore distressed.

George wrote to give Lalagé the last news of Captain Cleather. 'I think,' he added, 'after a while, Gertrude would be glad if you would come to her; so hold yourself in readiness for a summons. I know you will do all you can to comfort her.'

'So that was the secret of her life,' sobbed Lalagé, as she read to Belle the letter which had revealed so much. 'Poor Gertrude, poor Gertrude!'

CHAPTER XV.—THE LAST.

Belle and Lalagé were once more left alone in the Hill House. On the evening of George Wriothesley's departure they were sitting as usual in the drawing-room, when Belle said abruptly: 'Have you nothing to tell me, Lalagé?'

'O Belle,' cried the girl, 'I will tell you everything.' She went and sat on a footstool at her sister's feet, and poured out a confession very different from the one her auditor expected. All the pitiable story, with its weakness, its foolishness, its pain, was told, interrupted by sobs, and tears, and vivid blushes. 'I am so ashamed to have made such a mistake,' said Lalagé, lifting up repentant dewy eyes.

'My darling,' said Belle, whose eyes were likewise wet, 'I cannot bear to think you should have been in all that trouble whilst I knew nothing of it.'

'You are not vexed that I did not tell you before, are you?' asked Lalagé. 'O Belle, I *could* not, whilst it was all going on; and till I found George so kind, I thought you would despise me; but after his goodness, I knew you would be only more good, more kind, just as you are dearer and better than any one else.'

'I do not blame you, dear,' her sister answered; 'I know how hard it is at times to give confidence; besides, young people are so reticent about their troubles.'

'I am so thankful it is all over,' said Lalagé with a deep breath.

Yes, it was all over—the secrecy, the torment, the self-reviling; but the poor foolish little heart had learned a lesson which it never forgot in all its after-life. People used to say she had lost her high spirits, but Lalagé would laugh, and say it was only the shadow of the Cotswold Hills still hanging over her.

But to return. The loss of little Dinner Bell made a great blank in Lalagé's life, but she was resolved not to let it run into a waste of idleness, as she had before done; she went on diligently with those painful little pinafores, and laborious little dresses for her district; and even that dry, uninteresting work brought its reward. She was no longer wretched, and lonely, and *ennuyée;* the thousand pricks which her awkward fingers inflicted upon themselves with her unmanageable needle were the sharpest sorrows she had then. But still she felt that hers was not a very happy life, so many capabilities being unemployed, and she longed for the time when Gertrude would send for her. The ardent, sympathetic heart longed to comfort and help the woman who had been left alone in the world at so early an age. Belle had proposed that they should leave Grimswold at once, but Lalagé had earnestly entreated that they might not do so. 'I cannot even seem to run away from the curate,' she had said.

The first meeting with him she rather dreaded, but it passed off without awkwardness, for the moment she saw the unwise, embarrassed man, her own courage returned to her. 'I am glad to see you back again,' she said, 'for I am daily expecting a summons from Grimswold, and cannot bear to leave my district unbefriended; you will look after it, I know.'

And the big foolish man stammered, and grew red, and promised fifty things, and went back to

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his house again bedazzled and made miserable by that sweet, pure face in all its beauty of forgiveness.

This meeting took place out of doors, for never again did the curate enter the Hill House, never again walk and talk with Lalagé as he had been wont to do; she brought about this change of course, but it gave her pain; she knew that Mrs Verey would notice it, and say bitter, cruel things of her; but she accepted it all humbly. 'I have deserved it,' she said; 'I am glad to be punished for it;' and soon she had ample foundation for her fears.

'So t' parson be going to marry,' said an old district woman to her. 'I do hear tell as he hasn't just done right by you—threw you over, like.'

'Indeed, he has done nothing of the sort,' said Lalagé earnestly; 'you must not think such a wicked thing of him.' And disregarding her own pain, she tried to soothe the old woman, and convince her of the untruth of the report. But it was useless; with the pertinacity of old age, she clung to the idea.

'Mrs Verey, she says "Just what I thought;" but I don't call that proper on her, for t' parson be a good parson, and I thowt you and he would have got on well together—ah, dear, ah, dear.'

'So we shall get on well together as friends,' said the poor girl.

'Friends!' repeated the old woman scornfully. 'You won't settle down and live along o' t' parson because you and he be friends; you'll be making off and leaving we poor folk just when you 'n got tired on us.'

The 'making off and leaving them' was so near at hand that Lalagé had not the courage to acknowledge it. She went out of the cottage feeling sick at heart. She had been kept from the slander of the world all her life, and now—though Grimswold consisted of scarcely more than a handful of cottages—it was dreadful to think that her name was being carried from mouth to mouth as that of an injured woman, and to feel very sure that the curate was not spared any comments, most likely hearing all she herself had been told. 'Never mind,' she said to herself that night as it all crowded upon her; 'I don't deserve to be helped; but I believe something will come to my aid.'

And the very next morning proved she was right, for she received a letter from Gertrude Cleather, begging her to come and stay with her for a long time. Lalagé went; and as she and Belle drove down to the station next day, she looked out over the peaceful landscape with eyes which, though full of a painful recollection, did not know they were gazing on it for the last time.

Nothing could have done the girl who had so lately been absorbed in her own troubles more good than a visit to one so heavily afflicted as was Gertrude Cleather. Her own foolish griefs seemed so small by that great sorrow, that she soon learned to give them their due estimate, and all her ardent sympathy and unselfish love were exercised to lighten her friend's sufferings.

She was very sweet to all who were in trouble, poor Lalagé, who thought herself so useless; and Gertrude mentally thanked George Wriothesley twenty times a day for the suggestion of sending for one who proved so great a comfort. The two women would sit together talking for hours of the poor dead captain, Lalagé's quick intuition making her understand the hundred perils through which her friend had passed.

'But I was with him to the last, just as I hoped and prayed,' said Gertrude.

To the children, Lalagé was a source of great delight, her patience and goodness to them being inexhaustible. Little Isabel grew fonder than ever of her. 'I wish you could give me the child,' she said to Gertrude one day.

'I wish you could live with me always,' replied her friend.

'Live with you!' said Lalagé; 'why, I must be going back to Grimswold very soon; I have been away too long already; Belle is all alone.' And she thought, with a sigh, that the dreary winter months were drawing near. But to Grimswold she never returned.

Mr Hesketh threw up his seat in parliament; he was getting an old man, he said, and anxious to be quietly settled at home with his children; that was his original excuse; but subsequently he found that travelling on the continent would be more to his satisfaction than any amount of home comforts; so he wrote to Belle and Lalagé, begging them to be ready to accompany him to Italy in the beginning of November. The sisters accordingly met in London, neither of them sorry that their Grimswold life was over.

And now I must stop writing about her, my Lalagé, with the dear violet eyes—my Lalagé, of whom I grew so fond during the few months of our acquaintance, for she is no longer bounded and confined by a Limited Horizon, but has passed into a sphere where every capability is called forth. George Wriothesley's wife is a busy as well as a happy woman, and has no time now to look back upon the girlish episode which darkened her life under the shadow of the Cotswold Hills.

A STORM.

THE zigzag silver flashes, and the boom
With loud long rattling stuns the darkened meads;
A universal sound of rain succeeds,
And torrents running in the silent gloom;
And lo! the dreadful-threatening hand of doom
Hath spared the world; a grayer light is shed;
And unexpectedly the storm is fled,
Leaving a weight of silence in its room;
For the tense ear of all things aching waits
With dazzled eye to hear a cannonade
And crash intolerable from every part;
But nothing stirs the green expectant glade;
And now a sweet bird calls its scattered mates,
And gaily hearkens the unburdened heart.

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MONOGRAMS.

WHAT is a monogram? Oh, it is your initials twisted together, so that nobody can read them, and then stamped on your note-paper.

This is a fair description of a monogram according to the received notion in this nineteenth century. Most people would be greatly astonished to be told that these interlaced letters are not monograms at all. They may be polygrams—but monograms they are not.

The word monogram, as every one knows, signifies a single letter or symbol (*monos*, single; *gramma*, letter). Strictly speaking, then, a monogram is a combination of two or more letters combined so as to form a single symbol. The diphthongs Œ and Æ, for instance, are pure monograms, and so also is the ampersand (&).

Diphthonged letters were probably first used in translating from Greek into Latin. In Greek writing, when vowels were written side by side, but sounded together, the vowels were kept separate; but in Latin writing, some of them were joined together, as in the diphthongs just quoted. Indeed, the medieval monks employed numerous contractions, some monogrammatic, some not, principally for the purpose of saving labour and space. The most familiar example of these contractions is the ampersand, which is a pure monogram of the Latin word *et* (and), so contrived that it can be written by a single stroke of the pen. In the italic ampersand (&), still employed in typography, the letters E T can clearly be traced. Similar contractions are common in oriental writing. In Hebrew epistolary correspondence, which commences with 'By the help of God' (*Beesrath Hashem*), these words are represented by a pure monogram composed of the letters B H.

The foregoing examples shew what is meant by a pure monogram. They are not given as illustrations of the early use of monograms, or of joined letters. These are of much higher antiquity. Mr Berri, in his *Monograms Historical and Practical*, gives it as his opinion that such devices took their origin from Egyptian hieroglyphics. Take, for example, the triple *tau* or T, which among the Hebrews was the sign of security. The origin of the *tau* is lost; but some writers assert that it was the form of the Egyptian Nilometer, used to ascertain the height of the waters of the Nile, upon which depended the sustenance and lives of the inhabitants of Egypt. But, remarks Mr Berri, 'whatever might have been its origin, whether it was derived from the Nilometer or the Egyptian Trinity, that simple mark has been handed down from age to age.'

The Israelites bore this symbol on their banners, sometimes singly, sometimes triply. It is said to be referred to in Ezekiel ix. 6: 'Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the *mark*.' This mark was also called the letter of life, and among the Greeks the token of absolution, because prisoners or culprits upon whom this mark was placed had their lives spared.

In modern times, the same sign or monogram, if it may be so called, is, according to some authorities, found in heraldry in the form of the St Anthony's cross, so called because that saint always bore this device on his habit. This form of the *tau* implies that 'he who beareth it is a stay or supporter of his prince, and an upholder of the Christian faith.'

Astle, in *The Origin and Progress of Writing*, informs us that monograms were anciently used in Syria, Egypt, and Greece, and he gives numerous examples of joined letters taken from early Greek manuscripts, though none from Syriac or Egyptian.

Joined letters are also found on early Greek coins. Prior to the Macedonian epoch, it seems to have been the custom to stamp on coins the first two or three letters of the name of the place of minting. These letters were all distinct and separate; but the Greeks, not having the advantage of steel dies, the letters in the later impressions became more or less joined together, owing to the softness of the matrix. It is possible, and even probable, that this accident gave rise to the idea of saving lines by engraving the letters in a monogrammatic form. Be this as it may, it is well

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known that about the time of Alexander I. of Macedon (500 B.C.), the practice of stamping monograms on coins first came into vogue.

From the Greeks, the practice of monogrammatic abbreviation descended to the Etruscans and Romans, and through them to all the nations of civilised Europe. Ducange, in his *Glossarium*, gives a plate with numerous examples of monograms used by emperors, popes, &c. from the time of Hadrian (beginning of the second century) downwards. The sacred monogram or *chrismon* was extensively used by Constantine (fourth century). The principal banner of the army under that emperor, supported at the summit of the pike a crown of gold, enclosing the chrismon or mysterious monogram, at once expressive of the figure of the cross and of the name of Christ (Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, chap. xx., Note). The 'mysterious monogram' was nothing more nor less than the letters *Chi*, *Rho* (X P), the first two letters of the word *Christos* joined together. It was used by Constantine probably as a political measure for increasing his popularity, when he saw that the Christian religion was extending in spite of the fiercest persecutions; but the legend is that this emperor saw a vision in the heavens, composed of the words, '*In hoc signo vinces*,' surrounding the cross or monogram referred to, and that he then adopted this symbol to mark his conversion to Christianity.

The chrismon is said to be of much more ancient date than the time of Constantine. It is supposed by some to symbolise the Egyptian deity Osiris. However this may be, modern critics are of opinion that similar signs were stamped on Greek coins, and displayed on the *labarum*, or Roman standard, before the date of the vision of Constantine. The chrismon certainly appears carved on tombs in the Catacombs at Rome, which belong to a period anterior to that of Constantine; and the inference seems to be that that monarch merely brought the symbol into more general use. It is said by Mr Berri that the sacred monogram never appeared on the coins of Constantine, though it did on those of his sons and successors. Barclay, in his *Monograms*, gives facsimiles of two coins of the Constantine period, on which are seen figures of the emperor bearing the labarum, and displaying the chrismon.

The use of this symbol was continued by the popes. In the time of St Augustine, it was generally placed at the beginning of letters; and in the middle ages (beginning, according to Hallam, 486 A.D.), the chrismon was often added to signatures at the foot of deeds. It was thus employed by way of oath on the part of the writers or signers, as was the cross afterwards used by the Saxon kings. This was similar to the cross which in the present day is attached by Roman Catholic prelates to their signatures, and to the mark used by illiterate persons.

Monograms are frequent on Roman coins of the fifth and subsequent centuries, where they not unfrequently fill the whole field. About this time, monogrammatic treatment of names seems to have become common, the early kings of France and Italy, and other sovereigns, using monograms for signatures. The early French kings left the monograms to be written by their secretaries, except where the first person was used, when the signature was made by the king himself.

Charlemagne (742—814 A.D.) had a variety of monograms, as is shewn by examination of the manuscripts of his time. The sacred monogram appears on his coins. It is said that he was the first to sign documents with a monogram made by means of a thin perforated plate, as in stencilling, or by means of a stamp with the characters engraved in relief. Pope Leo III., who was contemporary with Charlemagne, incorporated the chrismon with his name. An example is given by Ducange. Indeed, about this period (ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries), kings, nobles, and the higher clergy almost always used monogrammatic signatures. The scaffold-like look of the perpendiculars of the Roman letters gave the monograms of this date a very ugly appearance. The later the period, the more crowded, unconnected, and unreadable monograms became, until, at the end of the tenth century, monograms as royal signatures began to fall into disuse. Robert II. of France (996 A.D.) did not always use them; Philip I. (1060 A.D.), rarely. Their use finally died out in France in the time of Charles IV. (1322 A.D.).

In Italy, monograms went out about the same time; but in Germany they were in vogue for some two centuries later. They, however, lost their imperial dignity, being freely used by merchants to mark their goods (merchants' marks).

Monograms were scarcely ever used by the kings of Spain or England. Monograms did not come into general use in England till the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when they were commonly associated with merchants' marks. These marks were, as a rule, very obscure and ambiguous, and constructed without any system. They were used by wool-merchants and other traders, and examples of them may still be found scattered about the country, especially carved in churches, in commemoration of the individuals who contributed to building those edifices. Some of the earliest, belonging to the first half of the fourteenth century, are to be found in Norwich (see publications of the Norwich Archæological Association); and many, a little later, at Hitchin Church; St Margaret's, Lynn; St John the Baptist and Redcliffe churches, Bristol; the old church at Doncaster; the old church, Hull; and elsewhere.

Printers' marks seem to have been suggested by merchants' marks. In the first instance, they were generally of the kind called the *rebus*, such as we now see when a bee is put for the letter B. Printers' marks were soon after most elaborately decorated, the monogrammatic portion only occupying a small shield in a large field of ornament. The use of printers' marks still continues; indeed, one can hardly take up a book now-a-days without finding the initials of the publishers (who are also frequently the printers) embellishing the title-page in the purest style of nineteenth century art.

The last use of monograms in this country, prior to their recent revival, was upon tradesmen's tokens, where they not unfrequently appear.

So much for the history of the monogram. In a pure monogram, such as those used in contracted writing, the point aimed at, as before remarked, is a saving of lines. But where ornamentation is the object, as in the modern so-called monogram, but more correctly polygram, there is no occasion to save lines, if a more agreeable effect can be produced by using them. Now, it is a fact well known to designers that interlacing lines and

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broken surfaces are pleasing to the eye. Why this is so, can scarcely be explained; but if the fact is admitted, then there can be no reason why we should not gratify the sense of sight by designing polygrams rather than pure monograms. The only pity is that the word should be so loosely used, and that we should persist in speaking of designs which are not monogrammatic, as though they were.

A few words on the principles to be followed in constructing these so-called monograms will appropriately conclude this paper. It is a great fault with the designers of these devices in the present day that they follow no rules, but string together higgledy-piggledy the letters they purpose to honour, and then endeavour to convince themselves that they have elaborated a strikingly beautiful monument of art. It has probably never occurred to them that in order to render such work of the slightest value in an artistic point of view, some principle should dictate it, some idea should pervade it. And if they have not considered this fact, they have probably overlooked another—namely, that a knowledge of principles results from study, and that their successful application is the consequence of ability aided by experience. It is not to be wondered at that persons who have never studied the subject should fail to evolve out of their inner consciousness compositions that will bear examination.

The first requisite in a thing which has to be read is *legibility*. Here we at once join issue with many monogrammatists who are of opinion that the monogram should not be decipherable at the first glance, but that it should involve some sort of puzzle. No doubt, where many letters, as of an entire name, for instance, are interlaced, a momentary bewilderment may be experienced even by the most apt monogram reader. This enigmatical condition, however, should not be sought for by the designer, but rather as much as possible avoided, and the monogram rendered as legible as the materials permit. Also, there should be an *order* in which the letters are to be read, otherwise the same design might stand for A Z and Z A. To this end some rules should be adopted that appeal to the common sense of the reader.

Now, it seems only reasonable, in a language which is read from left to right, that a combination of initials, or of the letters of a name, even though ornamentally written, should be read by the same rule. Hence, we place the letters in our monogram in such a way that the one to be read first is to the left, and so on to the right. Sometimes, as where several letters cluster round the initial J, it is more convenient to draw the monogram so as to read from above downwards.

In monograms containing but two letters, the letters should be of equal size, and the reading is from left to right.

In monograms containing more than two letters, one letter, the most important, generally has more *prominence* given it than the others.

The important letter in an initial monogram is the initial of the surname; in a word-monogram, the initial of the word. Just as we write May, and not maY, so we should, in designing a monogram of this name, make M the prominent letter.

In a name-monogram, the principal letter is to be read first; in an initial monogram, last.

The necessary prominence is obtained by causing the important letter to embrace all the others, or, at all events, the external letters right and left. In order to do this, the letter must be broader than the others; it should also be a trifle longer from above downwards, and somewhat stouter in outline. In illustration of what is meant, take a pencil and a threepenny-piece, and draw round the latter a circle, pressing gently with the pencil. Then move the coin so that it covers rather less than one-third of the first circle, and draw the pencil round it as before. Then take a sixpence, and place it over these two circles, so that the outer edge of one appears as much to the left of the sixpence, as the outer edge of the other appears to its right. Then draw a circle round the sixpence, pressing rather more heavily than before; and on removing the sixpence, a rough monogram of the letters O, O, O will be seen; which will shew what is meant by order and prominence of letters.

The *shape* which the monogram should assume has to be considered. It is the opinion of most monogrammatists that the general outline of the design should have reference to a circumscribing figure, such as an oval or a circle. This is sound doctrine enough if a circular or oval field has to be filled, as in the case of a coin or of a ring. Barclay's designs for marking silver-plate shew well the importance of filling the field, and the advantage to the design when arranged with that object. So, when a button, brooch, scarf-pin, or other article which presents a small circumscribed field has to be ornamented, undoubtedly the design should have reference to the shape of the thing. But when a piece of note-paper, or a soup-tureen, or a chair-back has to be marked, where only a small portion of the field has to be filled, it is out of all question to attempt a design with reference to the outline of the object. Nor need any imaginary circumscribing line, in our opinion, be drawn. If the design is neat and compact, and not straggling, it does not matter, in our view, what shape it assumes, when small on a large field, for the eye does not then connect the circumference of the design with the circumference of the object. Compactness is the only important element. A design which goes flying about all over the place, defeats the intention of covering only a small portion of the field.

The *size* of the monogram, under these circumstances, is a question of individual taste, just as much as the size of the type in which a book is printed. Personally, for note-paper, we like uncial letters; but most people prefer smaller letters.

The *compactness* of the design depends to a great extent on so arranging the spaces between the lines that they shall be nearly equal in area, otherwise the drawing will look crowded in one part and straggling in another. A good deal of practice and ingenuity is required to manage this nicely, so as to avoid the appearance of effort in the contrivance. In addition to this, the letters should be interlocked. This is effected by taking care that in all cases where lines cut each other, the crossing should be over and under alternately. Flourishes and other ornaments may be sparingly introduced, if equality of areas and alternate crossing cannot be compassed without their aid. But it is higher art to contrive the effect of compactness by modifying the letters themselves, lengthening here, widening there, pinching, adding a finial, and so on, to adapt each to its special position. In our opinion, monograms

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cannot be too severely drawn; profusion of ornament makes the composition heavy; ornament should only be allowed where the design *requires* its addition. Experience alone, and what, for want of a better explanation, is called taste, can guide the draughtsman to distinguish between the use and abuse of ornament.

Lastly, a *balance* should be aimed at in the finished work. What constitutes balance can hardly be explained, any more than what constitutes harmony in colouring. It may be replied that certain saturating proportions of the primitive colours satisfy the eye and produce harmony. That is true theoretically; but practically, it is found that in the conceptions of genius there is constant departure from rule, which pleases the educated eye; just as in music an occasional discord, or in poetry a spondaic verse, pleases the educated ear. The same applies to balance in designing. *A* balance may be got by working equally from both sides of a centre, but yet the work may not please the artist's eye. If it does, it is most likely good, whether truly balanced or not. If it displeases such an eye, there is probably some lack of feeling in it; though, possibly, the artist may not be able to point out exactly where the defect lies. But he knows that he would have done it differently.

Reversed letters are totally inadmissible in monograms which are to be read in the ordinary way. If intended to be deciphered by holding before a looking-glass, then a reversed cipher would be in excellent taste. In some cases, as of pierced monograms—as, for instance, in the G.R. on the gates of the Marble Arch—the reversed letters are correct, because there the intention is that the monogram shall be read from either side.

As for *eccentric monograms*, and the unfortunate bee which always creeps in where one of the initials happens to be a B, the less said the better. They are but puns, mostly without even the redeeming quality of humour. The rebus is not a monogram; it is a puzzle *by things* represented; figures or pictures being employed instead of letters. The rebus, as Camden has it, is the device of those who lack other wit to express their conceit.

In making choice of an *alphabet* to work from, whatever period is selected, its leading features must be adhered to, or the harmony of the composition will be marred. Nothing is more distressing than a design which has the appearance of having been commenced in one century and finished in another. As an illustration of the bad effect of mixing styles, take the *chiffre Napoléon*, which is fashionable in Paris. Nothing can be more hideous.

Individuals will, of course, fix on the period they prefer as a basis of operations. In our judgment, no letters are so graceful, none so elastic, and none, therefore, so suited to decorative purposes as those in vogue in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Choice of the alphabet of this period, too, gives the alternative in many instances of using round or square letters, in accordance with the exigences of the design. The round letters are the more elegant, and are more characteristic of the period, and should be used by preference; but the Roman or angular D, E, H, M, N, T, and V, may be introduced without mixing the style.

In monogram dies for stamping note-paper, we prefer the letters to be slender and cut solid. Shading should not be attempted except by experienced hands, possessing an intimate knowledge of the style imitated; and, certainly, all the letters in each design should be alike, whether solid, shaded, or in outline.

ON HER MAJESTY'S SERVICE: SPECIAL.

When I was first appointed one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Machinery, I thought myself a considerable personage. I was but a young man; but it seemed to me that I was set for ever above the troubles, and certainly the dependencies of life; that there was no need to *kotow* to any man, and that, by no possible combination of circumstances, could I ever be 'put in a funk.' It was fated, however, that within a very few months of my appointment, I was to endure a greater fright than I had suffered in my lifetime before; greater than when I was a schoolboy told to 'stay' at Eton (which was the delicate introduction to the flogging-block); and greater than when I went in for my Civil Service examination, choked with dates to the throat-gate. As in the latter case, it was a moral fright, and not a physical one. I was not caught in the machinery which it was my duty to overlook (as has happened to a brother-inspector), and dragged slowly in by the coat-tails to an assortment of cogs and wheels, which I only escaped by the skin—of my teeth; but I am not sure I would not have preferred the brief agony of such a position to the slow mental torture which I did suffer.

When inspectors of machinery were first appointed, many manufacturers resented it exceedingly. They contended that their mill was their castle, and that a tyrannical government had no right whatever to send its minions to pry into their goings on. If the machinery *was* unfenced, and the workmen did occasionally lose limb or life in consequence, that was *their* look-out, not ours. Such misadventures made people all the sharper—that is, those who were left alive. The principle of free trade was invaded by this meddling in its most vital part. England was not worth living in under such a system of espionage; and if it was persevered in, they (for one) would throw up their business, and leave this benighted land. However, as a general rule, they did not throw up their business; they remained where they were, and 'took it out' of the inspectors.

The stories I have had to listen to from Masters with respect to the certain ruin that awaited Trade under such circumstances, would have been terrible, had not the stories of their workpeople concerning matters that had happened, before the law stepped in, in the way of mutilation and death, weighed so much more heavily in the opposite scale. Of course, I was well treated. There are no more hospitable people in the world than your merchant-princes; and the cases were few indeed where those whom it was my duty to visit, and perhaps to rebuke, failed to dissociate me personally from my unwelcome office. Mr Wolfton, however, a great Leeds manufacturer, proved an exception to this rule. He not only

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resented government interference, but mine. He was almost rude to me in the presence of his workmen; and not content with expressing himself very strongly upon the 'unfenced machinery' question, actually addressed to me, from his country-house, a letter, couched in the same violent terms, which I had the honour to receive some days afterwards at my residence in London. I wrote him, as it was my duty to do, a temperate and reasonable reply; but his epistle tickled me excessively, and happening to be corresponding that day with my college friend, Jack Rawlings, who has a very keen sense of humour, I epitomised Mr Wolfton's communication for his benefit, adding a few lively comments of my own!

There was not the least harm in my doing so, of course. It was a 'privileged communication.' It would be hard indeed if one might not discuss the character of our fellow-creatures with one's friend. Mr W. himself would scarcely have expected that I should write to Jack about unfenced machinery and the natural rights of employers of labour as I did to him. But it was essential not to *put the two letters in the wrong envelopes.*

Let me here adjure any young hand at business who may read this dreadful story, never to begin a second letter until he has finished the first, and placed it in its properly directed envelope. In the days of sand-bottles, the saving of time might have been some object; but by help of the blotting-paper, the time that may be lost in arranging matters in their right order is so infinitesimal, that it should always be done. For only imagine the risk that may be run if you do otherwise! You may be ordering hearth-rugs of your correspondent at Cape Coast, and trying to import ivory and gold-dust from Manchester. Your African agent will, of course, imagine you are making heartless jokes upon his climate; and your Lancashire friend—who makes millions out of old bones and devil's-dust—will resent your pleasantry as still more offensive. But even then you will not have made such a mistake as *I* made. It would have been the height of rudeness in any man to have written such a letter as I was involuntarily sending to the magnate of Leeds; but in an official—an inspector! I protest that even at this distance of time it makes me damp to think of it. You will ask me, perhaps, how was it that I came to know that I *had* put the letters into their wrong envelopes? I can scarcely answer that question satisfactorily in a logical sense; all I know is, the fact flashed upon me hours afterwards, as I sat in my office in Whitehall, and I felt at once as certain that it had occurred as I did of my own existence. I cast one agonised glance at the clock, and saw that it was not yet four—that there was an hour and a half before the country mails left the receiving-office in Bayswater, and I called a Hansom, and drove thither at top-most speed.

Yes, I remembered it all now; my quiet but firmly expressed communication to Mr Wolfton had been laid on the right hand of my desk to dry, but the envelope addressed to him I had tossed to the left; then I had scribbled off my facetious letter to Jack, and addressed *his* envelope; then, without enclosing either letter, I had fallen into 'a brown-study,' a dream of college-life, with its palmy days of friendship and careless joy; and then—mechanically—I had folded up the letters, and put them each into the nearest envelope, which was the wrong one. That was how I worked it all out in my head, as I flew through the air in that rapid Hansom; but however the thing had come to pass, I felt quite sure that it had done so; the means were now of little moment, but the consequences? For one thing, I should lose my inspectorship—that was a dead certainty; for another, I should lose Louisa. Upon the strength of my appointment, I had ventured to propose to the very dearest girl in all the world—so dear, that her father could hardly be induced to part with her to me, even at the considerable figure which I was then able to command; and now, or at least in a few days, if I could not stop that letter, I should be almost penniless. How I cursed the 'facilities' afforded by the perfection of our post-office system! The idea of that letter, now lying in its drawer at Beak Street, Bayswater, being at Shoddy Hall in Yorkshire—Mr Wolfton's country residence—at seven A.M. next morning, was almost insupportable. Fortunately, the envelope was an official one; O.H.M.S. was printed on the left-hand corner of it; and on this circumstance I greatly relied. I had only to explain, I thought, that I was an official personage, and that that letter was *my* letter, to get it back again out of the post. I was soon undeceived, however, upon this point. The head of the little postal establishment at Beak Street would not even so much as let me look at it. Under that long white bib—for he was a grocer, and wore one—beat the heart of a true patriot. He was there, he said, to do his 'dooty;' a certain grave charge had been assigned to him, under conditions, and he was not the man to break faith. 'But, my good sir,' urged I, 'I am really the person I represent myself to be. You can come to Whitehall with me, and satisfy yourself of that fact. I am in the Queen's service, like yourself—and I shall make a point of representing in the proper quarter how resolutely you have stood by your regulations. But there is a point beyond which Determination becomes Obstinacy. To refuse me this letter is to obstruct the Public Good.'

'Sir,' replied the intrepid wretch, 'if the Queen herself, in person, was to say to me: "Mr Binks, I've made a mistake, and dropped a letter into your box as ought not to go," I shouldn't let her have it back again. "Parliament may do it, ma'am," I should say to her; "and it is to parliament as you must apply; Binks has not the power."'

I was desperate by this time, for it only wanted twenty minutes of the mail leaving, and I took out of my purse a five-pound note, and looked at him significantly.

I saw that there was an inward struggle in his British heart, and whispered, like another Mephistopheles: 'I will give you Ten.'

'It's as much as my place is worth,' said the little man, with a sigh, 'though nobody likes "turning away money" less than I do. I can't do it. And let me tell you, sir,' added he, with genuine dignity, 'it's a mean thing in a gentleman, as you profess yourself to be, to tempt a poor man like this.'

I honoured him in my heart, though I also felt I could have strangled him on the spot.

'You are as incorruptible,' said I bitterly, 'as Robespierre.'

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This evidently pleased and flattered him. 'Anything that I can do for you, sir,' said he, 'without prejudice to the public service, I am sure I shall be most happy. Any information'——

'What offices will this Yorkshire letter have to pass through?' inquired I, with a sudden gleam of hope.

The little man produced his postal books at once. 'It will leave the mail-train, sir, at Dodgely Junction, where it will be stamped; then it will go by mail-cart to Milbeck, which must be a small village, for there are no post-office orders issued at it.'

With this meagre help I was obliged to be content, and I resolved at once to go by that mail-train. There was still time, of course, by paying extra postage, to send a letter of apology to Shoddy Hall, which should arrive coincidently with my unfortunate despatch; but I felt that that would be worse than useless. Mr Wolfton was not the man to accept an apology; he was rather the man to come up by special train to lay his case before my superiors, and avenge his outraged dignity at all hazards: he was rather the man to rise in his place in parliament (for he was an M.P.), and denounce me as the insolent minion of a tyrannical government; and I seemed to see him doing it, with that suicidal letter in his clenched right hand.

I started by the mail-train that night, with my thoughts as burglariously fixed upon the post-office van, as though I was a second 'Jem the Penman,' bent on a bullion-robbery: but, of course, *that* was not in my programme. Notwithstanding my failure in Beak Street, I determined to try my luck with the Dodgely postmaster; a provincial official was more likely to be acted on by a semblance of authority, and was I not on Her Majesty's service, travelling special to stop a letter with O.H.M.S. in the corner of its address?

It was five o'clock in the morning when I arrived at the Junction, and a more dismal spot it was impossible to imagine; the Dodgely mail-bags had a carriage provided for them, but there was none for me. I ran after it wildly for a mile and a half, and reached the post-office within a minute or two of their arrival, hot and panting—though it was in the depth of winter. They would have thought me mad, had I gone in as I was, so I staid outside to cool body and mind, suspiciously eyed by a rural policeman. Then I rang the bell, and demanded to see the postmaster. That official himself, in dressing-gown and slippers, opened the door. 'I am come on particular busi'——

'Can't see you now, sir,' interrupted he curtly, 'whatever it is; we're sorting the mails.'

He would have slammed to the door, but I thrust my umbrella in, and prevented that. 'It is about the mails that I am here,' said I. 'I have come down special from London, on Her Majesty's Service. There has been a letter sent by mistake.'

'Have you an order from the postmaster-general?'

'Yes—at least not exactly.'

He would not hear another word. It is my belief that he thought I was a person of bad character.

'You had best be off,' he said, and he looked significantly at the policeman. It was most humiliating to an assistant-inspector of machinery. But I took his advice, and went off—to the inn. Everybody was in bed, of course; but I knocked them up, exhibited a purse full of sovereigns, and ordered a post-chaise-and-four to Milbeck. This was eight miles off; and the mail-cart rattled through the empty streets before my horses were brought out. It would have been shorter work to have taken a gig, but I trusted to my four horses to produce an impression. We did the eight miles in three-quarters of an hour, and met the mail-cart coming out of the village.

The Milbeck post-office was also an establishment for the sale of children's toys, half-penny balls of string, starch, cheap periodicals, and lollipops. It was kept by a widow woman of about eighty, and excessively deaf. She did not even hear the thunder of my equipage-and-four as it dashed up to her humble dwelling. But she could see with tolerable distinctness, and when her attention was drawn to my turn-out by her daughter and assistant, she ejaculated: 'Lord ha' mercy!'

'Madam,' said I, with a lofty air, 'I have been despatched by Her Majesty the Queen to recover a communication which has been sent by mistake by this morning's mail. Your letters, I see—for they were all lying in a heap on the little counter—have not as yet been delivered.'

'No, sir, no: you may take your pick on 'em, I'm sure.'

'Not at all, madam,' said I. 'I am not empowered to do that.' For it began to strike me for the first time that I might be getting into as great a hobble for meddling with 'the property of Her Majesty's Postmaster-general,' as for outraging the dignity of the proprietor of Shoddy Hall. The old lady, on the other hand, could get into no trouble, through being imposed on by so authoritative a messenger; and even if she lost her post, I had only to pension her and her daughter for their natural lives. 'The letter, madam, which I have to request you to hand over is enclosed (as I am instructed) in an official envelope, with O.H.M.S in the corner.'

'Here it is, mother,' cried the younger woman; and the old lady fortunately snatched it out of her hand before she could read the address, and put it into mine, as though it had contained some explosive substance. 'It wasn't *my* fault,' pleaded she, 'as it got there, I'm sure.'

'No, madam, no; you are not to blame in the affair at all,' observed I, in a tone of patronage, as I placed the precious missive in my breast-pocket. 'What pretty toys you have, and what exceedingly tempting lollipops! I must take some back to my young friends at home.'

I invested five shillings in those two articles of commerce, thereby buying up almost her entire stock, and then the old lady and I parted upon the best of terms. As I left the shop, I heard her say to her daughter: 'Now, Eliza*beth*, make haste with the squire's letters; you know what a caddel he makes if they beant sent over to the lodge at once.'

So it really had been a very narrow shave indeed.

I wonder my hair didn't turn gray during these dreadful twelve hours, and I shall never forget the worry and anxiety I suffered during them as long as I live. But the worst of it was, when I came to look into the epistle, about which I had been put in such a state, I found that I had placed Mr Wolfton's letter in the right envelope after all! My alarm had been entirely without foundation; I

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had travelled one hundred and sixty miles by railway, hired a carriage-and-four, and bought half a shopful of toys and lollipops—and all for nothing.

KEEPING CHRISTMAS.

Your true Briton is an inconsistent creature. At home, nothing pleases him better than running down things English, and grumbling that they manage this, that, and the other much better abroad. Send him abroad, and he is never so happy as when exhibiting his native habits for the behoof of benighted foreigners. The very man who votes Christmas a bore, its customs out of date, and partakes of its pudding under protest, if Christmas-bound in some land where holly is unknown, and the proper purpose of mistletoe ignored, will move heaven and earth to keep his Christmas after the manner of Englishmen, taxing his resources and exhausting his wits to obtain a plum-pudding for his Christmas-day's dinner. Whether he be freezing in the icy regions of the arctic zone, or sweltering in the heat of tropical sunshine, however incongruous his surroundings, the coming round of the great feast brings with it a hearty desire to celebrate it duly; and if he cannot contrive to do so exactly home-fashion, he makes himself as merry as circumstances allow, congratulating himself, like Mark Tapley, on being jolly under difficulties.

In this spirit did our soldiers keep Christmas-day in Abyssinia, with the thermometer at seventy-five in the shade, tying bunches of fir and what green branches they could get to the poles of their tents, as substitutes for more orthodox evergreens. Mr Henty, who dined with the officers of the Third Native Infantry, was quite satisfied with his entertainment. Two enormous fir-branches hung aloft, beneath which the dinner-party made themselves comfortable upon chairs and boxes of every possible height; one man's chin appearing just above the table—said table consisting of packing-case lids—while his neighbour had his knees on a level with his plate. The guests brought their own plates, knives, forks, and drinking-ware, so that the table when set out had the merit of variety at least: enamelled iron, tin, pewter, glass, and crockery, all putting in an appearance. As to the provender, there was enough and to spare—spur-fowls, guinea-fowls, venison, mutton, and—sole representative of traditional dishes—a joint of roast beef. Beer there was none, not a single bottle being procurable in the camp; but each diner had a bottle of champagne to himself, so that, all things considered, the feast was not unworthy of the season.

Thanks to General Muddle, the Crimean Christmas of 1854 was anything but what it ought and might have been; and the knowledge that plenty of good things had been provided by thoughtful hearts at home, but which were anywhere but where they were wanted, did not add to the merriment of our poor overworked, under-fed army; and although some desperate efforts were made to be jolly on dreary outposts and in uncomfortable trenches, they only resulted in miserable failure. The following Christmas was doubly enjoyable by comparison. The stubborn fortress had fallen at last to its more stubborn assailants; habit had deprived frost and snow of their terrors, and every hut ran over with hams, preserves, vegetables, and mysterious tins, till it resembled a grocer's store. The valleys of Miskomia, too, were rich in mistletoe, to be had for the trouble of gathering; but few cared to undergo that trouble for the sake of what only reminded them of unattainable sweets, and made them sigh for the girls they had left behind them.

The saviours of our Indian empire were nearly cheated out of their Christmas. The army was encamped at Intha, within sight of Nepaul, waiting for the rain to clear off and the tents to dry, ere it moved on to drive the sepoys into the Raptee. The skies cleared on Christmas-morning, and Lord Clyde was for marching at once, but relented in time to save the men's puddings from being spoiled—not only relented, but himself gave a Christmas banquet, at which the favoured guests sat down to well-served tables, laden with barons of beef, turkeys big enough to draw a gig, grass-fed mutton, game, fish, truffled fowls, and all the triumphs of the French cuisine—plum-puddings and mince-pies not being forgotten. To allay the thirst such substantial fare created, appeared beakers of pale ale from Burton and Glasgow; porter from London and Dublin; champagne, moselle, sherry, and old port, 'rather bothered by travelling twenty miles a day on camel-back.' Following the chief's example, each regiment had a glorious spread, and throughout the wide expanse of tents sounds of merry rejoicing were heard long after the shades of night descended.

The blue-jackets are generally better hands than the red-coats at improvising a jollification—Jack at anyrate does not take his pleasure sadly. The gallant bands that have from time to time gone forth to a bloodless campaign in the icy north, have always managed to keep their Christmas right joyously. Certainly they could not complain of uncongenial skies or unseasonable temperatures; while, so far as snow and ice are necessary to thorough enjoyment, the supply in the arctic regions is on a scale sufficient to satisfy the most ardent admirer of an old-fashioned Christmas. The frozen-in Investigators under M'Clure kept their first arctic Christmas soberly, cheerfully, and in good fellowship, round tables groaning with good cheer, in the shape of Sandwich Island beef, musk veal from the Prince of Wales's Strait, mince-meat from England, splendid preserves from the Green Isle, and dainty dishes from Scotland. Every one talked of home, and speculated respecting the doings of the dear ones there; and healths were drunk, not omitting those of their fellow-labourers sauntering somewhere in the regions about, but how near or how far away none could tell. When the festival came round again, the *Investigator* and *Enterprise* were alone in their glory, and they were separated by miles of frozen sea; but they had solved the great problem. On board the *Investigator*, frost-bound in the Bay of Mercy, things went as merry as the proverbial marriage-bell. After divine service, everybody took a constitutional on the ice until dinner-time; then the officers sat down to a meal of which the *pièce de résistance* was a haunch of Banks' Island reindeer, weighing twenty pounds, with fat two inches thick, and a most delicious flavour; while the crew were regaling upon venison and other good things, double allowance of grog included; and dinner discussed, dancing, singing, and skylarking filled up the holiday hours till bedtime; the fun being kept up with unflagging humour, and with such propriety withal as to make their leader wish the anxious folks at home could

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have witnessed the scene created amidst so many gloomy influences, by the crew of a ship after two years' sojourn in those ice-bound regions upon their own resources. Another Christmas found the brave fellows still confined in their snowy prison; but their table boasted plum-pudding rich enough for arctic appetites, Banks' Land venison, Mercy Bay hare-soup, ptarmigan pasties, and musk-ox beef—hung-beef, surely, seeing it had been dangling in the rigging above two years. The poets among the men wrote songs making light of the hardships they had endured; the painters exhibited pictures of past perils; comic actors were not wanting; and the whole company, casting all anxiety to the winds, enjoyed themselves to the utmost.

Sir Edward Belcher was waked up at midnight on Christmas-eve, to hear his gallant crew sing a Christmas ode of their own concoction:

Awake, awake! the Old Year's going:
Time flies apace;
Awake, awake! the New Year's coming
To take the old one's place.

Arise, arise! good shipmates all,
And do not danger fear;
Arise, arise! good shipmates all,
To welcome the New Year.

God bless our brave old commodore,
And our good commander too;
Not forgetting all our officers,
And our true and gallant crew.

Sleep on again, and on your brows
May oft repose be seen!
Sleep on again, while in our lay
We 'll sing, God bless the Queen!

They had begun their celebration of the holiday season by making the shortest day still shorter by a performance in the 'Queen's Arctic Theatre,' the programme consisting of a comedy and an act of *Hamlet*, in which one amateur played Laertes and the Ghost; and another, more ambitious yet, doubled the parts of Hamlet and the lady of his love. They finished by drinking Victoria's health in some of her own port, and doing justice to a joint of Her Majesty's own beef, with sundry adjuncts suitable to the occasion.

But in the matter of comestibles, the Christmas show made on board the little *Fox* stands alone in arctic experiences. The ship's tables were laid out like a confectioner's counters: here piles of apple and gooseberry tarts, there pyramids of sponge and plum cakes, divided attention with puffs of divers sorts, and cakes and loaves of every size and shape; delicacies set off by a background of nicely browned hams, meat-pies, and cheese. In the afternoon, the officers were enticed to join the men; and later on, Captain M'Clintock himself joined the party, and found them all perfectly sober, singing songs in turn, and in the best of humours with themselves and all the world. They were destined to spend a second Christmas amid the same scenes, but amid weather considerably worse—with a fierce north-wester howling through the rigging, the snow-drift rustling swiftly by, and the thermometer ranging between seventy-six and eighty degrees below freezing-point. But these trivialities did not affect their nerves or their enjoyment; and if they could not display such well-garnished tables as before, they contrived, by judicious setting out, to make a show formidable enough to support the delusion all were anxious to impose upon themselves—namely, that they were in a land of plenty—in fact, all *but* at home.

The plucky explorers of the North-west Passage by land had considerable difficulty in satisfying their desire to be jolly in the jolly season of the year. Lord Milton dared the dreary dangers of a journey through the snow to join a Christmas party at Fort Carlton; spending his Christmas-eve companionless and uncheerily over a supper of pemmican and galette. He might have enjoyed plum-pudding with his comrade Cheadle and his faithful La Ronde, for Canadian friends had supplied them with the ingredients; but Lord Milton's modesty would not then allow him to try his culinary skill in such a serious matter. Dr Cheadle, however, naturally envious of his companion's Christmasing, at last worried him into hazarding the attempt. The doctor's strong box was opened; and with some trouble, the precious materials were separated from the loose shot, tobacco, soap, and other undesirable matters with which they had ill-naturedly fraternised. The pudding was made, tied up in a cloth, and put in the pot. Oblivious of the saying, 'A watched pot never boils,' the anxious pair concentrated all their attention upon the progress of their dainty dish towards perfection. Let the doctor speak for them. 'Many a time was it taken out, and its state examined by point of fork before it was, at last, after boiling all day, pronounced thoroughly cooked. We had a brace of prairie-chickens also, but all interest was centered in the pudding. No one who has not been restricted to one species of food for a long time can form any idea of the greedy eyes with which we viewed that plum-pudding. It proved delicious beyond all anticipation, in spite of certain drawbacks in the shape of caps, buckshot, and fragments of tobacco. We had fondly hoped to finish it all at one sitting; but it was a very Brobdingnagian pudding, and we were reluctantly compelled to leave a portion unconsumed. We passed the night somewhat restlessly, partly caused, perhaps, by the indigestible character of our evening meal, but principally from impatience for the morning to arrive, that we might repeat the delights of the previous evening. When day began to break, each watched the movements of the other with anxious distrust; and before it was fairly light, both jumped out of bed at the same moment, each fearing he might lose his share of the delicious breakfast. Never did schoolboy view with such sincere regret the disappearance of his last morsel of cake, as we felt when sighing over the last mouthful of that unequalled plum-pudding!'

Mr Whymper, who could think of no better way of expending his superfluous energy than by taking a trip to what was until lately Russian America, had to put up with a Christmas dinner in which the pudding was conspicuous by its absence, a circumstance not to be wondered at, considering that Uncle Sam's latest territorial acquisition has yet attained but a moderate pitch of civilisation. Mr Whymper had the advantage of pleasant company, and sat down with a gay, free-hearted French Canadian, a jolly New Brunswicker, and an enthusiastic naturalist hailing from Boston, fully determined to do justice to the feast provided by his clever Indian cook. A big log-fire blazed in the oven, the room was decorated

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with spruce-fir boughs, flags and Indian trading goods, and the table tastefully set out with iron mess-kettles, tin platters, and cups. The 'high-toned and elegant-natured' repast consisted of soup *à la Yukon*, arctic grouse, Alaska reindeer meat, Nulato cranberry sauce, Californian preserved peas and tomatoes, dried apple-pudding, gingerbread, iced cheese, coffee, tea, and iced water; followed by rum punch (limited), and pipes, songs, and recitations *ad libitum*. Doubtless, each one of the merry quartet had spent less cheerful Christmases than that celebrated on the banks of the broad, frost-bound Yukon, blessed with only a couple of hours' sunlight in a winter day.

Very different were the surroundings of Mr Hutchinson when he passed his Christmas in the Soledad Valley of El Chaco. Misanthropical folks, he says, might imagine, from the name of the locality, that it was something worse than a Christmas in Newgate, or at the bottom of a coal-mine; but although his party of eighty was composed of men from all nations of the world, the happy family inside the bars at Charing Cross might have learned a lesson from them. The travellers encamped in a pretty spot overlooking a well-timbered valley. Here and there stood out the tents of the soldiers; round one fire reclined groups of guachos, sipping their 'maté;' the soldiers chatted and smoked round another; while Mr Hutchinson and his friends sat outside the principal tent, recalling the memories of past festivals while busy preparing for doing due honour to the present. The thermometer was at 100 degrees Fahrenheit, and not a drop of fresh water was to be had, while snow and ice only existed in the thirsty imagination. However, a good dinner afforded some consolation, and every justice was done to a magnificent piece of beef cooked camp fashion, with the skin on, an omelet of ostrich eggs, and a perfect beauty of a plum-pudding. It was too hot to toast healths in wine or brandy, so their good wishes were washed down with dirty water, sucked through a patent filter.

Mr Bates spent many Christmases in South America, but says little about his own manner of holiday-making, giving us, however, a picture of Christmas at Serpa, on the Lower Amazons, where the ceremonies observed are those taught by the Jesuit missionaries a hundred years ago to the aborigines they induced to settle there. In the morning, all the feminine population turned out, dressed in white chemises and showy calico petticoats, went in procession round the town, picking up on their way the stewards of the festival, who carried long white reeds decorated with gay ribbons as tokens of their office. In front of the procession marched three old squaws, carrying a large semicircular frame, covered with cotton, and studded with bits of looking-glass, ornaments, and finery. This, the 'sairé,' they danced up and down to the accompaniment of a monotonous whining hymn; turning round now and again to face their followers, who immediately came to a halt. This sairé is said to have originated in a device of the Jesuits, who found the savages would follow a mirror anywhere for the pleasure of viewing their own sweet selves magically reflected, and took advantage of the weakness to entice the natives into church—the destination of the procession we have described.

In the evening, revelry, boisterous but good-humoured, was the rule of the place; the negroes singing and dancing to the music of the drum and the caracasha; the drum being a hollow log, having one end covered with skin, played by the performer straddling it, and drumming with his knuckles; the other instrument being merely a notched bamboo tube, producing a harsh rattling noise by the passing of a hard stick over the notches. The Indians could not get up a dance on their own account for lack of ladies, the pretty girls they would have liked as partners being carried off by the whites for their ball; while the old squaws preferred looking on, to exercising their own grace and agility, leaving their husbands who were dancing bent to join the negroes. But the redskins generally preferred getting drunk, which they did in a wonderfully short time, becoming amazingly voluble under the operation. Negroes and Indians, when reproached for their liquoring-up propensities, replied that they only got drunk at one end of the town while the whites were getting drunk at the other; an excuse more truthful than satisfactory.

A certain young man about town once forsook the sweet shady side of Pall Mall for the sake of smoking his cigar in savage Africa; but when Christmas came, he was seized with a desire to spend it in Christian company, and this is how he did spend it: 'We English once possessed the Senegal; and there, every Christmas-eve, the Feast of Lanterns used to be held. The native women picked up the words and airs of the carols; the custom had descended to the Gambia, and even to the Casemanche, where it is still preserved. A few minutes after I had ridden up, sounds of music were heard, and a crowd of blacks came to the door, carrying the model of a ship made of paper, and illuminated within; and hollowed pumpkins, also lighted up for the occasion. Then they sang some of our dear old Christmas carols, and among others, one which I had heard years ago one Christmas-eve at Oxford:

> Nowel, Nowel, the angels did say,
> To certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay—
> In fields as they lay keeping their sheep,
> One cold winter's night, which was so deep.
> Nowel, Nowel, Nowel, Nowel,
> Born is the King of Israel.

You can imagine with what feelings I listened to those simple words, sung by negresses who knew not a phrase of English besides. You can imagine what recollections they called up, as I sat under an African sky, the palm-trees rustling above my head, and the crocodiles moaning in the river beyond. I thought of the snow lying thick upon the ground; of the keen, clear frosty air. I thought of the ruddy fire which would be blazing in a room I knew; and of those young faces which would be beaming still more brightly by its side; I thought of—oh, of a hundred things, which I can laugh at now, because I am in England, but which, in Africa, made me more wretched than I can well express.'

Next day, sadness and sentiment gave way, for a while at least, to more prosaical feelings. When Mr Reade sat down to his Christmas-dinner, he must have wished, with Macbeth, 'May good digestion wait on appetite,' as he contemplated the fare awaiting discussion, and to which a boar's head grinned a welcome. Snails from France, oysters torn from trees, gazelle cutlets, stewed

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iguana, smoked elephant, fried locusts, manati-breasts, hippopotamus steaks, boiled alligator, roasted crocodile eggs, monkeys on toast, land-crabs, and African soles, carp, and mullet—detestable in themselves, but triumphant proof of the skill of the cook—furnished forth the festival-table, in company with potatoes, plantains, pine-apples, oranges, papaws, bananas, and various fruits rejoicing in extraordinary shapes, long native names, and very nasty flavours; and last, but not least, palm-cabbage stewed in white sauce, 'the ambrosia of the gods,' and a bottle of good Bordeaux at every man's elbow. When evening came, Mr Reade and a special friend sought the river: 'The rosy wine had rouged our yellow cheeks, and we lay back on the cushions, and watched the setting sun with languid, half-closed eyes. Four men, who might have served as models to Apelles, bent slowly to their stroke, and murmured forth a sweet and plaintive song. Their oars, obedient to their voice, rippled the still water, and dropped from their blades pearls, which the sun made rubies with its rays. Two beautiful girls, who sat before us in the bow, raised their rounded arms and tinkled their bracelets in the air. Then, gliding into the water, they brought us flowers from beneath the dark bushes, and kissed the hands which took them, with wet and laughing lips. Like a dark curtain, the warm night fell upon us; strange cries arose from the forest; beasts of the waters plunged around us, and my honest friend's hand pressed mine.' And Christmas-day was over. We might seek long for a stranger contrast to an Englishman's Christmas at home, although—to adapt some seasonable lines—

Where'er
An English heart exists to do and dare,
Where, amid Afric sands, the lion roars,
Where endless winter chains the silent shores,
Where smiles the sea round coral islets bright,
Where Brahma's temples sleep in glowing light—
In every spot where England's sons may roam,
Dear Christmas-tide still speaks to them of Home!

A CHEAP MARKET.

On a spot, in London, that was once butter-cupped field and daisied meadow, there is still held a weekly market. Brooks bubbled on there, not so very long ago; trees whispered; kine sunned themselves, and looked wise and weighty over their quiet chew. For that matter, trees are even yet not so very far away; near waters still give back a darkened picture of the sky; and by the side of them, sheep still keep the grass well cropped, and they and their lambs answer each other with their tender and melancholy baa. It is true that the grass is cut away there with a prematurity that is ugly if it is not sad; that the brook has been so widened, and shallowed, and 'ornamented,' its water does not flow much ever, and has little ripple on it, save when tiny men and women stab at its thick and glassy face with a heavily planted stone. It is true, in short, that we call these few acres of land Park. Park—that means Nature so much deteriorated, it has turned sullen, and shews other colours than it should, out of deep spite. But, though this slice of the country has been caught thus—imprisoned, trapped, bottled up (it might be), as a specimen of what wood, and herbage, and running rivers are, under a high heaven and a pure air—it *is* a hint of what used to be there; and whilst it lingers, the memory of the green slopes and lowly hills that London stands on cannot entirely pass by. But for the market!—the little clustering-place where maids took their butter, where farmers carried their hay and cattle, where fruit and fowls, and eggs and geese, were spread invitingly, under the shadow almost of the homesteads they had come from, and certainly with the fragrance of flowers about them, and the fleeting chirp of birds in the clear sky—it is *so* unlike the thing it used to be, that the most imaginative person might be defied to recognise it. Where there was once a placid cheapening, there is now a pandemonian din. Where there were once the dazzle of snow-white dairy-cloths, and the savouriness of butter-women's rosy cheeks, there are now such dirt and squalor, such a curious and unhandsome mixture of wares and produce, the marvel is what the needs are that bring them there, and what sort of a living the venders can hope for, even if they find purchasers for all they so strangely bring.

Going to this market a few days before Christmas, a sketch was made of what was heard and seen there. There was much fun, some pathos, and such a great deal of what was strange and suggestive, that it was an interesting study. The interest begins, indeed, before the market is quite reached. It lies in a nest of small streets, inhabited by the poor people who use it; and reminiscences of long-left country homes exist there on first and second story window-sills, where mimic field-rails are put up as balcony, with cross-bar gate, and a tiny layer of grass, and wooden toy-cows to seem to nibble it; so that *only* the sun and air, and peace and rustic indolence, may be lacking to make the thing complete. Hawkers, too, pass through these streets on their way to the loud and dirty market; not filling them with their tearing cries, as they would on any other day, but trundling on in silent file, a poor famished set, the most of them; their wives, with burst shoes and draggle-tails, trudging faithfully beside them through the mud, to take their share in the day's cold toil.

It is not all toil, either, as may be seen the moment the market itself is entered. A good feeling exists among the dealers, who give each other quiet nods or vocal how-d'ye-does. Some have their usual stand-places, and go to them, without any elbowing or strife from those around; some help each other to unpack their cheap goods, or look on with interest and pleasure as the articles are carefully revealed. ''Ave a tatur, Jim?' one young fellow tenderly offered to another—just because Jim was dejected and disconsolate. 'Come on!' said a peep-show man to a dealer at his side. 'You may look at 'em if you like! *I* sha'n't charge you!' And he pulled his little strings for the behoof of his neighbour, omitting only the *pomposo* narrative he would have ground out to those who paid him for it with a small copper coin. 'How's business? Doin' much?' a second dealer inquired kindly of a third. 'No,' was the answer, in confidence and gratitude. 'Dead low.' 'Ah!' verified the other, 'so *I* find. Wouldn't a come if I'd a known.' This was, indeed, a statement heard on all sides. It was a general verdict; though Heaven knows

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where the subsistence of the utterers would have come from, if they had stayed away. One blind man was particularly certain that the market would have been *minus* him. He was a large, old, sandy-coloured individual, well known in London streets, and he confided his decision to a smooth, young, dark-haired woman, standing immediately at his side. *He* sold stay and boot laces; *she*, children's little flags for Christmas-trees; and both cried out their wares at stated intervals, like half or quarter minute guns.

'Ape-neach—toup-enny!' let off the old man. And then he bent his head a little towards his fleshy lady-friend. 'You only took *what?*' was his question, as chatty as anybody. And then in his bleat or blur: 'Ape-neach—toup-enny!' and immediately after: '*How* much did you say?'

The woman held her flags up on high (they were stuck into a great raw turnip, by way of a convenient and inexpensive pincushion), and she screamed their price out: 'Six a penny!' in a thin shrill shriek. And then she confided to the old man, quite lowly and placidly, that fifteen shillings had been her 'takings,' but that to-day she had taken nothing at all.

'Ah!' went the old man. 'Ape-neach—toup-enny! Too bad, isn't it? Only wish I'd a known it! Ape-neach—toup-enny! You wouldn't a got *me* from home!'

Some of the dealers looked, like the blind man, melancholy over their no-trade; others seemed made by it more loquacious, and gained by their loquacity a well-merited reward. Indeed, if speech were not silver here, it brought in copper, and to call silence golden was an egregious mistake. Those who asked had, in this strange community; and those who did not ask were supposed not to want, and were heedlessly passed by. The most successful man by far in this day's sale was one who kept the part of the market where he stood alive with his merry talk. He sold strips of muslin with holes punched in them for embroidery, and he vaunted these up to the leaden and near-hanging sky.

'This way, buyers!' he cried out, as if he were herald of a show. 'Here you are, buyers! This way! This way! Only a penny! Just look! Did you *ever* see such stuff as this for a penny! Take 'em round the market—and if—you—can—bring—me *one* stamped on a better muslin than this, I'll give you sixpence! Now, go round the market! It's all you've got to do!'

Of course, the bystanders did *not* go round the market; and of course the embroidery-man knew they wouldn't. Precisely as he had calculated, they thronged round his table, they lifted up his wares and felt them, they held them between their finger and thumb, looked up, looked down, and finally put their hands in their pockets for their money.

'Sold!' the man shrieked out, in a frenzy of delight. 'Sold again! Sold! Lor! This way, buyers! This way! Look here! Three strips, threepence; two strips, twopence; four strips, fourpence; quite right. Sold!'

Immediately behind him was another noteworthy man. Immediately behind him were *two* men, would have been, however, a better description, for they performed their business as a duet of advertiser and master, though the brilliance of him who advertised quite paled the owner's fire. He was about forty—tall, strong, fine; so eloquent, he never once faltered for a word; so well educated, he used every word properly, with precisely the emphasis required. How on earth he was there *en cette galère*, was the puzzling question. His *galère*, or rather his master's, was a well-to-do one, too. It was a bright, glossy, and well-lamped dog-cart;' the horse (a good one, and in excellent condition) taken out, the shafts set up against a wall of wagons, and itself serving as a rostrum or stage. On this stood the speaker, in good clothing, and before a good audience (for the sort of thing and the place), and there he held forth.

'I am here again,' he began, in a loud clear voice, 'to tell you of the virtues of my friend the doctor. I am here again, to make you the same little drawing that I made before.' Black board handed up here by the medical man in question. 'You know quite well that a man has lungs'—a chalk curve put down—'and that if any foreign substance gets in those lungs'—more chalking, and a lung getting well defined—'it makes us coff We call this coff sometimes a cold'—more chalking—'and we think nothing of it; but, my friends, cold produces coff, coff proceeds to asthma, asthma entails consumption, and consumption brings on death! Now, my friend, Dr Dulcamara, here'—bottle of medicine with wonderful alacrity and precision handed up—'understands this coff so well, he has produced something that will cure it as soon as it has come. The price for this size that I hold in my hand is sixpence. Sixpence! Good Heavens, friends, I am speaking surely in a country where there is *no* coff! where there is *no* lung-disease! *no* asthma! *no* consumption! Why, friends, three-fifths of the people in this country die every year of lung-disease! There is no end to the diseases of the lungs of humanity, and these fall beneath this medicine like the summer leaf before the autumn wind! Ah, perhaps you are not prepared!'—Small box of lozenges handed up with the same miraculous co-action.—'Here are lozenges from the same herbs; hyssop, ground-ivy, marsh-mallows, sugar, honey; and the price of these is only a penny a box—a penny a box. If the dear child at your breast has the hooping-coff, give it one of these, and it will be well directly.'—A few pennies handed in here to the medical man, who exchanges them for lozenge-packets promptly and silently.—'Here are your lungs, my friends'—more chalking—'and here is the tube that leads to them. You must be aware'—of a quantity of fresh facts well elucidated, during the enumeration of which more pennies poured in, and Dr Dulcamara looked sharply out for the gathering of a larger harvest of pennies still.

To this great man there was a rival. A poor puny one, it must be confessed; one relying on getting rid of *his* cough-lozenges, not by elocution, but by the display of a boldly-executed oil-colour picture. This shewed an attenuated man dying of a 'pulmonic cough,' and then (after swallowing a lozenge) swollen to Banting-like proportions, and clapping everybody hilariously on the back. But this pictorial mode of appealing to the public failed. The evidence might be crushing, but the lozenge-boxes remained in their little piles hour after hour, and were scarcely once disturbed. Better far, was the clear conclusion from this, a mouthful of the most arrant trash, so that it were

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but uttered, and uttered loudly. Never let your tongue be still; no, not a minute.

So indeed thought a crockery-seller in the same avenue of the market. 'Sort 'em out! Sort 'em out! Sort 'em out!' was his cry. 'Here you are, ladies! Half-price to-day!' and he was so impressed with the importance of a jingle, he filled up all his pauses with the rattle of plates and cups, and gave his upheld dishes a testificatory ring. A neighbour of his understood the world just as well. 'Don't go away, ladies!' went his perpetual *reveillé*. We're bound to serve you well, ladies! Don't go away!' And a toy-man, within the touch almost of his elbow, accompanied him excellently. 'Farthing each!' he sounded out, in the fashion of a bass. 'Farthing every one! No mistaking here! All one price!' and he spun his clay angels on their india-rubber string, and blew on his scarlet trumpets their most vivacious squeak. Then there was a lady facing him who sold caps and ribbons; and had the former strung up with their empty faces where they looked most winning, and where there could be the least discovery that they were on no heads at all. 'You can't have *that!*' she exclaimed, unhooking the very specimen of fascinating millinery that was the object on which all eyes were fixed. 'How foolish of me to have brought it out. That's sold!' And the stimulus this artful touch gave to dilatory judgment, brought such an accession of outstretched arms and calculating eyes, the cap-lady knew that that was the time to fling down another stroke. 'Take care of your purses, ladies!' ran her brisk and shrewd advice. 'A rare market is this for gittin' your pockets picked. And a rare market, too, for gittin' my goods stolen if I don't look sharp!' And this was the signal for her to give a broad sweep of all her ribbons from the fingers that were testing them, and for customers to be so startled by the hint, they made their purchases hastily, and got gratefully and carefully away.

In the open area which this lively avenue surrounded was another dealer aware of the value of a tongue. He was a fine old man, hale, and gray, and bearded, and substantially clothed and shod. 'Tate-zut!' was his cry, with, after, a moment's pause. 'Tate-zut!'—and then a pause again. And 'Tate-zut!—Tate-zut!—Tate-zut!' till time had come to take in his surroundings, and discover the meaning of his cry. The keeper of a potato-can, of course; his stock in a covering so large it stood on four massive wheels, and, hearty as he was, he was not enough alone to ply his trade. His wife (a little woman, of course) was with him; and whilst he submitted himself to the exertion of his mangled cry, and to opening the door of his 'establishment' every time there was a bite, she cut the released potato in half, and cooled its smoking bosom with a generous sprinkling of salt.

A small child had set up, within eye-shot, as a dealer for herself. She had a tray half a yard square, perhaps, on a stand half a yard high; and laid here were two shillingsworth, it may be, of toys. Suppose she sold them all, how much would be her reward? Suppose she had some stolen, what would be her starved living then? *Would* any one steal from a poor, cold, painstaking little girl? Yes; absolutely. That was the cause of her humble goods having the protection round them of a thin garden trellis-wire.

'You see,' she said, in matter-of-fact explanation, 'I've had some stolen often. When your back's turned, or when you're not a-watchin', the boys they sneaks round!'

Not far off was an avenue devoted to cast-off clothing. In one of the niches in it there was especial skill displayed in attracting—the system, indeed, must have been almost enough to have driven excitable ladies mad. The proprietress (a large, grave, *silent* woman) stood on her shop-floor, with her hands at the neck of a monster sack or bag; her mate (a thin young man, pretty-featured and fair) stood upon her counter, as designedly mute as she, and hung up her treasures as she placidly handed them out. The woman lowered her hand into the gigantic bag; drew it up; spread out what she dug out; and looked at it with a ruminating eye. It was a silk jacket perhaps, or a braided gown; it was a frilled skirt, or a child's much-bedizened coat; second-hand, everything, and with unmistakable marks of wear and tear; but whatever the make or the material, there was no variety in the solemn show. Madam bent over it, mused on it with a serene smile, marked its shape, its trimming, its quality, found all satisfactory, and—handed it up to the expectant young man. The women looking on were frantic. They struck out at the garment as it was being handed up; they caught the hem of it, they felt it, they flipped it out to get a glimmering of its width. No use. It was raised, and raised, and raised (slowly? Ah! with a sloth that made the aggravation), till it was on the high level, and safe from the contamination of any but buying hands. Then those most vulnerable to this tantalisation were pricked to the right point. 'How much?' they asked, in lowly and subdued tones; and the price was whispered to them, and they thought it best to pay it, without any of the usual long and noisy 'bate.'

Among the second-hand clothes-sellers was a woman with but an umbrellaful of garments, and these so patched and old, it seemed impossible they should be thought good enough to sell. But they were, though; and a poor woman came up and asked the price of a thin scant flannel petticoat, as if it had been a gem. It was a shilling, a twelfth part, perhaps, of the poor creature's weekly earnings; and it was more than she could spare. She might get it cheaper, though; and the best way for that to be accomplished was to inspect the garment at its weakest part. It was very thin—worn almost to a vapour—in front, where the wearing would be sure to come, and the would-be purchaser turned that uppermost, and gave a little depreciatory smile.

'It's only where the stays 'as been, ma'am!' chirped out the dealer, perfectly up to the manœuvre. 'It's only the rubbing of the busk!' as if, because the busk had made the thinning, it was *no* thinning, but something almost to be admired! But to this the customer's experience did not lead her, and she still held the petticoat very hesitatingly in her hand.

'You can't expect it to be *new*, ma'am!' argued the stall-keeper, stepping on to fresh ground as she found the former would not hold.

And to this the poor woman gave in. 'No,' she said, giving a feeble shake of her head. The words, perhaps, had a double meaning to her. She could *not* expect—she dared *not* hope for the bliss to have *new* clothes; and that was the cause possibly

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of the little hopeless sigh. Anyhow, she put down the petticoat, and walked away.

Close to where these two women went through their no-negotiation, there was a perfect bower of holly. It was heaped up into glistening trees, and the pale mistletoe hung on it, and shewed up its rich colour excellently. 'Penny a bunch! Penny a bunch!' was heard all round; and many were the pennyworths carried away. One smart, plump, young woman leaving the market with her portion of prickly leaves, observed with self-complacency: 'It's a good job it isn't mistletoe!' as if, if it had been, the young men *must* have jumped at her, and kissed her, and, for her life, she could not have thought they were to blame! Other women bargained that their pennyworth *should* contain some mistletoe, and walked off with a deep impression of their skill. This necessity for things to be purchasable for a penny was acknowledged from the beginning of the market to the end. There were penny hillocks of different-sized nails; penny heaps of small screws; penny gridirons; penny hanks of rope; pennyworths of wash-leather; of muffins; penny bottles of scent; penny dozens of all sorts of buttons; quite a skein, for the same price, of braid; a triplet of reels of cotton; two lemons, and sometimes three; a regular assortment of blue, and starch, and spice—four packets, and each as neat as though it cost a pound; a thick bunch of onions; a brace of herrings; a bundle of burnished sprats; and finally, a whole dozen of tin skewers, being, as the woman screeched who sold them: 'Twelve a penny! Twelve a penny! and every one of 'em with a good pint!' Besides which, there were traysful of old keys, each one a penny, kept on the chance that they would fit old locks; and old tooth-brushes—in much request, if supply is any criterion of demand, for there was a hideous spread of them; old tools, which workmen took up cannily, and tested with faces that were very acute; old mended china, old music, old books, old shoes, old jewellery, and, if such may be added to a list of things that were second-hand, penny basins of pea-soup.

This latter was a commodity that, in conjunction with the halfpenny baked potato, formed, the favourite meal among the men. They were to be discovered—just glimpses of them—behind some tall article on their stand, sipping as much as they could get, between attending to the demands of their customers and watching every approaching pair of hands; but, for the women—they clung, as women always do, gratefully to their tea, and had a particular little lounging-place of their own. It had a fireplace—an open cylinder of glowing coal on a pedestal three feet high, roast-chestnut fashion—and round this the women drank their tea, and chatted. A penny a cup was, of course, the price; and even at that the taste of the drinkers was consulted. The *marchande*, who was fat, and tall, and very dirty, asked each lady whether she took milk and sugar, and found some of them with so sweet a tooth she trembled for her profit. 'There!' she cried to one *exigeante* young woman as she handed her her cup, 'you have a'most a 'aporth of sugar in *that!*' And considering the young woman had a warm of her finger-tips in for her penny as well, it must be admitted she knew how to make the best of a bargain.

From this unlovely lounge, it was but one step out of the market into the street; it was a step, however, not quickly trodden. It must require some courage to set up a stall, even within the wide gates of a market, to judge from the number of traders who inconveniently try to do their business without. It is true, some of these may be astute geniuses, who have taken up their position there of artful intent, calculating on the timidity of the class of buyers who may be caught before venturing into the hurly-burly, or on the indecision of those who may wander through the mazes, and come out yet with their money in their hand; but there they were. There, also, were the usual stock ladies and gentlemen who strive to win the compassion of a crowd: the men who stand on two dwarfed wooden legs; the *artiste* who plays tom-tom sort of tunes on his jaw-boneless and mobile chin; the other gentleman, who has a ghostly fiddle-bow instead of a right arm, and finds he can execute polkas and valses nimbly and quite well. But to give a list of these would be to compile a catalogue of no inconsiderable part of the gratis exhibitions of London, and that shall be let alone. Sufficient for the sketch is the subject thereof; and the Cheap Market has been drawn.

A SECRET OF THE SEA.

We had battled round the Horn, and up through the 'roaring Forties.' Decks had just been washed down, and both passengers and crew were rigging themselves out in smarter togs than usual, in honour of our first sunny, quiet Sunday at sea, when one of the men on the forecastle sang out: 'A sail!' It was the first that we had seen since we had fairly got away from Sydney, and therefore it excited unusual interest. The captain bade the man at the wheel change the course a point to the westward, that we might make sure of speaking the welcome stranger; and when we came on deck again after breakfast, every glass on board was levelled at her, and the signal-box was got out in readiness. We made the stranger out to be a low black brig, with a round stern, a white quarter-rail, and very rakish masts—the lower masts painted white. The spanker was brailed up, but all other canvas, except studding-sails, was set—even a cotton main sky-sail. The brig flew no bunting of any kind; but something in the cut of her double topsails, and the build of her hull and white deck-houses, led the experts on board our ship to pronounce her a Yankee. In vain did we run up our fluttering lines of gay, party-coloured, little signal-flags. Up and down they went with good-tempered patience, but the brig's gaff still obstinately continued dumb. Not a man or boy could we get a glimpse of on board her; and the way in which she was sailed was most un-Yankee-like, unless there were some piratical purpose in it. Now she was kept full, now she fell off her course with flapping canvas, and sometimes she slewed round, head on to the wind, and was regularly taken aback. Then presently she would forge round, fill again, and slant off on another tack. If vessels could get tipsy—and one *has* heard of a 'tight ship'—you might have said that the brig had taken too much grog on board. Her remarkable manœuvres puzzled us sorely at first, but presently our captain said, contemptuously: '*Pirates!* Not much of that, I reckon. It's my belief that every man

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Jack on board is drunk. They were drinking "Sweethearts and wives" a little too deep last night, I guess; and now they're all skulking, from the skipper to the cabin-boy.—Mr Largie'—to the chief-officer—'lower away one of the quarter-boats, and board her. I'll stand off and on till you've found out what's up.'

'There's room for you, if you like to come,' said Largie to me as he went over the side; and I followed him down into the boat.

The excitement of the trip was attractive after the confined monotony of shipboard life; but, not wishing to make myself out to be braver than I am, I will acknowledge that I felt 'rather queer' at first when the davit-blocks were unhooked, and we had pushed off and were pulling away. For one thing, as the light boat was sent up like a foam-bell on the unfathomed waves, I began to fear as to whether I had not boasted too soon of never being sea-sick. For another, the waste of weltering waters, with no visible bottom or shore to reassure a landsman's eye, seemed so drearily boundless, in spite of the sunlight on them—the countless golden spangles on the countless ever-washing waves, indeed, rather intensified the feeling—that I more than half fancied that I had foolishly thrown away my chance of ever getting home across the watery wilderness, when the little boat danced off from the big ship; itself looking so insignificant, when seen from the outside, heaving on the vast ocean, beneath the vast sky, that had only one another to limit them, and *that* with a dreamy vagueness which suggested limitless sea and sky beyond. I gazed ruefully at the familiar faces clustered along the bulwarks, and when these faces vanished, as the boat slid down into the trough of the sea, I seemed to be sinking down, down to the centre, or farther, as one seems to be falling through the bed in the same direction on waking from a momentary snatch of dyspeptic sleep. 'Use is everything,' however, and use is soon full grown. After some half-dozen sledge-like dips and cork-like rises, I ceased to look back regretfully at our good ship, and reserved all my curiosity for our 'chase.' A nice chase she led us, jigging and reeling about as she did. Time after time the mate had to alter the direction of the boat's nose. At last, however, as we topped a ridge crisping into white foam for its fall, we saw the brig bearing right down upon us. She was clipper-built below the water-line, but had bluff, almost apple bows above; and the spray which her sharp cut-water threw up, painted their blistered tar with rainbows. About she staggered again, when she had almost run us down, and we pulled under her stern. 'Heave us a line, you lubbers!' shouted Largie, as the boat bumped against her weather-side. But no line was thrown; so the man in the bows hooked on to the main-chains; the boat was made fast somehow, and we scrambled on board.

The first thing Largie did was to send a man to the wheel, which was 'bobbing around' in a very eerie fashion. The tiller-chains ground up and down; the spokes went backwards and forwards, as if unseen hands—some ghostly mariner's—were pulling and pressing at them. When the flesh-and-blood man at the wheel had had his course given him, the rest of us commenced our inspection. The brig looked most dismally lonely both aloft and alow. The only living thing above deck was a big ape in the foretop, which shewed its teeth, and jabbered down at us, as if it had been frightened out of its wits, and then slipped through the lubber-hole, and curled itself up between the mast and the futtock-shrouds. Both the deck-houses were empty. The bunks had been stripped. A pair of sea-boots, a sea-chest with the lid smashed in, a black cutty-pipe, and a litter of rubbish, were the only contents in either. In the galley was half a bucketful of burned rice; and a pannikin, with a drop of something brown in it that tasted like rum and coffee, stood on the stove. The main hatch-way was open; the combings and part of the deck close by were charred; a very little of the cargo had also been burned. When we had cleared away the greasy black ashes that lay on the top, we came upon charred hides. There were brown-red splashes and spots, plainly of dried-up blood, upon the deck; a sailor's greasy knife-sheath; a pewter watch-case, trodden out of shape; a heap of biscuit-crumbs, with footmarks in it; and a half-burned envelope, with '——gh——t P—plar' alone legible upon it. Here and there we found a bullet in the bulwarks, that must have been fired on board; and on one of the belaying-pins there was a bloody wisp of gray hair. The water-casks had been started, and we could find no stores. Before we looked for *them*, however, Largie had taken as much sail as he could manage off the brig, for the weather had changed, and the wind was freshening rather disagreeably. The men tried to catch the ape when they went aloft; but he swung himself from rope to rope, rested for a moment to jabber at them, and then again sought some unsociable nook of refuge. The blending of fear and ferocity in his eyes was something horrible to witness. 'The muckle beastie is na canny,' said a compatriot member of Largie's crew, sagely shaking his huge, gray-eyed, sandy-thatched, Aberdonian head. Before we hunted for the stores, too, we had been down into the cabin, and had seen a sight there which I shall not easily forget.

Upon the floor, under the table, lay a green-painted iron box, with the lid prised off the hinges. A cane-bottomed lounging-chair, with a taper white forefinger clinging, blood-glued, to a rail of the carved back, was overturned in one corner of the cabin. In another, on its back, lay the corpse of a man—a short, spare man, with a yellow 'goatee' beard: the upper part of his head was frightfully battered in; and his shirt and green grass-cloth hip-jacket were stiff with the blood that had gushed, and dribbled, and clotted from the score or so of stabs and shot-wounds with which he was riddled. The flesh on the back of his hands was slashed with knife-cuts; clenched in one there was a fragment of frayed black barege. Amongst the jumble of disordered furniture lay a battered barometer. The cabin had been sacked; lockers and boxes had both been forced open. We found no papers—nothing that could give us the least clue. The brig did not carry her name upon her stern; her quarter-boards had been wrenched off, and all her boats were gone. The only thing we did find that shed any additional light upon the awful tragedy that had plainly been enacted on that cramped stage, was a photograph in the sleeping-berth. It had fallen between the battens of a tumbled bunk; but the open lid of its case had kept it from dropping to the floor. It was the likeness of an exceedingly

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beautiful young woman, nursing a plump baby, with a short, spare, goatee-bearded man leaning on the back of her chair. Interested—fleah-creepingly interested—as I could not help feeling in our gloomy search, I was very glad when Largie said that it was time to put an end to it. For some time, the brig had been pitching and rolling in a manner very alarming to a landsman, who remembered that he had to be tossed in a cockle-shell of a boat before he could once more feel himself homeward bound. Our ship was taking in reefs; it was high time to get on board. Accordingly, Largie ran the brig in as near as he durst; and then, lashing the helm to keep her clear, we went over the side. The pull back was not a very long one; but I, at anyrate, was very glad when it was over. The boat was nearly stove in when she got alongside. I never felt more thankful in my life than when I was pushed and hauled on deck, drenched to the skin. When safe back amongst cheerful faces and voices in our own good ship once more, I felt as if only in a nightmare dream could I ever have been on board the blood-stained floating hearse that was slanting away into the distance—left perforce to the wild will of the winds and waves; the murdered captain lying stiff in his cabin, with the jabbering ape in the rigging for sole mourner.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

Endeavours towards improved education are certainly among the most prominent and encouraging signs of the times. Mr James Young, the well-known chemist, whose name is so intimately associated with paraffin, has given L.10,000 for the endowment of a School of Technology at Glasgow; a sum that will provide L.300 a year for a professor. A little farther south, the university of Durham, ceasing to confine its teaching to theology, is devising a way to start a school of physical science, and to teach during eight months in the year, instead of twenty-four weeks, as at present. The Owens College at Manchester, with its able staff of professors, is perhaps sufficient for Lancashire; but Yorkshire, lying between, feels that pace must be kept with it, and has taken steps towards the foundation of a Science College, in which her strenuous sons may acquire a knowledge of the materials on which they work, and of the natural phenomena by which they are surrounded. At the initiatory meeting held by the General Council of the Yorkshire Board of Education at Leeds, a good deal of common sense was uttered by the several speakers; and we heartily wish that a chair of Common Sense could be established in the new college. Among the hundreds of thousands of workers in the county of the Red Rose and of the White Rose, the majority are more in want of that, than of a knowledge of natural philosophy. Otherwise, they would not so willingly submit to the mischievous consequences of trades-unionism. Among these consequences is a self-imposed taxation. Those who call out for reciprocity, says Mr Ashworth, a Lancashire man, 'take no account of the heavy duties levied at home by trades-unions, far heavier than any foreign tariffs, except the American. We cannot have a hammer or nail for domestic use but it has paid its trade-union tribute. The national industry is so shackled and clogged by trades-unions and their hindering rules, that we need not be surprised that a free country like Belgium can fetch pig-iron from Scotland and cotton from England, and return cast-iron and calico back to London and Manchester, and undersell our British trades-unionists in their own market.' If the new schools and colleges will but clear away such obstructiveness as this, they will be a boon indeed.

Perhaps the most remarkable among the signs above referred to is the change made by act of parliament in the government of our public schools—the Grammar-schools of England. New 'governing bodies,' as they are termed, are to be appointed, and among those authorised to appoint are the President and Council of the Royal Society—the foremost scientific society in the world. They will naturally nominate scientific men to be members of the governing bodies, so that, as we may expect, science will henceforth become a part of the education given at seven schools—that is, Westminster, Charterhouse, Harrow, Eton, Winchester, Rugby, and Shrewsbury. This is an important change, at variance with tradition and practice, but it can hardly fail of benefit. Many a youth whom grammar repels, would be attracted by natural philosophy. We shall next see our middle-class schools taking up science.

The *Great Eastern*, with 2736 nautical miles of cable telegraph on board, is now on her way to India, round the Cape of Good Hope, to lay a line from Bombay to Aden and Suez, preparatory to a direct communication between England and her great empire in the east. But how little attention did the sailing of the great ship attract when compared with the excitement that attended her departure with the first Atlantic cable. It seems that we are grown familiar with deep-sea cables, regarding their laying as matters of course, and with more or less of indifference. Yet it is no trifling work on which the *Great Eastern* is now employed. With twelve hundred miles of cable on board attendant vessels, there will be length enough to establish a connection with the present Malta and Alexandria cable. By-and-by the projected line from Falmouth to Gibraltar and Malta will be laid, and then our Secretary of State for India will be able to flash messages direct from his office in Downing Street to Bombay and Calcutta. It seems inevitable that this achievement should be followed by an extension to Singapore, and thence to Australia, by which we shall get daily telegrams from our brethren at the antipodes. Moreover, we can look forward to round-the-world messages; for the Russian government have granted a 'concession' for extending their Siberian line to Japan and China: and so the 'highway of thought,' carried onwards from the east and from the west, will one day meet and form a continuous line, a triumph indeed of science and civilisation.

A small item of news from India has occasioned some sensation in the engineering world. The Governor-general, Lord Mayo, has sent to the United States for an engineer accustomed to the rough and ready way of constructing railways in that country, and at a cost far below that which an English engineer would consider possible. India is yet in want of thousands of miles of railway; and if, by Lord Mayo's experiment, they can be made cheaply, the benefit will be great to all

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concerned, including English engineers, who may perhaps learn a useful lesson therefrom, and lay down cheap railways in Australia. By the way, Australia is seeking to develop a trade in another kind of live-stock as well as sheep and oxen, and has offered to supply the Indian government with all the horses required for their army at twenty-five pounds apiece.

A special series of Art and Industry Exhibitions is to be held at South Kensington, where permanent buildings for the purpose are now commenced. The first is to take place in 1871. In the same year, a World's Fair is to be held somewhere on the Mississippi, probably at Louisville. Another item from beyond the Atlantic is worth mentioning: the first census ever taken in the republic of Buenos Ayres has been made up, and it shews a total population of 1,200,000, or one to a square mile. Here is a fact for those who want to know where room can be found for emigrants. In the city of Buenos Ayres the number of inhabitants is 180,000.

There is talk of an international commission to sit in Paris to make another attempt towards the adoption of a uniform system of weights and measures. Meanwhile, the Central Chamber of Agriculture, at a recent meeting held in London, carried a unanimous resolution, 'that in their opinion all agricultural produce should be sold by weight only,' with a view to get rid of the present confusion of measures.

Geologists are much interested in the results of the exploration of the deep sea made last summer in H.M.S. *Porcupine* by Dr Carpenter, Professor Wyville Thomson, and Mr Gwyn Jeffreys. The *Porcupine* was lent for the purpose by the Admiralty, at the instance of the Council of the Royal Society. Chief among the physical facts discovered is, that while the surface of the sea may have a temperature of fifty-two degrees, there are cold tracts and warm tracts below, existing within a short distance of each other, and marked by characteristic differences. The bottom of the cold tract is formed of barren sandstone, mingled with fragments of older rock, inhabited but by a few animals, and those mostly of the arctic kinds. In the adjacent warm area, on the contrary, the bottom is cretaceous, and abounding with life. Now, suppose these two tracts upheaved, and become dry land. Geologists would naturally believe them to have been formed at different times, and under very different circumstances; and yet here we find them contemporaneous and almost conterminous. Here, then, is a fact which will have to be considered in all future discussions about what is called 'geological time.'

Another fact established by this exploration, and contrary to long-received opinion, is, that in the deepest seas yet examined, nearly 2500 fathoms, the bottom teems with animal life, the animals having perfect eyes. This at once upsets the long-received notion that the depths of the sea were devoid of life and of light. The life is now an established fact, and the light may be inferred, for if there be no light down in these abysses, why have the animals eyes? The whole account of the exploration above named, with its leading results, was given by Dr Carpenter at the first two evening meetings of the Royal Society for the present session. Interesting as it was, there is yet much more to come out of it; in the meantime, it suggests important questions. If ordinary daylight penetrates to the bottom of the sea, how does it penetrate? or is there at the bottom some kind of phosphorescent light? If a photograph could be taken deep down in the sea, that would testify to the presence of daylight. As to the breathing of the animals at the bottom, there is no difficulty; for the late Master of the Mint, Mr Graham, has shewn, by his liquid diffusion of gases, that air may be diffused downwards to the greatest depths.

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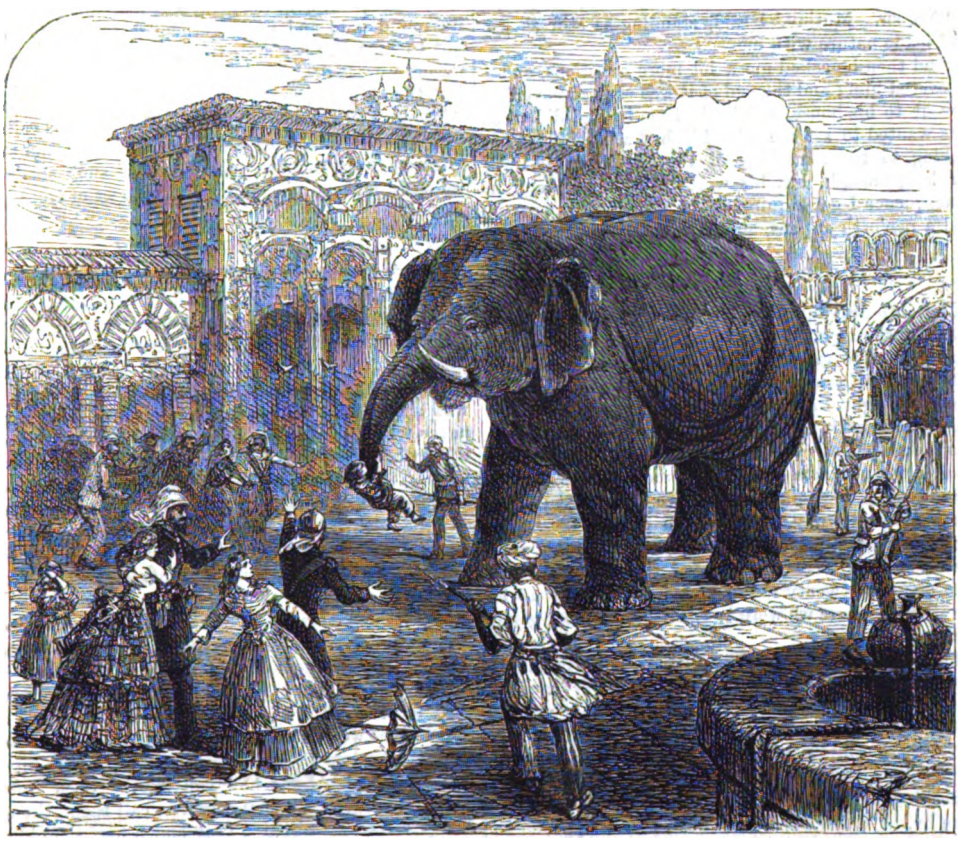

BEGUMBAGH.

INTRODUCTION.

I'VE waited all these years, expecting some one or another would give a full and true account of it all; but little thinking it would ever come to be my task. For it's not in my way; but seeing how much has been said about other parts and other people's sufferings, while ours never so much as came in for a line of newspaper, I can't think it's fair; and as fairness is what I always did like, I set to, very much against my will; while, on account of my empty sleeve, the paper keeps slipping and sliding about, so that I can only hold it quiet by putting the lead inkstand on one corner, and my tobacco-jar on the other. You see, I'm not much at home at this sort of thing; and though, if you put a pipe and a glass of something

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before me, I could tell you all about it, taking my time, like, it seems that won't do. I said: 'Why don't you write it down as I tell it, so as other people could read all about it?' But 'No,' he says; 'I could do it in my fashion, but I want it to be in your simple unadorned style; so set to and do it.'

I daresay a good many of you know me—seen me often in Bond Street, at Facet's door—Facet's, you know, the great jeweller, where I stand and open carriages, or take messages, or small parcels with no end of valuables in them, for I 'm trusted. Smith, my name is, Isaac Smith; and I 'm that tallish, grisly fellow with the seam down one side of my face, my left sleeve looped up to my button, and not a speck to be seen on that 'commissionnaire's' uniform, upon whose breast I 've got three medals.

I was standing one day, waiting patiently for something to do, when a tallish gentleman came up, nodded as if he knew me well, and I saluted.

'Lose that limb in the Crimea, my man?' he said.

'No, sir. Mutiny,' I said, standing as stiff as use had made nature with me.

And then he asked me a lot more questions, and I answered him; and the end of it was that one evening I went to his house, and he had me in, and did what was wanted to set me off. I 'd had a little bit of an itching to try something of the kind, I must own, for long enough, but his words started me; and in consequence I got a quire of the best foolscap paper, and a pen'orth of pens, and here 's my story.

I.

Dub-dub-dub-dub-dub-dub. Just one light beat given by the boys in front—the light sharp tap upon their drums, to give the time for the march; and in heavy order there we were, her Majesty's 156th Regiment of Light Infantry, making our way over the dusty roads with the hot morning sun beating down upon our heads. We were marching very loosely, though, for the men were tired, and we were longing for the halt to be called, so that we might rest during the heat of the day, and then go on again. Tents, baggage-wagons, women, children, elephants, all were there; and we were getting over the ground at the rate of about twenty miles a day, on our way up to the station, where we were to relieve a regiment going home.

I don't know what we should have done if it hadn't been for Harry Lant, the weather being very trying, almost as trying as our hot red coats and heavy knapsacks, and flower-pot bushies, with a round white ball like a child's plaything on the top; but no matter how tired he was, Harry Lant had always something to say or do, and even if the colonel was close by, he 'd say or do it. Now, there happened to be an elephant walking along by our side, with the captain of our company, one of the lieutenants, and a couple of women in the howdah; while a black nigger fellow, in clean white calico clothes, and not much of 'em, and a muslin turban, and a good deal of it, was striddling on the creature's neck, rolling his eyes about, and flourishing an iron toasting-fork sort of thing, with which he drove the great flap-eared patient beast. The men were beginning to grumble gently, and shifting their guns from side to side, and sneezing, and coughing, and choking in the kicked-up dust, like a flock of sheep, when Captain Dyer scrambles down off the elephant, and takes his place alongside us, crying out cheerily: 'Only another mile, my lads, and then breakfast.'

We gave him a cheer, and another half-mile was got over, when once more the boys began to flag terribly, and even Harry Lant was silent, which, seeing what Harry Lant was, means a wonderful deal more respecting the weather than any number of degrees on a thermometer, I can tell you; but I looked round at him, and he knew what it meant, and, slipping out, he goes up to the elephant. 'Carry your trunk, sir,' he says; and taking gently hold of the great beast's soft nose, he laid it upon his shoulder, and marched on like that, with the men roaring with laughter.

'Pulla-wulla. Ma-pa-na,' shouted the nigger who was driving, or something that sounded like it, for of all the rum lingoes ever spoke, theirs is about the rummest, and always put me in mind of the fal-lal-la or tol-de-rol chorus of a song.

'All right. I 'll take care!' sings out Harry; and on he marched, with the great soft-footed beast lifting its round pats and putting them down gently so as not to hurt Harry; and, trifling as that act was, it meant a great deal, as you 'll see if you read on, while just then it got our poor fellows over the last half-mile without one falling out; and then the halt was called; men wheeled into line; we were dismissed; and soon after we were lounging about, under such shade as we could manage to get in the thin topes of trees.

II.

That 's a pretty busy time, that first half-hour after a halt: what with setting loosely up a few tents, and getting a fire lighted, and fetching water; but in spite of our being tired, we soon had things right. There was the colonel's tent, Colonel Maine's—a little stout man, that we all used to laugh at, because he was such a little, round, good-tempered chap, who never troubled about anything, for we hadn't learned then what was lying asleep in his brave little body, waiting to be brought out. Then there was the mess tent for the officers, and the hospital tent for those on the sick-list, beside our bell tents, that we shouldn't have set up at all, only to act as sun-shades. But, of course, the principal tent was the colonel's.

Well, there they were, the colonel and his lady, Mrs Maine—a nice, kindly-spoken, youngish woman: twenty years younger than he, she was; but, for all that, a happier couple never breathed; and they two used to seem as if the regiment, and India, and all the natives were made on purpose to fall down and worship the two little golden idols they 'd set up—a little girl and a little boy, you know. Cock Robin and Jenny Wren, we chaps used to call them, though Jenny Wren was about a year and a half the oldest. And I believe it was from living in France a bit, that the colonel's wife had got the notion of dressing them so; but it would have done your heart good to see those two children—the boy with his little red tunic and his sword, and the girl with her red jacket and belt, and a little canteen of wine and water, and a tiny tin mug; and them little things driving the old black ayah half-wild with the way they used to dodge away from her to get amongst the men, who took no end of delight in bamboozling the fat old woman when she was hunting for them; sending them here, and there, and everywhere, till she 'd turn round and make signs with her hands, and spit on

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the ground, which was her way of cursing us. For I must say that we English were very, very careless about what we did or said to the natives. Officers and men, all alike, seemed to look upon them as something very little better than beasts, and talked to them as if they had no feelings at all, little thinking what fierce masters the trampled slaves could turn out, if ever they had their day—the day that the old proverb says is sure to come for every dog; and there was not a soul among us then that had the least bit of suspicion that the dog—by which, you know, I mean the Indian generally—was going mad, and sharpening those teeth of his ready to bite.

Well, as a matter of course, there were other people in our regiment that I ought to mention: Captain Dyer I did name; but there was a lieutenant, a very good-looking young fellow, who was a great favourite with Mrs Colonel Maine; and he dined a deal with them at all times, besides being a great chum of Captain Dyer's—they two shooting together, and being like brothers, though there was a something in Lieutenant Leigh that I never seemed to take to. Then there was the doctor—a Welshman he was, and he used to make it his boast that our regiment was about the healthiest anywhere; and I tell you what it is, if you were ill once, and in hospital, as we call it—though, you know, with a marching regiment that only means anywhere till you get well—I say, if you were ill once, and under his hands, you'd think twice before you made up your mind to be ill again, and be very bad too before you went to him. Pestle, we used to call him, though his name was Hughes; and how we men did hate him, mortally, till we found out his real character, when we were lying cut to pieces almost, and him ready to cry over us at times as he tried to bring us round. 'Hold up, my lads,' he'd say, 'only another hour, and you'll be round the corner!' when what there was left of us did him justice. Then, of course, there were other officers, and some away with the major and another battalion of our regiment at Wallahbad; but they've nothing to do with my story.

I do not think I can do better than introduce you to our mess on the very morning of this halt, when, after cooling myself with a pipe, just the same as I should have warmed myself with a pipe if it had been in Canady or Nova Scotia, I walked up to find all ready for breakfast, and Mrs Bantem making the tea.

Some of the men didn't fail to laugh at us who took our tea for breakfast; but all the same I liked it, for it always took me home, tea did—and to the days when my poor old mother used to say that there never was such a boy for bread and butter as I was; not as there was ever so much butter that she need have grumbled, whatever I cost for bread; and though Mrs Bantem wasn't a bit like my mother, she brought up the homely thoughts. Mrs Bantem was, I should say, about the biggest and ugliest woman I ever saw in my life. She stood five feet eleven and a half in her stockings, for Joe Bantem got Sergeant Buller to take her under the standard one day. She'd got a face nearly as dark as a black's; she'd got a moustache, and a good one too; and a great coarse look about her altogether. Measles—I'll tell you who he was directly—Measles used to say she was a horse godmother; and they didn't seem to like one another; but Joe Bantem was as proud of that woman as she was of him; and if any one hinted about her looks, he used to laugh, and say that was only the outside rind, and talk about the juice. But all the same, though, no one couldn't be long with that woman without knowing her flavour. It was a sight to see her and Joe together, for he was just a nice middle size—five feet seven and a half—and as pretty a pink and white, brown-whiskered, open-faced man as ever you saw. We all got tanned and coppered over and over again, but Joe kept as nice and fresh and fair as on the day we embarked from Gosport years before; and the standing joke was that Mrs Bantem had a preparation for keeping his complexion all square.

Joe Bantem knew what he was about, though, for one day when a nasty remark had been made by the men of another regiment, he got talking to me in confidence over our pipes, and he swore that there wasn't a better woman living; and he was right, for I'm ready now at this present moment to take the Book in my hand, and swear the same thing before all the judges in Old England. For you see we're such duffers, we men: shew us a pretty bit of pink and white, and we run mad after it; while all the time we're running away from no end of what's solid and good, and true, and such as'll wear well, and shew fast colours, long after your pink and white's got faded and grimy. Not as I've much room to talk. But present company, you know, and setra. What, though, as a rule, does your pretty pink and white know about buttons, or darning, or cooking? Why, we had the very best of cooking; not boiled tag and rag, but nice stews and roasts and hashes, when other men were growling over a dog's-meat dinner. We had the sweetest of clean sheets, and never a button off; our stockings were darned; and only let one of us—Measles, for instance—take a drop more than he ought, just see how she'd drop on to him, that's all. If his head didn't ache before, it would ache then; and I can see as plain now as if it was only this minute, instead of years ago, her boxing Measles' ears, and threatening to turn him out to another mess if he didn't keep sober. And she would have turned him over too, only, as she said to Joe, and Joe told me, it might have been the poor fellow's ruin, seeing how weak he was, and easily led away. The long and short of it is, Mrs Bantem was a good motherly woman of forty; and those who had anything to say against her, said it out of jealousy, and all I have to say now is what I've said before: she only had one fault, and that is, she never had any little Bantems to make wives for honest soldiers to come; and wherever she is, my wish is that she may live happy and venerable to a hundred.

That brings me to Measles. Bigley his name was; but he'd had the small-pox very bad when a child, through not being vaccinated; and his face was all picked out in holes, so round and smooth that you might have stood peas in them all over his cheeks and forehead, and they wouldn't have fallen off; so we called him Measles. If any of you say 'Why?' I don't know no more than I have said.

He was a sour-tempered sort of fellow was Measles, who listed because his sweetheart laughed at him; not that he cared for her, but he didn't like to be laughed at, so he listed out of spite, as he said, and that made him spiteful. He was always grumbling about not getting his promotion, and sneering at everything and everybody, and quarrelling with Harry Lant, him, you know, as carried the elephant's trunk; while Harry was never happy without he was teasing

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him, so that sometimes there was a deal of hot water spilled in our mess.

And now I think I've only got to name three of the drum-boys, that Mrs Bantem ruled like a rod of iron, though all for their good, and then I've done.

Well, we had our breakfast, and thoroughly enjoyed it, sitting out there in the shade. Measles grumbled about the water, just because it happened to be better than usual; for sometimes we soldiers out there in India used to drink water that was terrible lively before it had been cooked in the kettle; for though water insects out there can stand a deal of heat, they couldn't stand a fire. Mrs Bantem was washing up the things afterwards, and talking about dinner; Harry Lant was picking up all the odds and ends, to carry off to the great elephant, standing just then in the best bit of shade he could find, flapping his great ears about, blinking his little pig's eyes, and turning his trunk and his tail into two pendulums, swinging them backwards and forwards as regular as clockwork, and all the time watching Harry, when Measles says all at once: 'Here come some lunatics!'

III.

Now, after what I've told you about Measles' listing for spite, you will easily understand that the fact of his calling any one a lunatic did not prove a want of common reason in the person spoken about; but what he meant was, that the people coming up were half-mad for travelling when the sun was so high, and had got so much power.

I looked up and saw, about a mile off, coming over the long straight level plain, what seemed to be an elephant, and a man or two on horseback; and before I had been looking above a minute, I saw Captain Dyer cross over to the colonel's tent, and then point in the direction of the coming elephant. The next minute, he crossed over to where we were. 'Seen Lieutenant Leigh?' he says in his quick way.

'No, sir; not since breakfast.'

'Send him after me, if he comes in sight. Tell him Miss Ross and party are yonder, and I've ridden on to meet them.'

The next minute he had gone, taken a horse from a sycee, and in spite of the heat, cantered off to meet the party with the elephant, the air being that clear that I could see him go right up, turn his horse round, and ride gently back by the elephant's side.

I did not see anything of the lieutenant, and, to tell the truth, I forgot all about him, for I was thinking about the party coming, for I had somehow heard a little about Mrs Maine's sister coming out from the old country to stay with her. If I recollect right, the black nurse told Mrs Bantem, and she mentioned it. This party, then, I supposed contained the lady herself; and it was as I thought. We had had to leave Patna unexpectedly to relieve the regiment ordered home; and the lady, according to orders, had followed us, for this was only our second day's march.

I suppose it was my pipe made me settle down to watch the coming party, and wonder what sort of a body Miss Ross would be, and whether anything like her sister. Then I wondered who would marry her, for, as you know, ladies are not very long out in India without picking up a husband. 'Perhaps,' I said to myself, 'it will be the lieutenant;' but ten minutes after, as the elephant shambled up, I altered my mind, for Captain Dyer was ambling along beside the great beast, and his was the hand that helped the lady down—a tall, handsome, self-possessed girl, who seemed quite to take the lead, and kiss and soothe the sister, when she ran out of the tent to throw her arms round the new-comer's neck.

'At last, then, Elsie,' Mrs Colonel said out aloud. 'You've had a long dreary ride.'

'Not during the last ten minutes,' Miss Ross said, laughing in a bright, merry, free-hearted way. 'Lieutenant Leigh has been welcoming me most cordially.'

'Who?' exclaimed Mrs Colonel, staring from one to the other.

'Lieutenant Leigh,' said Miss Ross.

'I'm afraid I am to blame for not announcing myself,' said Captain Dyer, lifting his muslin-covered cap. 'Your sister, Miss Ross, asked me to ride to meet you, in Lieutenant Leigh's absence.'

'You, then'——

'I am only Lawrence Dyer, his friend,' said the captain smiling.

It's a singular thing that just then, as I saw the young lady blush deeply, and Mrs Colonel look annoyed, I muttered to myself, 'Something will come of this,' because, if there's anything I hate, it's for a man to set himself up for a prophet. But it looked to me as if the captain had been taking Lieutenant Leigh's place, and that Miss Ross, as was really the case, though she had never seen him, had heard him so much talked of by her sister, that she had welcomed him, as she thought, quite as an old friend, when all the time she had been talking to Captain Dyer.

And I was not the only one who thought about it; else why did Mrs Colonel look annoyed, and the colonel, who came paddling out, exclaim loudly: 'Why, Leigh, look alive, man! here's Dyer been stealing a march upon you. Why, where have you been?'

I did not hear what the lieutenant said, for my attention was just then taken up by something else, but I saw him go up to Miss Ross, holding out his hand, while the meeting was very formal; but, as I told you, my attention was taken up by something else, and that something was a little dark, bright, eager, earnest face, with a pair of sharp eyes, and a little mocking-looking mouth; and as Captain Dyer had helped Miss Ross down with the steps from the howdah, so did I help down Lizzy Green, her maid; to get, by way of thanks, a half-saucy look, a nod of the head, and the sight of a pretty little tripping pair of ankles going over the hot sandy dust towards the tent.

But the next minute she was back, to ask about some luggage—a bullock-trunk or two—and she was coming up to me, as I eagerly stepped forward to meet her, when she seemed, as it were, to take it into her head to shy at me, going instead to Harry Lant, who had just come up, and who, on hearing what she wanted, placed his hands, with a grave swoop, upon his head, and made her a regular eastern salaam, ending by telling her that her slave would obey her commands. All of which seemed to grit upon me terribly; I didn't know why, then, but I found out afterwards, though not for many days to come.

We had the route given us for Begumbagh, a town that, in the old days, had been rather famous for its grandeur; but, from what I had heard, it was likely to turn out a very hot, dry, dusty, miserable spot; and I used to get reckoning up how long we should be frizzling out there in India before we got the

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orders for home; and put it at the lowest calculation, I could not make less of it than five years. At all events, we who were soldiers had made our own beds, and had to lie upon them, whether it was at home or abroad; and, as Mrs Bantem used to say to us, 'Where was the use of grumbling?' There were troubles in every life, even if it was a civilian's—as we soldiers always called those who didn't wear the Queen's uniform—and it was very doubtful whether we should have been a bit happier, if we had been in any other line. But all the same, government might have made things a little better for us in the way of suitable clothes, and things proper for the climate.

And so on we went: marching mornings and nights; camping all through the hot day; and it was not long before we found that, in Miss Ross, we men had got something else beside the children to worship.

But I may as well say now, and have it off my mind, that it has always struck me, that during those peaceful days, when our greatest worry was a hot march, we didn't know when we were well off, and that it wanted the troubles to come before we could see what good qualities there were in other people. Little trifling things used to make us sore—things such as we didn't notice afterwards, when great sorrows came. I know I was queer, and spiteful, and jealous, and no great wonder that, for I always was a man with a nastyish temper, and soon put out; but even Mrs Bantem used to shew that she wasn't quite perfect, for she quite upset me, one day, when Measles got talking at dinner about Lizzy Green, Miss Ross's maid, and, what was a wonderful thing for him, not finding fault. He got saying that she was a nice girl, and would make a soldier as wanted one a good wife; when Mrs Bantem fires up as spiteful as could be—I think, mind you, there 'd been something wrong with the cooking that day, which had turned her a little—and she says that Lizzy was very well, but looks weren't everything, and that she was raw as raw, and would want no end of dressing before she would be good for anything; while, as to making a soldier's wife, soldiers had no business to have wives till they could buy themselves off, and turn civilians. Then, again, she seemed to have taken a sudden spite against Mrs Maine, saying that she was a poor, little, stuck-up, fine lady, and she could never have forgiven her if it had not been for those two beautiful children; though what Mrs Bantem had got to forgive the colonel's wife, I don't believe she even knew herself.

The old black ayah, too, got very much put out about this time, and all on account of the two newcomers; for when Miss Ross hadn't got the children with her, they were along with Lizzy, who, like her mistress, was new to the climate, and hadn't got into that dull listless way that comes to people who have been some time up the country. They were all life, and fun, and energy, and the children were never happy when they were away; and of a morning, more to please Lizzy, I used to think, than the children, Harry Lant used to pick out a shady place, and then drive Chunder Chow, who was the mahout of *Nabob*, the principal elephant, half wild, by calling out his beast, and playing with him all sorts of antics.

Chunder tried all he could to stop it, but it was of no use, for Harry had got such influence over that animal that when one day he was coaxing him out to lead him under some trees, and the mahout tried to stop him, *Nabob* makes no more ado, but lifts his great soft trunk, and rolls Mr Chunder Chow over into the grass, where he lay screeching like a parrot, and chattering like a monkey, rolling his opal eyeballs, and shewing his white teeth with fear, for he expected that *Nabob* was going to put his foot on him, and crush him to death, as is the nature of those great beasts. But not he: he only lays his trunk gently on Harry's shoulder, and follows him across the open like a great flesh-mountain, winking his little pig's eyes, whisking his tiny tail, and flapping his great ears; while the children clapped their hands as they stood in the shade with Miss Ross and Lizzy, and Captain Dyer and Lieutenant Leigh close behind.

'There 's no call to be afraid, miss,' says Harry, saluting as he saw Miss Ross shrink back; and seeing how, when he said a few words in Hindustani, the great animal minded him, they stopped being afraid, and gave Harry fruit and cakes to feed the great beast with.

You see, out there in that great dull place, people are very glad to have any little trifle to amuse them, so you mustn't be surprised to hear that there used to be quite a crowd to see Harry Lant's performances, as he called them. But all the same, I didn't like his upsetting old Chunder Chow; and it seemed to me even then, that we 'd managed to make another black enemy—the black ayah being the first.

However, Harry used to go on making old *Nabob* kneel down, or shake hands, or curl up his trunk, or lift him up, finishing off by going up to his head, lifting one great ear, saying they understood one another, whispering a few words, and then shutting the ear up again, so as the words shouldn't be lost before they got into the elephant's brain, as Harry explained, because they 'd got a long way to go. Then Harry would lie down, and let the great beast walk backwards and forwards all over him, lifting his great feet so carefully, and setting them down close to Harry, but never touching him, except one day when, just as the great beast was passing his foot over Harry's breast, a voice called out something in Hindustani—and I knew who it was, though I didn't see—when *Nabob* puts his foot down on Harry's chest, and Lizzy gave a great scream, and we all thought the poor chap would be crushed; but not he: the great beast was took by surprise, but only for an instant, and, in his slow quiet way, he steps aside, and then touches Harry all over with his trunk; and there was no more performance that day.

'I 've got my knife into Master Chunder for that,' says Harry to me, 'for I 'll swear that was his voice.' And I started to find he had known it.

'I wouldn't quarrel with him,' I says quietly, 'for it strikes me he 's got his knife into you.'

'You 've no idea,' says Harry, 'what a nip it was. I thought it was all over; but all the same, the poor brute didn't mean it, I 'd swear.'

IV.

Who could have thought just then that all that nonsense of Harry Lant's with the elephant was shaping itself for our good; but so it was, as you shall by-and-by hear. The march continued, matters seeming to go on very smoothly—but only seeming, mind you, for let alone that we were all walking upon a volcano, there was a good deal of unpleasantry

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brewing. Let alone my feeling that, somehow or another, Harry Lant was not so good a mate to me as he used to be, there was a good deal wrong between Captain Dyer and Lieutenant Leigh, and it soon seemed plain that there was much more peace and comfort in our camp a week earlier than there was at the time of which I am now writing.

I used to have my turns as sentry here and there; and it was when standing stock still with my piece, that I used to see and hear so much—for in a camp it seems to be a custom for people to look upon a sentry as a something that can neither see nor hear anything but what might come in the shape of an enemy. They know he must not move from his post, which is to say that he 's tied hand and foot, and perhaps from that they think that he 's tied as to his senses. At all events, I got to see that when Miss Ross was seated in the colonel's tent, and Captain Dyer was near her, she seemed to grow gentle and quiet, and her eyes would light up, and her rich red lips part, as she listened to what he was saying; while, when it came to Lieutenant Leigh's turn, and he was beside her talking, she would be merry and chatty, and would laugh and talk as lively as could be. Harry Lant said it was because they were making up matters, and that some day she would be Mrs Leigh; but I didn't look at it in that light, though I said nothing.

I used to like to be sentry at the colonel's tent, on our halting for the night, when the canvas would be looped up, to let in the air, and they 'd got their great globe-lamps lit, with the tops to them, to keep out the flies, and the draughts made by the punkahs swinging backwards and forwards. I used to think it quite a pretty sight, with the ladies and the three or four officers, perhaps chatting, perhaps having a little music, for Miss Ross could sing like—like a nightingale, I was going to say; but no nightingale that I ever heard could seem to lay hold of your heart and almost bring tears into your eyes, as she did. Then she used to sing duets with Captain Dyer, because the colonel wished it, though it was plain to see Mrs Maine didn't like it, any more than did Lieutenant Leigh, who, more than once, as I 've seen, walked out, looking fierce and angry, to strike off right away from the camp, perhaps not to come back for a couple of hours.

It was one night when we 'd been about a fortnight on the way, for during the past week the colonel had been letting us go on very easily, I was sentry at the tent. There had been some singing, and Lieutenant Leigh had gone off in the middle of a duet. Then the doctor, the colonel, and a couple of subs were busy over a game at whist, and the black nurse had beckoned Mrs Maine out, I suppose to see something about the two children; when Captain Dyer and Miss Ross walked together just outside the tent, she holding by one of the cords, and he standing close beside her.

They did not say much, but stood looking up at the bright silver moon and the twinkling stars; while he said a word now and then about the beauty of the scene, the white tents, the twinkling lights here and there, and the soft peaceful aspect of all around; and then his voice seemed to grow lower and deeper as he spoke from time to time, though I could hardly hear a word, as I stood there like a statue watching her beautiful face, with the great clusters of hair knotted back from her broad white forehead, the moon shining full on it, and seeming to make her eyes flash as they were turned to him.

They must have stood there full half an hour, when she turned as if to go back, but he laid his hand upon hers as it held the tent cord, and said something very earnestly, when she turned to him again to look him full in the face, and I saw that her hand was not moved.

Then they were silent for a few seconds before he spoke again, loud enough for me to hear.

'I must ask you,' he said huskily; 'my peace depends upon it. I know that it has always been understood that you were to be introduced to Lieutenant Leigh. I can see now plainly enough what are your sister's wishes; but hearts are ungovernable, Miss Ross, and I tell you earnestly, as a simple, truth-speaking man, that you have roused feelings that until now slept quietly in my breast. If I am presumptuous, forgive me—love is bold as well as timid—but at least set me at rest: tell me, is there any engagement between you and Lieutenant Leigh?'

She did not speak for a few moments, but met his gaze—so it seemed to me—without shrinking, before saying one word, so softly, that it was like one of the whispers of the breeze crossing the plain—and that word was 'No!'

'God bless you for that answer, Miss Ross—Elsie,' he said deeply; and then his head was bent down for an instant over the hand that rested on the cord, before Miss Ross glided away from him into the tent, and went and stood resting with her hand upon the colonel's shoulder, when he, evidently in high glee, began to shew her his cards, laughing and pointing to first one, and then another, for he seemed to be having luck on his side.

But I had no more eyes then for the inside of the tent, for Captain Dyer just seemed to awaken to the fact that I was standing close by him as sentry, and he gave quite a start as he looked at me for a few moments without speaking. Then he took a step forward.

'Who is this? Oh, thank goodness!' (he said those few words in an undertone, but I happened to hear them). 'Smith,' he said, 'I forgot there was a sentry there. You saw me talking to that lady?'

'Yes, sir,' I said.

'You saw everything?'

'Yes, sir.'

'And you heard all?'

'No, sir, not all; only what you said last.'

Then he was silent again for a few moments, but only to lay his hand directly after on my chest.

'Smith,' he said, 'I would rather you had not seen this; and if it had been any other man in my company, I should perhaps have offered him money, to insure that there was no idle chattering at the mess-tables; but you I ask, as a man I can trust, to give me your word of honour as a soldier to let what you have seen and heard be sacred.'

'Thank you, captain,' I said, speaking thick, for somehow his words seemed to touch me. 'You shan't repent trusting me.'

'I have no fear, Smith,' he said, speaking lightly, and as if he felt joyful, and proud, and happy.—'What a glorious night for a cigar;' and he took one out of his case, when we both started, for, as if he had that moment risen out of the ground, Lieutenant Leigh stood there close to us; and even to this day I can't

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make out how he managed it, but all the same he must have seen and heard as much as I had.

'And pray, is my word of honour as a soldier to be taken, Captain Dyer? or is my silence to be bought with money?—Curse you! come this way, will you!' he hissed; for Captain Dyer had half turned, as if to avoid him, but he stepped back directly, and I saw them walk off together amongst the trees, till they were quite out of sight; and if ever I felt what it was to be tied down to one spot, I felt it then, as I walked sentry up and down by that tent watching for those two to return.

V.

Now, after giving my word of honour to hold all that sacred, some people may think I'm breaking faith in telling what I saw; but I made that right by asking the colonel's leave—he is a colonel now—and he smiled, and said that I ought to change the names, and then it would not matter.

I left off my last chapter saying how I felt being tied down to one spot, as I kept guard there; and perhaps everybody don't know that a sentry's duty is to stay in the spot where he has been posted, and that leaving it lightly might, in time of war, mean death.

I should think I watched quite an hour, wondering whether I ought to give any alarm; but I was afraid it might look foolish, for perhaps after all it might only mean a bit of a quarrel, and I could not call to mind any quarrel between officers ending in a duel.

I was glad, too, that I did not say anything, for at last I saw them coming back in the clear moonlight—clear-like as day; and then in the distance they stopped, and in a moment one figure seemed to strike the other a sharp blow, which sent him staggering back, and I could not then see who it was that was hit, till they came nearer, and I made out that it was Captain Dyer; while, if I had any doubts at first, I could have none as they came nearer and nearer, with Lieutenant Leigh talking in a big insolent way at Captain Dyer, who was very quiet, holding his handkerchief to his cheek.

So as to be as near as possible to where they were going to pass, I walked to the end of my tether, and, as they came up, Lieutenant Leigh says, in a nasty spiteful whisper: 'I should have thought you would have come into the tent to display the wound received in the lady's cause.'

'Leigh,' said Captain Dyer, taking down his white handkerchief—and in the bright moonlight I could see that his cheek was cut, and the handkerchief all bloody—'Leigh, that was an unmanly blow. You called me a coward; you struck me; and now you try to poison the wound with your bitter words. I never lift hand against the man who has taken that hand in his as my friend, but the day may come when I can prove to you that you are a liar.'

Lieutenant Leigh turned upon him fiercely, as though he would have struck him again; but Captain Dyer paid no heed to him, only walked quietly off to his quarters; while, with a sneering, scornful sort of laugh, the lieutenant went into the colonel's tent; though, if he expected to see Miss Ross, he was disappointed, for so long as I was on guard, she did not shew any more that night.

Off again the next morning, and over a hotter and dustier road than ever; and I must say that I began to wish we were settled down in barracks again, for everything seemed to grow more and more crooked, and people more and more unpleasant. Why, even Mrs Bantem that morning before starting must shew her teeth, and snub Bantem, and then begin going on about the colonel's wife, and the fine madam, her sister, having all sorts of luxuries, while poor hard-working soldiers' wives had to bear all the burden and heat of the day; while, by way of winding up, she goes up to Harry Lant and Measles, who were, as usual, squabbling about something, and boxes both their ears, as if they had been bad boys. I saw them both colour up fierce; but the next minute Harry Lant bursts out laughing, and Measles does the same, and then they two did what I should think they never did before—they shook hands; but Mrs Bantem had no sooner turned away with tears in her eyes, because she felt so cross, than the two chaps fell out again about some stupid thing or another, and kept on snarling and snapping at each other all along the march.

But there, bless you! that wasn't all: I saw Mrs Maine talking to her sister in a quick earnest sort of way, and they both seemed out of sorts; and the colonel swore at the tent-men, and bullied the adjutant, and he came round and dropped on to us, finding fault with the men's belts, and that upset the sergeants. Then some of the baggage didn't start right, and Lieutenant Leigh had to be taken to task by Captain Dyer, as in duty bound; while, when at last we were starting, if there wasn't a tremendous outcry, and the young colonel—little Cock Robin, you know—kicking, and screaming, and fighting the old black nurse, because he mightn't draw his little sword, and march alongside of Harry Lant!

Now, I'm very particular about putting all this down, because I want you to see how we all were one with the other, and how right through the battalion little things made us out of sorts with one another, and hardly friendly enough to speak, so that the difference may strike you, and you may see in a stronger light the alteration and the behaviour of people when trouble came.

All the same, though, I don't think it's possible for anybody to make a long march in India without getting out of temper. It's my belief that the grit does it, for you do have that terribly; and what with the heat, the dust, the thirst, the government boots, that always seem as if made not to fit anybody, and the grit, I believe even a regiment all chaplains would forget their trade.

Tramp, tramp, tramp, day after day, and nearly always over wide, dreary, dusty plains. Now we'd pass a few muddy paddy-fields, or come upon a river, but not often; and I many a time used to laugh grimly to myself, as I thought what a very different place hot, dusty, dreary India was, to the glorious country I used to picture, all beautiful trees and flowers, and birds with dazzling plumage. There are bright places there, no doubt, but I never came across one, and my recollections of India are none of the most cheery.

But at last came the day when we were crossing a great wide-spread plain, in the middle of which seemed to be a few houses, with something bright here and there shining in the sun; and as we marched on, the cluster of houses appeared to grow and grow, till we halted at last in a market square of a good-sized town; and that night we were once more in barracks.

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But, for my part, I was more gritty than ever; for now we did not see the colonel's lady or her sister, though I may as well own that there was some one with them that I wanted to see more than either.

They were all, of course, at the colonel's quarters, a fine old palace of a place, with a court-yard, and a tank in the centre, and trees, and a flat roof, by the side of the great square; while on one side was another great rambling place, separated by a narrowish sort of alley, used for stores and hospital purposes; and on the other side, still going along by the side of the great market square, was another building, the very fellow to the colonel's quarters, but separated by a narrow footway, some ten feet wide, and this place was occupied by the officers.

Our barracks took up another side of the square; and on the others were mosques and flat-roofed buildings, and a sort of bazaar; while all round stretched away, in narrow streets, the houses of what we men used to call the niggers. Though, speaking for myself, I used to find them, when well treated, a nice, clean, gentle sort of people. I used to look upon them as a big sort of children, in their white muslin and calico, and their simple ways of playing-like at living; and even now I haven't altered my opinion of them in general, for the great burst of frenzied passion that ran through so many of them was just like a child's uncontrolled rage.

Things were not long in settling down to the regular life: there was a little drill of a morning, and then, the rest of the day, the heat to fight with, which seemed to take all the moisture out of our bodies, and make us long for night.

I did not get put on as sentry once at the colonel's quarters, but I heard a little now and then from Mrs Bantem, who used to wash some of Mrs Maine's fine things, the black women doing everything else; and she'd often have a good grumble about 'her fine ladyship,' as she called her, and she'd pity her children. She used to pick up a good deal of information, though, and, taking a deal of interest as I did in Miss Ross, I got to know that it seemed to be quite a settled thing between her and Captain Dyer; and Bantem, who got took on now as Lieutenant Leigh's servant, used to tell his wife about how black those two used to seem one towards the other.

And so the time went on in a quiet sleepy way, the men getting lazier every day. There was nothing to stir us, only now and then we'd have a good laugh at Measles, who'd get one of his nasty fits on, and swear at all the officers round, saying he was as good as any of them, and that if he had his rights he would have been made an officer before then. Harry Lant, too, used to do his bit to make time pass away a little less dull, singing, telling stories, or getting up to some of his pranks with old *Nabob*, the elephant, making Chunder, the mahout, more mad than ever, for, no matter what he did or said, only let Harry make a sort of queer noise of his, and, just like a great flesh-mountain, that elephant would come. It didn't matter who was in the way: regiment at drill, officer, rajah, anybody, old *Nabob* would come straight away to Harry, holding out his trunk for fruit, or putting it in Harry's breast, where he'd find some bread or biscuit; and then the great brute would smooth him all over with his trunk, in a way that used to make Mrs Bantem say, that perhaps, after all, the natives weren't such fools as they looked, and that what they said about dead people going into animal's bodies might be true after all, for, if that great overgrown beast hadn't a soul of its own, and couldn't think, she didn't know nothing, so now then!

VI.

But it was always the same; and though time was when I could have laughed as merrily as did that little Jenny Wren of the colonel's at Harry's antics, I couldn't laugh now, because it always seemed as if they were made an excuse to get Miss Ross and her maid out with the children.

A party of jugglers, or dancing-girls, or a man or two with pipes and snakes, were all very well; but I've known clever parties come round, and those I've named would hardly come out to look; and my heart, I suppose it was, if it wasn't my mind, got very sore about that time, and I used to get looking as evil at Harry Lant as Lieutenant Leigh did at the captain.

But it was a dreary time that, after all, one from which we were awakened in a sudden way, that startled us to a man.

First of all, there came a sort of shadowy rumour that something was wrong with the men of a native regiment, something to do with their caste; and before we had well realised that it was likely to be anything serious, sharp and swift came one bit of news after another, that the British officers in one native regiment had been shot down—here, there, in all directions; and then we understood that what we had taken for the flash of a solitary fire, was the firing of a big train, and that there was a great mutiny in the land. And not, mind, the mutiny or riot of a mob of roughs, but of men drilled and disciplined by British officers, with leaders of their own caste, all well armed and provided with ammunition; and the talk round our mess when we heard all this was, How will it end?

I don't think there were many who did not realise the fact that something awful was coming to pass. Measles grinned, he did, and said that there was going to be an end of British tyranny in India, and that the natives were only going to seize their own again; but the next minute, although it was quite clean, he takes his piece out of the rack, cleans it thoroughly all over again, fixes the bayonet, feels the point, and then stands at the 'present!'

'I think we can let 'em know what 's what, though, my lads, if they come here,' he says, with a grim smile; when Mrs Bantem, whose breath seemed quite taken away before by the way he talked, jumped up quite happy-like, laid her great hand upon his left side, and then, turning to us, she says: 'It 's beating strong.'

'What is?' says Bantem, looking puzzled.

'Measles' heart,' says Mrs Bantem; 'and I always knew it was in the right place.'

The next minute she gave Measles a slap on the back as echoed through the place, sending him staggering forward; but he only laughed and said: 'Praise the saints, I ain't Bantem.'

There was a fine deal of excitement, though, now. The colonel seemed to wake up, and with him every officer, for we expected not only news but orders every moment. Discipline, if I may say so, was buckled up tight with the tongue in the last hole; provisions and water were got in; sentries doubled, and a strange feeling of distrust and fear came upon all, for we soon saw that the people of the place hung

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away from us, and though, from such an inoffensive-looking lot as we had about us, there didn't seem much to fear, yet there was no knowing what treachery we might have to encounter, and as he had to think and act for others beside himself, Colonel Maine—God bless him—took every possible precaution against danger, then hidden, but which was likely to spring into sight at any moment.

There were not many English residents at Begumbagh, but what there were came into quarters directly; and the very next morning we learned plainly enough that there was danger threatening our place by the behaviour of the natives, who packed up their few things and filed out of the town as fast as they could, so that at noonday the market-place was deserted, and, save the few we had in quarters, there was not a black face to be seen.

The next morning came without news; and I was orderly, and standing waiting in the outer court close behind the colonel, who was holding a sort of council of war with the officers, when a sentry up in the broiling sun, on the roof, calls out that a horseman was coming; and before very long, covered with sweat and dust, an orderly dragoon dashes up, his horse all panting and blown; and then coming jingling and clanking in with those spurs and that sabre of his, he hands despatches to the colonel.

I hope I may be forgiven for what I thought then, but, as I watched his ruddy face, while he read those despatches, and saw it turn all of a sickly, greeny white, I gave him the credit of being a coward; and I was not the only one who did so. We all knew that, like us, he had never seen a shot fired in anger; and something like an angry feeling of vexation came over me, I know, as I thought of what a fellow he would be to handle and risk the lives of the four hundred men under his charge there at Begumbagh.

'D'yer think I'd look like that?' says a voice close to my ear just then. 'D'yer think if I'd been made an officer, I'd ha' shewed the white feather like that?' And turning round sharp, I saw it was Measles, who was standing sentry by the gateway; and he was so disgusted, that he spat about in all directions, for he was a man who didn't smoke, like any other Christian, but chewed his tobacco like a sailor.

'Dyer,' says the colonel, the next moment, and they closed up together, but close to where we two stood—'Dyer,' he says, 'I never felt before that it would be hard to do my duty as a soldier; but, God help me, I shall have to leave Annie and the children.' There were a couple of tears rolling down the poor fellow's cheeks as he spoke, and he took Captain Dyer's hand.

'Look at him! Cuss him!' whispers Measles again; and I kicked out sharp behind, and hit him in the shin. 'He's a pretty sort of a'——

He didn't say any more just then, for, like me, he was staggered by the change that took place.

I think I've said Colonel Maine was a little, easy-going, pudgy man, with a red face; but just then, as he stood holding Captain Dyer's hand, a change seemed to come over him; he dropped the hand he had held, tightened his sword-belt, and then took a step forward, to stand thoughtful, with despatches in his left hand. It was then that I saw in a moment that I had wronged him, and I felt as if I could have gone down on the ground for him to have walked over me, for whatever he might have been in peace, easy-going, careless, and fond of idleness and good-living—come time for action, there he was with the true British officer flashing out of his face, his lips pinched, his eyes flashing, and a stern look upon his countenance that I had never seen before.

'Now then!' I says in a whisper to Measles. I didn't say anything else, for he knew what I meant. 'Now then—now then!'

'Well,' says Measles then, in a whisper, 'I s'pose women and children will bring the soft out of a man at a time like this; but, cuss him! what did he mean by humbugging us like that!'

I should think Colonel Maine stood alone thoughtful and still in that court-yard, with the sun beating down upon his muslin-covered forage-cap, while you could slowly, and like a pendulum-beat, count thirty. It was a tremendously hot morning, with the sky a bright clear blue, and the shadows of a deep purply black cast down and cut as sharp as sharp. It was so still, too, that you could hear the whirring, whizzy noise of the cricket things, and now and then the champ, champ of the horse rattling his bit as he stood outside the gateway. It was a strange silence, that seemed to make itself felt; and then the colonel woke into life, stuck those despatches into his sword-belt, gave an order here, an order there, and the next minute—Tantaran-tantaran, *Tantaran-tantaran*, TANTARAN-TANTARAN, *Tantaran-tay*—the bugle was ringing out the assemblée, men were hurrying here and there, there was the trampling of feet, the court-yard was full of busy figures, shadows were passing backwards and forwards, and the news was abroad that our regiment was to form a flying column with another, and that we were off directly.

Ay, but it was exciting, that getting ready, and the time went like magic before we formed a hollow square, and the colonel said a few words to us, mounted as he was now, his voice firm as firm, except once, when I saw him glance at an upper window, and then it trembled, but only for an instant. His words were not many; and to this day, when I think of the scene under that hot blue sky, they come ringing back; for it did not seem to us that our old colonel was speaking, but a new man of a different mettle, though it was only that the right stuff had been sleeping in his breast, ready to be wakened by the bugle.

'My lads,' he said, and to a man we all burst out into a ringing cheer, when he took off his cap, and waved it round—'My lads, this is a sharp call, but I've been expecting it, and it has not found us asleep. I thank you for the smart way in which you have answered it, for it shews me that a little easy-going on my part in the piping times of peace has not been taken advantage of. My lads, these are stern times; and this despatch tells me of what will bring the honest British blood into every face, and make every strong hand take a firm gripe of its piece as he longs for the order to charge the mutinous traitors to their Queen, who, taking her pay, sworn to serve her, have turned, and in cold blood butchered their officers, slain women, and hacked to pieces innocent babes. My lads, we are going against a horde of monsters; but I have bad news—you cannot all go'——

There was a murmur here.

'That murmur is not meant,' he continued; 'and I know it will be regretted when I explain myself. We have women here and children: mine—yours—and they must be protected' (it was here that his voice shook). 'Captain Dyer's company will garrison

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the place till our return, and to those men many of us leave all that is dear to us on earth. I have spoken. God save the Queen!'

How that place echoed with the hearty 'Hurray!' that rung out; and then it was, 'Fours right. March!' and only our company held firm, while I don't know whether I felt disappointed or pleased, till I happened to look up at one of the windows, to see Mrs Maine and Miss Ross, with those two poor little innocent children clapping their hands with delight at seeing the soldiers march away; one of them, the little girl, with her white muslin and scarlet sash over her shoulder, being held up by Lizzy Green; and then I did know that I was not disappointed, but glad I was to stay.

But to shew you how a man's heart changes about when it is blown by the hot breath of what you may call love, let me tell you that only half a minute later, I was disappointed again at not going; and dared I have left the ranks, I'd have run after the departing column, for I caught Harry Lant looking up at that window, and I thought a handkerchief was waved to him.

Next minute, Captain Dyer calls out, 'Form four—deep. Right face. March!' and he led us to the gateway, but only to halt us there, for Measles, who was sentry, calls out something to him in a wild excited way.

'What do you want, man?' says Captain Dyer.

'O sir, if you 'll only let me exchange. 'Taint too late. Let me go, captain.'

'How dare you, sir!' says Captain Dyer sternly, though I could see plainly enough it was only for discipline, for he was, I thought, pleased at Measles wanting to be in the thick of it. Then he shouts again to Measles: ''Tention—present arms!' and Measles falls into his right position for a sentry when troops are marching past. 'March!' says the captain again; and we marched into the market-place, and—all but those told off for sentries—we were dismissed; and Captain Dyer then stood talking earnestly to Lieutenant Leigh, for it had fallen out that they two, with a short company of eight-and-thirty rank and file, were to have the guarding of the women and children left in quarters at Begumbagh.

VII.

It seemed to me that, for the time being, Lieutenant Leigh was too much of a soldier to let private matters and personal feelings of enmity interfere with duty; and those two stood talking together for a good half-hour, when, having apparently made their plans, fatigue-parties were ordered out; and what I remember then thinking was a wise move, the soldiers' wives and children in quarters were brought into the old palace, since it was the only likely spot for putting into something like a state of defence.

I have called it a palace, and I suppose that a rajah did once live in it, but, mind you, it was neither a very large nor a very grand place, being only a square of buildings, facing inward to a little court-yard, entered by a gateway, after the fashion of no end of buildings in the east.

Water we had in the tank, but provisions were brought in, and what sheep there were. Fortunately, there was a good supply of hay, and that we got in; but one thing we did not bargain for, and that was the company of the great elephant, *Nabob*, he having been left behind. And what does he do but come slowly up on those india-rubber cushion feet of his, and walk through the gateway, his back actually brushing against the top; and then, once in, he goes quietly over to where the hay was stacked, and coolly enough begins eating!

The men laughed, and some jokes were made about his taking up a deal of room, and I suppose, really, it was through Harry Lant that the great beast came in; but no more was said then, we all being so busy, and not one of us had the sense to see what a fearful strait that great inoffensive animal might bring us to.

I believe we all forgot about the heat that day as we worked on, slaving away at things that, in an ordinary way, we should have expected to be done by the niggers. Food, ammunition, wood, particularly planks, everything Captain Dyer thought likely to be of use; and soon a breastwork was made inside the gateway; such lower windows as looked outwards carefully nailed up, and loopholed for a shot at the enemy, should any appear; and when night did come at last, peaceful and still, the old palace was turned into a regular little fort.

We all knew that all this might be labour in vain, but all the same it seemed to be our duty to get the place into as good a state of defence as we could, and under orders we did it. But, after all, we knew well enough that if the mutineers should bring up a small field-piece, they could knock the place about our ears in no time. Our hope, though, was that, at all events while our regiment was away, we might be unmolested, for, if the enemy came in any number, what could eight-and-thirty men do, hampered as they were with half-a-dozen children, and twice as many women? Not that all the women were likely to hamper us, for there was Mrs Bantem, busy as a bee, working here, comforting there, helping women to make themselves snug in different rooms; and once, as she came near me, she gave me one of her tremendous slaps on the back, her eyes twinkling with pleasure, and the perspiration streaming down her face the while. 'Ike Smith,' she says, 'this is something like, isn't it? But ask Captain Dyer to have that breastwork strengthened—there isn't half enough of it. Glad Bantem hasn't gone. But, I say, only think of that poor woman! I saw her just now crying, fit to break her poor heart.'

'What poor woman?' I said, staring hard.

'Why, the colonel's wife. Poor soul, it 's pitiful to see her! it went through me like a knife.—What! are you there, my pretties?' she cried, flumping down on the stones as the colonel's two little ones came running out. 'Bless your pretty hearts, you 'll come and say a word to old Mother Bantem, won't you?'

'What's everybody tying about?' says the little girl, in her prattling way. 'I don't like people to ty. Has my ma been whipped, and Aunt Elsie been naughty?'

'Look, look!' cries the boy excitedly; 'dere's old *Nabob!*' And toddling off, the next minute he was close to the great beast, his little sister running after him, to catch hold of his hand; and there the little mites stood close to, and staring up at the great elephant, as he kept on amusing himself by twisting up a little hay in his trunk, and then lightly scattering it over his back, to get rid of the flies—for what nature could have been about to give him such a scrap of a tail, I can't understand. He 'd work it, and flip it about hard enough; but as to getting rid

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of a fly, it's my belief that if insects can laugh, they laughed at it, as they watched him from where they were buzzing about the stone walls and windows in the hot sunshine.

The next minute, like a chorus, there came a scream from one of the upper windows, one from another, and a sort of howl from Mrs Bantem, and we all stood startled and staring, for what does Jenny Wren do, but, in a staggering way, lift up her little brother for him to touch the elephant's trunk, and then she stood laughing and clapping her hands with delight, seeing no fear, bless her! as that long, soft trunk was gently curled round the boy's waist, he was drawn out of his sister's arms; and then the great beast stood swinging the child to and fro, now up a little way, now down between his legs, and him crowing and laughing away all the while, as if it was the best fun that could be.

I believe we were all struck motionless; and it was like taking a hand away from my throat to let me breathe once more, when I saw the elephant gently drop the little fellow down on a heap of hay, but only for him to scramble up, and run forward shouting: 'Now 'gain, now 'gain;' and, as if *Nabob* understood his little prattling, half-tied tongue, he takes him up again, and swings him, just as there was a regular rush made, and Mrs Colonel, Miss Ross, Lizzy, and the captain and lieutenant came up.

'For Heaven's sake, save the child!' cries Mrs Maine.—'Mr Leigh, pray, do something.'

Miss Ross did not speak, but she looked at Captain Dyer; and those two young men both went at the elephant directly, to get the child away; but, in an instant, *Nabob* wheeled round, just the same as a stubborn donkey would at home with a lot of boys teasing it; and then, as they dodged round his great carcass, he trumpeted fiercely, and began to shuffle off round the court.

I went up too, and so did Mrs Bantem, brave as a lion; but the great beast only kept on making his loud snorting noise, and shuffled along, with the boy in his trunk, swinging him backwards and forwards; and it was impossible to help thinking of what would be the consequence if the elephant should drop the little fellow, and then set on him one of his great feet.

It seemed as if nothing could be done, and once the idea—wild enough too—rushed into my head that it would be advisable to get a rifle put to the great beast's ear, and fire, when Measles shouted out from where he was on guard: 'Here 's Chunder coming!' and, directly after, with his opal eye-balls rolling, and his dark, treacherous-looking face seeming to me all wicked and pleased at what was going on, came the mahout, and said a few words to the elephant, which stopped directly, and went down upon its knees. Chunder then tried to take hold of the child, but somehow that seemed to make the great beast furious, and, getting up again, he began to grunt and make a noise after the fashion of a great pig, going on now faster round the court, and sending those who had come to look, and who stood in his way, fleeing in all directions.

Mrs Maine was half fainting, and, catching the little girl to her breast, I saw her go down upon her knees and hide her face, expecting, no doubt, every moment, that the next one would be her boy's last; and, indeed, we were all alarmed now, for the more we tried to get the little chap away, the fiercer the elephant grew; the only one who did not seem to mind being the boy himself, though his sister now began to cry, and in her little artless way I heard her ask her mother if the naughty elephant would eat Clivey.

I've often thought since that if we'd been quiet, and left the beast alone, he would soon have set the child down; and I've often thought, too, that Mr Chunder could have got the boy away if he had liked, only he did nothing but tease and irritate the elephant, which was not the best of friends with him. But you will easily understand that there was not much time for thought then.

I had been doing my best along with the others, and then stood thinking what I could be at next, when I caught Lizzy Green's eye turned to me in an appealing, reproachful sort of way, that seemed to say as plainly as could be: 'Can't you do anything?' when all at once Measles shouts out: ''Arry, 'Arry!' and Harry Lant came up at the double, having been busy carrying arms out of the guard-room rack.

It was at one and the same moment that Harry Lant saw what was wrong, and that a cold dull chill ran through me, for I saw Lizzy clasp her hands together in a sort of thankful way, and it seemed to me then, as Harry ran up to the elephant, that he was always to be put before me, and that I was nobody, and the sooner I was out of the way the better.

All the same, though, I couldn't help admiring the way Harry ran up to the great brute, and did what none of us could manage. I quite hated him, I know, but yet I was proud of my mate, as he went up and says something to *Nabob*, and the elephant stands still. 'Put him down,' says Harry, pointing to the ground; and the great flesh-mountain puts the little fellow down. 'Now then,' says Harry, to the horror of the ladies, 'pick him up again;' and in a twinkling the great thing whips the boy up once more. 'Now, bring him up to the colonel's lady.' Well, if you 'll believe me, if the great thing didn't follow Harry like a lamb, and carry the child up to where, half fainting, knelt poor Mrs Maine. 'Now, put him down,' says Harry; and the next moment little Clive Maine —Cock Robin, as we called him—was being hugged to his mother's breast. 'Now, go down on your knees, and beg the ladies' pardon,' says Harry laughing. Down goes the elephant, and stops there, making a queer chuntering noise the while. 'Says he 's very sorry, ma'am, and won't do so no more,' says Harry, serious as a judge; and in a moment, half laughing, half crying, Mrs Maine caught hold of Harry's hand, and kissed it, and then held it for a moment to her breast, sobbing hysterically as she did so.

'God bless you! You're a good man,' she cried; and then she broke down altogether; and Miss Ross, and Mrs Bantem, and Lizzy got round her, and helped her in.

I could see that Harry was touched, for one of his lips shook; but he tried to keep up the fun of the thing; and turning to the elephant, he says out loud: 'Now, get up, and go back to the hay; and don't you come no more of those games, that's all.'

The elephant got up directly, making a grunting noise as he did so.

'Why not?' says Harry, making-believe that that was what the great beast said. 'Because, if you do, I 'll smash you. There!'

Officers and men, they all burst out laughing, to see little Harry Lant—a chap so little that he wouldn't have been in the regiment only that men were scarce, and the standard was very low when he listed—to see him standing shaking his fist at the great monster, one of whose legs was bigger than Harry altogether —stand shaking his fist in its face, and then take hold of the soft trunk and lead him away.

Perhaps I did, perhaps I didn't, but I thought I caught sight of a glance passing between Lizzy Green, now at one window, and Harry, leading off the elephant; but all the same I felt that jealous of him, and to hate him so that I could have quarrelled with

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him about nothing. It seemed as if he was always to come before me in everything.

And I wasn't the only one jealous of Harry, for no sooner was the court pretty well empty, than he came slowly up towards me, in spite of my sour black looks, which he wouldn't notice; but before he could get to me, Chunder Chow, the mahout, goes up to the elephant, muttering and spiteful-like, with his hook-spear thing, that mahouts use to drive with; and being, I suppose, put out, and jealous, and annoyed at his authority being taken away, and another man doing what he couldn't, he gives the elephant a kick in the leg, and then hits him viciously with his iron hook thing.

Lord bless you! it didn't take an instant, and it seemed to me that the elephant only gave that trunk of his a gentle swing against Chunder's side, and he was a couple of yards off, rolling over and over in the hay scattered about.

Up he jumps, wild as wild; and the first thing he catches sight of is Harry laughing fit to crack his sides, when Chunder rushes at him like a mad bull.

I suppose he expected to see Harry turn tail and run; but that being one of those things not included in drill, and a British soldier having a good deal of the machine about him, Harry stands fast, and Chunder pulls up short, grinning, rolling his eyes, and twisting his hands about, just for all the world like as if he was robbing a hen-roost, and wringing all the chickens' necks.

'Didn't hurt much, did it, blacky?' says Harry coolly. But the mahout couldn't speak for rage; but he kept spitting on the ground, and making signs, till really his face was anything but pretty to look at. And there he kept on, till, from laughing, Harry turned a bit nasty, for there was some one looking out of a window; and from being half-amused at what was going on, I once more felt all cold and bitter. But Harry fires up now, and makes towards Mr Chunder, who begins to retreat; and says Harry: 'Now I tell you what it is, young man; I never did you any ill turn; and if I choose to have a bit of fun with the elephant, it 's government property, and as much mine as yours. But look ye here—if you come cussing, and spitting, and swearing at me again in your nasty heathen dialect, why, if I don't—— No,' he says, stopping short, and half-turning to me, 'I can't black his eyes, Isaac, for they 're black enough already; but let him come any more of it, and, jiggermaree, if I don't bung 'em!'

VIII.

Chunder didn't like the looks of Harry, I suppose, so he walked off, turning once to spit and curse, like that turn-coat chap, Shimei, that you read of in the Bible; and we two walked off together towards our quarters.

'I ain't going to stand any of his nonsense,' says Harry.

'It 's bad making enemies now, Harry,' I said gruffly. And just then up comes Measles, who had been relieved, for his spell was up now, and another party were on, else he would have had to be in the guard-room.

'There never was such an unlucky beggar as me,' says Measles. 'If a chance does turn up for earning a bit of promotion, it 's always some one else gets it. Come on, lads, and let 's see what Mother Bantem 's got in the pot.'

'You 'll perhaps have a chance before long of earning your bit of promotion without going out,' I says.

'Ike Smith 's turned prophet and croaker in ornary,' says Harry, laughing. 'I believe he expects we 're going to have a new siege of Seringapatam here, only back 'ards way on.'

'Only wish some of 'em would come this way,' says Measles grimly; and he made a sort of offer, and a hit out at some imaginary enemy.

'Here they are,' says Joe Bantem, as we walked in. 'Curry for dinner, lads—look alive.'

'What, my little hero!' says Mrs Bantem, fetching Harry one of her slaps on the back. 'My word, you 're in fine plume with the colonel's lady.'

Slap came her hand down again on Harry's back; and as soon as he could get wind: 'Oh, I say, don't,' says Harry. 'Thank goodness, I ain't a married man.—Is she often as affectionate as this with you, Joe?'

Joe Bantem laughed; and soon after we were all making, in spite of threatened trouble and disappointment, an uncommonly hearty dinner, for, if there ever was a woman who could make a good curry, it was Mrs Bantem; and many 's the cold winter 's day I 've stood in Facet's door there in Bond Street, and longed for a plateful. Pearls stewed in sunshine, Harry Lant used to call it; and really to see the beautiful, glistening, white rice, every grain tender as tender, and yet dry and ready to roll away from the others—none of your mosh-posh rice, if Mrs Bantem boiled it—and then the rich golden curry itself: there, I 've known that woman turn one of the toughest old native cocks into what you 'd have sworn was a delicate young Dorking chick—that is, so long as you didn't get hold of a drumstick, which perhaps would be a bit ropy. That woman was a regular blessing to our mess, and we fellows said so, many a time.

One, two, three days passed without any news, and we in our quarters were quiet as if thousands of miles from the rest of the world. The town kept as deserted as ever, and it seemed almost startling to me when I was posted sentry on the roof, after looking out over the wide, sandy, dusty plain, over which the sunshine was quivering and dancing, to peer down amongst the little ramshackle native huts without a sign of life amongst them, and it took but little thought for me to come to the conclusion that the natives knew of something terrible about to happen, and had made that their reason for going away. Though, all the same, it might have been from dread lest we should seek to visit upon them and theirs the horrors that had elsewhere befallen the British.

I used often to think, too, that Captain Dyer had some such feelings as mine, for he looked very, very serious and anxious, and he 'd spend hours on the roof with his glass, Miss Ross often being by his side, while Lieutenant Leigh used to watch them in a strange way, when he thought no one was observing him.

I 've often thought that when people get touched with that queer complaint folks call love, they get into a curious half-delirious way, that makes them fancy that people are nearly blind, and have their eyes shut to what they do or say. I fancy there was something of this kind with Miss Ross, and I 'm sure there was with me when I used to go hanging about, trying to get a word with Lizzy; and, of course, shut up as we all were then, often having the chance, but getting seldom anything but a few cold answers, and a sort of show of fear of me whenever I was near to her.

But what troubled me as much as anything, was the behaviour of the four Indians we had shut up with us—Chunder Chow, the old black nurse, and two more—for they grew more uppish and bounceable every day, refusing to work, until Captain Dyer had one of the men tied up to the triangles and flogged, down in a great cellar or vault place that there was under the north end of the palace, so that the ladies and women shouldn't hear his cries. He deserved all he got, as I can answer for, and that made the rest a little more civil, but not for long; and, just the day before something happened, I took

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the liberty of saluting Captain Dyer, after he had been giving me some orders, and took that chance of speaking my mind.

'Captain,' I says, 'I don't think those black folks are to be trusted.'

'Neither do I, Smith,' he says. 'But what have you to tell me?'

'Nothing at all, captain, only that I have my eye on them; and I've been thinking that they must somehow or another have held communication outside; and I don't like it, for those people don't get what we call cheeky without cause.'

'Keep both eyes on them then, Smith,' says Captain Dyer, smiling; 'and, no matter what it is—if it is the most trivial thing in any way connected with them, report it.'

'I will, sir,' I says; and the very next day, much against the grain, I did have something to report.

IX.

The next morning was hotter, I think, than ever, with no prospect either of rain or change; and, after doing what little work I had to get over, it struck me that I might as well attend to what Captain Dyer advised—give two eyes to Chunder and his friends; so I left Mrs Bantem busy over her cooking, and went down into the court.

All below was as still as death—sunshine here, shadow there; but, through one of the windows, open to catch the least breeze that might be on the way, and taking in instead the hot, sultry air, came now and then the silvery laughter of the children—that pleasant cheery sound that makes the most rugged old face grow a trifle smoother.

I looked here, and I looked there, but could only see old *Nabob* amusing himself with the hay, a sentry on the roof to the east, and another on the roof to the west, and one in the gateway, broiling almost, all of them, with the heat.

The ladies and the children were seldom seen now, for they were in trouble; and Mrs Maine was worn almost to skin and bone with anxiety, as she sat waiting for tidings of the expedition.

Not knowing what to do with myself, I sauntered along by where there was a slip of shade, and entered the south side of the palace—an old half-ruinous part; and after going first into one, and then into another of the bare empty rooms, I picked out what seemed to be the coolest corner I could find, sat down with my back propped against the wall, filled and lit my pipe, and then putting things together in my mind, thoroughly enjoyed a good smoke.

There was something wonderfully soothing in that bit of tobacco, and it appeared to me cooling, comforting, and to make my bit of a love-affair seem not so bad as it was. So, on the strength of that, I refilled, and was about half-way through another pipe, when things began to grow very dim round about me, and I was wandering about in my dreams, and nodding that head of mine in the most curious and wild way you can think of. What I dreamed about most was about getting married to Lizzy Green; and in what must have been a very short space, that event was coming off at least half-a-dozen times over, only *Nabob*, the elephant, would come in at an awkward time and put a stop to it. But at last, in my dreamy fashion, it seemed to me that matters were smoothed over, and he consented to put down the child, and, flapping his ears, promised he'd say yes. But in my stupid, confused muddle, I thought that he'd no sooner put down the child with his trunk than he wheeled round and took him up with his tail; and so on, backwards and forwards, when, getting quite out of patience, I caught Lizzy's hand in mine, saying: 'Never mind the elephant—let 's have it over;' and she gave a sharp scream.

I jumped to my feet, biting off and swallowing a bit of pipe-shank as I did so, and then stood drenched with perspiration, listening to a scuffling noise in the next room; when, shaking off the stupid confused feeling, I ran towards the door just as another scream—not a loud, but a faint excited scream—rang in my ears, and the next moment Lizzy Green was sobbing and crying in my arms, and that black thief Chunder was crawling on his hands and knees to the door, where he got up, holding his fist to his mouth, and then he turned upon me such a look as I have never forgotten.

I don't wonder at the people of old painting devils with black faces, for I don't know anything more devilish-looking than a black's phiz when it is drawn with rage, and the eyes are rolling about, now all black flash, now all white, while the grinning ivories below seem to be grinding and ready to tear you in pieces.

It was after that fashion that Chunder looked at me as he turned at the door; but I was then only thinking of the trembling, frightened girl I held in my arms, trying at the same time to whisper a few gentle words, while I had hard work to keep from pressing my lips to her white forehead.

But the next minute she disengaged herself from my grasp, and held out her little white hand to me, thanking me as sweetly as thanks could be given.

'Perhaps you had better not say a word about it,' she whispered. 'He 's come under pretence of seeing the nurse, and been rude to me once or twice before. I came here to sit at that window with my work, and did not see him come behind me.'

I started as she spoke about that open window, for it looked out upon the spot where I sometimes stood sentry; but then, Harry Lant sometimes stood just in the same place, and I don't know whether it was a strange impression caused by his coming, that made me think of him, but just then there were footsteps, and, with his pipe in his mouth, and fatigue-jacket all unbuttoned, Harry entered the room.

'Beg pardon; didn't know it was engaged,' he says lightly, as he stepped back; and then he stopped, for Lizzy called to him by his name.

'Please walk back with me to Mrs Maine's quarters,' she said softly; and once more holding her hand out to me, with her eyes cast down, she thanked me; and the question I had been asking myself—Did she love Harry Lant better than me?—was to my mind answered, and I gave a groan as I saw them walk off together, for it struck me then that they had engaged to meet in that room, only Harry Lant was late.

'Never mind,' I says to myself; 'I've done a comrade a good turn.' And then I thought more and more of there being a feeling in the blacks' minds that their day was coming, or that ill-looking scoundrel would never have dared to insult a white woman in open day.

Ten minutes after, I was on my way to Captain Dyer, for, in spite of what Lizzy had said, I felt that, being under orders, it was my duty to report all that occurred with the blacks; for we might at any time have been under siege, and to have had unknown and treacherous enemies in the camp would have been ruin indeed.

'Well, Smith,' he said, smiling as I entered and saluted, 'what news of the enemy?'

'Not much, sir,' I said; what I had to tell, going, as I have before said, very much against the grain. 'I was in one of the empty rooms on the south side, when I heard a scream, and running up, I found it was Miss Ross'——

'What!' he roared, in a voice that would have startled a stronger man than I.

'Miss Ross's maid, sir, with that black fellow Chunder, the mahout, trying to kiss her.'

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'Well?' he said, with a black angry look overspreading his face.

'Well, sir,' I said, feeling quite red as I spoke, 'he kissed my fist instead—that 's all.'

Captain Dyer began to walk up and down, playing with one of the buttons on his breast, as was his way when eager and excited.

'Now, Smith,' he said at last, stopping short before me, 'what does that mean?'

'Mean, sir?' I said, feeling quite as excited as himself. 'Well, sir, if you ask me, I say that if it was in time of peace and quiet, it would only mean that it was a bit of his damned black—— I beg your pardon, captain,' I says, stopping short, for, you see, it was quite time.

'Go on, Smith,' he said quietly.

'His black impudence, sir.'

'But, as it is not in time of peace and quiet, Smith?' he said, looking me through and through.

'Well, sir,' I said, 'I don't want to croak, nor for other people to believe what I say; but it seems to me that that black fellow's kicking out of the ranks means a good deal; and I take it that he is excited with the news that he has somehow got hold of—news that is getting into his head like so much green 'rack. I've thought of it some little time now, sir; and it strikes me that if, instead of our short company being Englishmen, they were all Chunder Chows, before to-morrow morning, begging your pardon, Captain Dyer and Lieutenant Leigh would have said "Right wheel" for the last time.'

'And the women and children!' he muttered softly: but I heard him.

He did not speak then for quite half a minute, when he turned to me with a pleasant smile.

'But you see, though, Smith,' he said, 'our short company is made up of different stuff; and therefore there 's some hope for us yet; but—— Ah, Leigh, did you hear what he said?'

'Yes,' said the lieutenant, who had been standing at the door for a few moments, scowling at us both.

'Well, what do you think?' said Captain Dyer.

'Think?' said Lieutenant Leigh contemptuously, as he turned away—'nothing!'

'But,' said Captain Dyer quietly, 'really I think there is much truth in what he, an observant man, says.'

There was a challenge from the roof just then; and we all went out to find that a mounted man was in sight; and on the captain making use of his glass, I heard him tell Lieutenant Leigh that it was an orderly dragoon.

A few minutes after, it was plain enough to everybody; and soon, man and horse dead beat, the orderly with a despatch trotted into the court.

It was a sight worth seeing, to look upon Mrs Maine clutching at the letter enclosed for her in Captain Dyer's despatch. Poor woman! it was a treasure to her—one that made her pant as she hurriedly snatched it from the captain's hand, for all formality was forgotten in those days; and then she hurried away to where her sister was waiting to hear the news.

X.

The orderly took back a despatch from Captain Dyer, starting at daybreak the next morning; but before then, we all knew that matters were getting to wear a terrible aspect. At first, I had been disposed to think that the orderly was romancing, and giving us a few travellers' tales; but I soon found out that he was in earnest; and more than once I felt a shiver as he sat with our mess, telling us of how regiment after regiment had mutinied and murdered their officers; how station after station had been plundered, collectors butchered, and their wives and daughters sometimes cut down, sometimes carried off by the wretches, who had made a sport of throwing infants from one to the other on their bayonets.

'I never had any children,' sobbed Mrs Bantem then; 'and I never wished to have any; for they 're not right for soldiers' wives; but only to think—the poor sweet, suffering little things. Oh, if I 'd only been a man, and been there!'

We none of us said anything; but I believe all thought as I did, that if Mrs Bantem had been there, she 'd have done as much—ah, perhaps more—than some men would have done. Bless my soul! as I think of it, and recall it from the bygone, there I can see Mother Bantem—though why we called her mother, I don't know, unless it was because she was like a mother to us—with her great strapping form; and think of the way in which she '——

Halt! Retire by fours from the left.

Just in time; for I find handling my pen 's like handling a commander-in-chief's staff, and that I've got letters which make words, which make phrases, which make sentences, which make paragraphs, which make chapters, which make up the whole story: and that is for all the world like the army with its privates made into companies, and battalions, and regiments, and brigades. Well, there you are: if you don't have discipline, and every private in his right place, where are you? Just so with me; my words were coming out in the wrong places, and in another minute I should have spoiled my story, by letting you know what was coming at the wrong time.

Well, we all felt very deeply the news brought in by that orderly, for soldiers are not such harum-scarum roughs as some people seem to imagine. For the most part, they 're men with the same feelings as civilians; and I don't think many of us slept very sound that night, feeling as we did what a charge we had, and that we might be attacked at any time; and a good deal of my anxiety was on account of Lizzy Green; for even if she wouldn't be my wife, but Harry Lant's, I could not help taking a wonderful deal of interest in her.

But all the same it was a terribly awkward time, as you must own, for falling in love; and I don't know hardly whom I pitied most, Captain Dyer or myself; but think I had more leanings towards number one, because Captain Dyer was happy; though, perhaps, I might have been; only like lots more hot sighing noodles, I never once thought of asking the girl if she 'd have me. As for Lieutenant Leigh, I never once thought of giving him a bit of pity, for I did not think he deserved it.

Well, the trooper started off at daybreak, so as to get well on his journey in the early morning; and about an hour after he was gone, I had a fancy to go into the old ruined room again, where there was the bit of a scene I've told you of. My orders from Captain Dyer were, to watch Chunder strictly, both as to seeing that he did not again insult any of the women, and also to see if he had any little game of his own that he was playing on the sly; for though Lieutenant Leigh, on being told, pooh-poohed it all, and advised a flogging, Captain Dyer had his suspicions—stronger ones, it seemed, than mine; and hence my orders and my being excused from mounting guard.

It was all very still, and cool, and quiet as I walked from room to room, slowly and thoughtfully, stopping to pick up my broken pipe, which lay where I had dropped it; and then going on into the next room, where, under the window, lay the bit of cotton cob-web and cat's-cradle work Lizzy had been doing, and had left behind. I gave a bit of a gulp as I picked that up, and I was tucking it inside my jacket when I stopped short, for I thought I heard a whisper.

I listened, and there it was again—a low, earnest whispering of first one and then another voice in the

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next room, whose wide broken doorway stood open, for there wasn't a bit of woodwork left.

I have heard about people saying, that in some great surprise or fright, their hearts stood still; but I don't believe it, because it always strikes me that, when a person's heart does stand still, it never goes on again. All the same, though, my heart felt then as if it did stand still with the dead, dull, miserable feeling that came upon me. Only to think that on this, the second time, I had come through these ruined rooms, and they were here again! It was plain enough Harry Lant and Lizzy made this their meeting-place, and only they knew how many times they'd met before.

Time back, I could have laughed at the idea of me, a great strapping fellow, feeling as I did; but now I felt very wretched; and as I thought of Harry Lant kissing those bright red lips, and looking into those deep dark eyes, and being let pass his hand over the glossy hair, with the prospect of some day calling it all his own, I did not burn all over with a mad rage and passion, but it was like a great grief coming upon me, so that, if it hadn't been for being a man, I could have sat down and cried.

I should think ten minutes passed, and the whispering still went on, when I said to myself: 'Be a man, Isaac; if she likes him better, hasn't she a right to her pick?' But still I felt very miserable as I turned to go away, when a something, said a little louder than the rest, stopped me.

'That ain't English,' I says to myself. 'What! surely she's not listening to that black scoundrel?'

I was red-hot then in a moment; and as to thinking whether this or that was straightforward, or whether I was playing the spy, or anything of that sort, such an idea never came into my head. Chunder was evidently talking to Lizzy Green in that room; and for a few seconds I felt blind with a sort of jealous savage rage—against her, mind, now; and going on tip-toe, I looked round the doorway, so as to see as well as hear.

I was back in an instant, with a fresh set of sensations busy in my breast. It was Chunder, but he was alone; there was no Lizzy there; and I don't know whether my heart beat then for joy at knowing it, or for shame at myself for having thought such a thing of her.

What did it mean, then?

I did not have to ask myself the question twice, for the answer came—Treachery! And stealing to the slit of window in the room I was in, I peeped cautiously but in time to see Chunder throwing out what looked like a white packet. I could see his arm move as he threw it down to a man in a turban—a dark wiry-looking rascal; and in those few seconds I seemed to read that packet word for word, though no doubt the writing was in one of the native dialects, and my reading of it was, that it was a correct list of the defenders of the place, the women and children, and what arms and ammunition there were stored up.

It was all plain enough, and the villain was sending it by a man who must have brought him tidings of some kind.

What was I to do? That man ought to be stopped at all hazards; and what I ought to have done was to steal back, give the alarm, and let a party go round to try and cut him off.

That's what I ought to have done; but I never did have much judgment.

Now for what I did do.

Slipping back from the window, I went cautiously to the doorway, and entered the old room where Chunder was standing at the window; and I went in so quietly, and he was so intent, that I had crept close, and was in the act of leaping on to him before he turned round and tried to avoid me.

He was too late, though, for with a bound I was on him, pinioning his hands, and holding him down on the window-sill, with his head half out, as bearing down upon him, I leaned out as far as I could, yelling out:

'Sentry in the next roof, mark man below. Stop him, or fire.'

The black fellow below drew a long, awkward-looking pistol, and aimed at me, but only for a moment. Perhaps he was afraid of killing Chunder, for the next instant he had stuck the pistol back in his calico belt, and, with head stooped, was running as hard as he could run, when I could hardly contain myself for rage, knowing as I did how important it was for him to have been stopped.

'Bang!'

A sharp report from the roof, and the fellow made a bound.

Was he hit?

No: he only seemed to run the faster.

'Bang!'

Another report as the runner came in sight of the second sentry.

But I saw no more, for all my time was taken up with Chunder; for as the second shot rang out, he gave a heave, and nearly sent me through the open window.

It was by a miracle almost that I saved myself from breaking my neck, for it was a good height from the ground; but I held on to him tightly with a clutch such as he never had on his arms and neck before; and then, with a strength for which I shouldn't have given him credit, he tussled with me, now tugging to get away, now to throw me from the window, his hot breath beating all the time upon my cheeks, and his teeth grinning, and eyes rolling savagely.

It was only a spurt, though, and I soon got the better of him.

I don't want to boast, but I suppose our cold northern bone and muscle are tougher and stronger than theirs; and at the end of five minutes, puffing and blown, I was sitting on his chest, taking a paper from inside his calico.

That laid me open; for, like a flash, I saw then that he had a knife in one hand, while before another thought could pass through my mind, it was sticking through my jacket and the skin of my ribs, and my fist was driven down against his mouth for him to kiss for the second time in his life.

Next minute, Captain Dyer and a dozen men were in the room, Chunder was handcuffed and marched off, and the captain was eagerly questioning me.

'But is that fellow shot down or taken—the one outside?' I asked.

'Neither,' said Captain Dyer; 'and it is too late now: he has got far enough away.'

Then I told him what I had seen, and he looked at the packet, his brow knitting as he tried to make it out.

'I ought to have come round, and given the alarm, captain,' I said bitterly.

'Yes, my good fellow, you ought,' he said; 'and I ought to have had that black scoundrel under lock and key days ago. But it is too late now to talk of what ought to have been done; we must talk of what there is to do.—But are you hurt?'

'He sent his knife through my jacket, sir,' I said, 'but it's only a scratch on the skin;' and fortunately that's what it proved to be, for we had no room for wounded men, since we should have them soon enough.

XI.

An hour of council, and then another—our two leaders not seeming to agree as to the extent of the coming danger. Challenge from the west roof:

'Orderly in sight.'

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Sure enough, a man on horseback riding very slowly, and as if his horse was dead beat.

'Surely it isn't that poor fellow come back, because his horse has failed? He ought to have walked on,' said Captain Dyer.

'Same man,' said Lieutenant Leigh, looking through his glass; and before very long, the poor fellow who had gone away at daybreak rode slowly up to the gate, was admitted, and then had to be helped from his horse, giving a great sobbing groan as it was done.

'In here, quick!' I said, for I thought I heard the ladies' voices; and we carried him in to where Mrs Bantem was, as usual, getting ready for dinner, and there we laid him on a mattress.

'Despatches, captain,' he says, holding up the captain's letter to Colonel Maine. 'They didn't get that. They were too many for me. I dropped one, though, with my pistol, and cut my way through the others.'

As he spoke, I untwisted his leather sword-knot, which was cutting into his wrist, for his hacked and blood-stained sabre was hanging from his hand.

'Wouldn't go back into the scabbard,' he said faintly; and then with a harsh gasp: 'Water—water!'

He revived then a bit; and as Captain Dyer and Mrs Bantem between them were attending to, and binding up his wounds, he told as how he had been set upon ten miles off, and been obliged to fight his way back; and, poor chap, he had fought; for there were no less than ten lance-wounds in his arms, thighs, and chest, from a slight prick up to a horrible gash, deep and long enough, it seemed to me, to let out half-a-dozen poor fellows' souls.

Just in the middle of it, I saw Captain Dyer start and look strange, for there was a shadow came across where we were kneeling; and the next instant he was standing between Miss Ross and the wounded man.

'Pray, go, dear Elsie; this is no place for you,' I heard him whisper to her.

'Indeed, Lawrence,' she whispered, 'am I not a soldier's daughter? I ought to say this is no place for you. Go, and make your arrangements for our defence.'

I don't think any one but me saw the look of love she gave him as she took sponge and lint from his hand, pressing it as she did so, and then her pale face lit up with a smile as she met his eyes; the next moment she was kneeling by the wounded trooper, and in a quiet firm way helping Mrs Bantem, in a manner that made her, poor woman, stare with astonishment.

'God bless you, my darling,' she whispered to her, as soon as they had done, and the poor fellow was lying still—a toss-up with him whether it should be death or life; and I saw Mrs Bantem take Miss Ross's soft white hand between her two great rough hard palms, and kiss it just once.

'And I'd always been abusing and running her down for a fine madam, good for nothing but to squeak songs, and be looked at,' Mrs Bantem said to me, a little while after. 'Why, Isaac Smith, we shall be having that little maid shewing next that there's something in her.'

'And why not?' I said gruffly.

'Ah, to be sure,' says she, with a comical look out of one eye; 'why not? But, Isaac, my lad,' she said sadly, and looking at me very earnestly, 'I'm afraid there's sore times coming; and if so, God in heaven help those poor bairns! Oh, if I'd been a man, and been there!' she cried, as she recollected what the trooper had told us; and she shook her fist fiercely in the air. 'It's what I always did say: soldiers' wives have no business to have children; and it's rank cruelty to the poor little things to bring them into the world.'

Mrs Bantem then went off to see to her patient, while I walked into the court, wondering what would come next, and whether, in spite of all the little bitternesses and grumbling, everybody, now some of the stern realities of life were coming upon us, would shew up the bright side of his or her nature; and somehow I got very hopeful that they would.

I felt just then that I should have much liked to have a few words with Lizzy Green, but I had no chance, for it was a busy time with us. Captain Dyer felt strongly enough his responsibility, and not a minute did he lose in doing all he could for our defence; so that after an anxious day, with nothing more occurring, when I looked round at what had been done in barricading and so on, it seemed to me, speaking as a soldier, that, as far as I could judge, there was nothing more to be done, though still the feeling would come home to me that it was a great place for forty men to defend, if attacked by any number. Captain Dyer must have seen that, for he had arranged to have a sort of citadel at the north end by the gateway, and this was to be the last refuge, where all the ammunition and food and no end of chatties of water were stowed down in the great vault-place, which went under this part of the building and a good deal of the court. Then the watch was set, trebled this time, on roof and at window, and we waited impatiently for the morning. Yes, we all of us, I believe, waited impatiently for the morning, when I think, if we had known all that was to come, we should have knelt down and prayed for the darkness to keep on hour after hour, for days, and weeks, and months, sooner than the morning should have broke as it did upon a rabble of black faces, some over white clothes, some over the British uniform that they had disgraced; and as I, who was on the west roof, heard the first hum of their coming, and caught the first glimpse of the ragged column, I gave the alarm, setting my teeth hard as I did so; for, after many years of soldiering, I was now for the first time to see a little war in earnest.

Captain Dyer's first act on the alarm being given was to double the guard over the three blacks, now secured in the strongest room he could find, the black nurse being well looked after by the women. Then, quick almost as thought, every man was at the post already assigned to him; the women and children were brought into the corner rooms by the gates, and then we waited excitedly for what should follow. The captain now ordered me out of the little party under a sergeant, and made me his orderly, and so it happened that always being with or about him, I knew how matters were going on, and was always carrying the orders, now to Lieutenant Leigh, now to this sergeant or that corporal; but at the first offset of the defence of the old place, there was a dispute between captain and lieutenant; and I'm afraid it was maintained by the last out of obstinacy, and just at a time when there should have been nothing but pulling together for the sake of all concerned. I must say, though, that there was right on both sides.

Lieutenant Leigh put it forward as his opinion that, short of men as we were, it was folly to keep four enemies under the same roof, who were likely at any time to overpower the one or two sentries placed over them; while, if there was nothing to fear in that way, there was still the necessity of shortening our defensive forces by a couple of valuable men.

'What would you do with them, then?' said Captain Dyer.

'Set them at liberty,' said Lieutenant Leigh.

'I grant all you say, in the first place,' said the captain; 'but our retaining them is a sheer necessity.'

'Why?' said Lieutenant Leigh, with a sneer; and I must say that at first I held with him.

'Because,' said the captain sternly, 'if we set them at liberty, we increase our enemies' power, not merely

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with three men, but with scoundrels who can give them the fullest information of our defences, over and above that of which I am afraid they are already possessed. The matter will not bear further discussion.—Lieutenant Leigh, go now to your post, and do your duty to the best of your power.'

Lieutenant Leigh did not like this, and he frowned; but Captain Dyer was his superior officer, and it was his duty to obey, so of course he did.

Now, our position was such, that, say, a hundred men with a field-piece could have knocked a wing in, and then carried us by assault with ease; but though our enemies were full two hundred and fifty, and many of them drilled soldiers, pieces you may say of a great machine, fortunately for us, there was no one to put that machine together, and set it in motion. We soon found that out, for, instead of making the best of things, and taking possession of buildings—sheds and huts—here and there, from which to annoy us, they came up in a mob to the gate, and one fellow on a horse—a native chief, he seemed to be—gave his sword a wave, and half-a-dozen sowars round him did the same, and then they called to us to surrender.

Captain Dyer's orders were to act entirely on the defensive, and to fire no shot till we had orders, leaving them to commence hostilities.

'For,' said he, speaking to all the men, 'it may be a cowardly policy with such a mutinous set in front of us, but we have the women and children to think of; therefore, our duty is to hold the foe at bay, and when we do fire, to make every shot tell. Beating them off is, I fear, impossible, but we may keep them out till help comes.'

'Wouldn't it be advisable, sir, to try and send off another despatch?' I said; 'there's the trooper's horse.'

'Where?' said Captain Dyer, with a smile. 'That has already been thought of, Smith; and Sergeant Jones, the only good horseman we have, went off at two o'clock, and by this time is, I hope, out of danger. —Good heavens! what does that mean?' he said, using his glass.

It was curious that I should have thought of such a thing just then, at a time when four sowars led up Sergeant Jones tied by a piece of rope to one of their saddle-bows, while the trooper's horse was behind.

Captain Dyer would not shew, though, that he was put out by the failure of that hope: he only passed the word for the men to stand firm, and then sent me with a message to Mrs Colonel Maine, requesting that every one might keep right away from the windows, as the enemy might open fire at any time.

He was quite right, for just as I knocked at Mrs Maine's door, a regular squandering, scattering fire began, and you could hear the bullets striking the wall with a sharp pat, bringing down showers of white lime-dust and powdered stone.

I found Mrs Maine seated on the floor with her children, pale and trembling, the little things the while laughing and playing over some pictures. Miss Ross was leaning over her sister, and Lizzy Green was waiting to give the children something else when they were tired of the pictures.

As the rattle of the musketry began, it was soon plain enough to see who had the stoutest hearts; but I seemed to be noticing nothing, though I did a great deal, and listened to Mrs Bantem's voice in the next room, bullying and scolding a woman for crying out loud and upsetting everybody else.

I gave my message, and then Miss Ross asked me if any one was hurt, to which I answered as cheerfully as could be that we were all right as yet; and then, taking myself off, Lizzy Green came with me to the door, and I held out my hand to say 'good-bye,' for I knew it was possible I might never see her again. She gave me her hand, and said 'Good-bye,' in a faltering sort of way, and it seemed to me that she shrank from me. The next instant, though, there was the rattling crash of the firing, and I knew now that our men were answering.

XII.

As I went down into the court-yard, I found the smoke rising in puffs as our men fired over the breastwork at the mob coming at the gate. Captain Dyer in the thick of it the while, going from man to man, warning them to keep themselves out of sight, and to aim low.

'Take care of yourselves, my lads. I value every one of you at a hundred of those black scoundrels.—Tut, tut, whose that down?'

'Corporal Bray,' says some one.

'Here, Emson, Smith, both of you lend a hand here: we'll make Bantem's quarters hospital.—Now then, look alive, ambulance party.'

We were about lifting the poor fellow, who had sunk down behind the breastwork, all doubled up like, hands and knees; and head down; but as we touched him, he straightened himself out, and looked up at Captain Dyer.

'Don't touch me yet,' he says in a whisper. 'My stripes for some one, captain. Do for Isaac Smith there. Hooray!' he says faintly; and he took off his cap with one hand, gave it a bit of a wave—'God save the Quee'——

'Bear him carefully to the empty ground floor, south side,' says Captain Dyer sternly; 'and make haste back, my lads: moments are precious.'

'I'll do that with Private Manning's wife,' says a voice; and turning as we were going to lift our dead comrade, there was big, strapping Mrs Bantem, and another soldier's wife, and she then said a few words to the captain.

'Gone?' says Captain Dyer.

'Quarter of an hour ago, sir,' says Mrs Bantem; and then to me: 'Poor trooper, Isaac!'

'Another man here,' says Captain Dyer.—'No, not you, Smith.—Fill up here, Bantem.'

Joe Bantem waved his hand to his wife, and took the dead corporal's place, but not easily, for Measles, who was next man, was stepping into it, when Captain Dyer ordered him back.

'But there 's such a much better chance of dropping one of them mounted chaps, sir,' says Measles grumbling.

'Hold your tongue, sir, and go back to your own loophole,' says Captain Dyer; and the way that Measles kept on loading and firing, ramming down his cartridges viciously, and then taking long and careful aim, ah! and with good effect, too, was a sight to see.

All the while, we were expecting an assault, but none came, for the mutineers fell fast, and did not seem to dare to make a rush while we kept up such practice.

Then I had to go round and ask Lieutenant Leigh to send six more men to the gate, and to bring news of what was going on round the other sides.

I found the lieutenant standing at the window where I caught Chunder, and there was a man each at all the other four little windows which looked down at the outside—all the others, as I have said, looking in upon the court.

The lieutenant's men had a shot now and then at any one who approached; but the mutineers seemed to have determined upon forcing the gate, and, so far as I could see, there was very little danger to fear from any other quarter.

I knew Lieutenant Leigh was not a coward, but he seemed very half-hearted over the defence, doing his duty but in a sullen sort of way; and of course that was because he wanted to take the lead now held by Captain Dyer; and, perhaps it was misjudging

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him, but I'm afraid just at that time he'd have been very glad if a shot had dropped his rival, and he could have stepped into his place.

Captain Dyer's plan to keep the rabble at bay till help could come, was of course quite right; and that night it was an understood thing, that another attempt should be made to send a messenger to Wallahbad, another of our corporals being selected for the dangerous mission.

The fighting was kept on, in an on-and-off way till evening, we losing several men, but a good many falling on the other side, which made them more cautious, and not once did we have a chance of touching a man with the bayonet. Some of our men grumbled a little at this, saying that it was very hard to stand there hour after hour to be shot down; and could they have done as they liked, they'd have made a sally.

Then came the night, and a short consultation between the captain and Lieutenant Leigh. The mutineers had ceased firing at sundown, and we were in hopes that there would be a rest till daylight, but all the same the strictest watch was kept, and only half the men lay down at a time.

Half the night, though, had not passed, when a hand was laid upon my shoulder, and in an instant I was up, piece in hand, to find that it was Captain Dyer.

'Come here,' he said quietly; and following him into the room underneath where the women were placed, he told me to listen, and I did, to hear a low, grating, tearing noise, as of something scraping on stone. 'That's been going on,' he said, 'for a good hour, and I can't make it out, Smith.'

'Prisoners escaping,' I said quietly.

'But they are not so near as that. They were confined in the next room but one,' he said in a whisper.

'Broke through, then,' I said.

Then we went—Captain Dyer and I—quietly up on to the roof, answered the challenge, and then walked to the edge, where, leaning over, we could hear the dull grating noise once more; then a stone seemed to fall out on to the sandy way by the palace walls.

It was all plain enough: they had broken through from one room to another, where there was a window no bigger than a loophole, and they were widening this.

'Quick, here, sentry,' says the captain.

The next minute the sentry hurried up, and we had a man posted as nearly over the window as we could guess, and then I had my orders in a minute:

'Take two men and the sentry at their door, rush in, and secure them at once. But if they have got out, join Sergeant Williams, and follow me to act as reserve, for I am going to make a sally by the gate to stop them from the outside.'

I roused Harry Lant and Measles, and they were with me in an instant. We passed a couple of sentries, and gave the countersign, and then mounted to the long stone passage which led to where the prisoners had been placed.

As we three privates neared the door, the sentry there challenged; but when we came up to him and listened, there was not a sound to be heard, neither had he heard anything, he said. The next minute the door was thrown open, and we found an empty room; but a hole in the wall shewed us which way the prisoners had gone.

We none of us much liked the idea of going through that hole to be taken at a disadvantage, but duty was duty, and running forward, I made a bold thrust through with my piece in two or three directions; then I crept through, followed by Harry Lant, and found that room empty too; but they had not gone by the doorway which led into the women's part, but enlarged the window, and dropped down, leaving a large opening—one that, if we had not detected it then, would no doubt have done nicely for the entrance of a strong party of enemies.

'Sentry here,' I said; and leaving the man at the window, followed by Harry Lant and Measles, I ran back, got down to the court-yard, crossed to where Sergeant Williams with half-a-dozen men waited our coming, and then we were passed through the gate, and went along at the double to where we could hear noise and shouting.

We had the narrow alley to go through—the one I have before mentioned as being between the place we had strengthened and the next building; and no sooner were we at the end, than we found we were none too soon, for there, in the dim starlight, we could see Captain Dyer and four men surrounded by a good score, howling and cutting at them like so many demons, and plainly to be seen by their white calico things.

'By your left, my lads, shoulder to shoulder—double,' says the sergeant.

Then we gave a cheer, and with hearts bounding with excitement, down we rushed upon the scoundrels to give them their first taste of the bayonet, cutting Captain Dyer and two more men out, just as the other two went down.

It was as fierce a fight that, as it was short; for we soon found the alarm spread, and enemies running up on all sides. It was bayonet-drill then, and well we shewed the practice, till we retired slowly to the entrance of the alley; but the pattering of feet and cries told that there were more coming to meet us that way; when, following Captain Dyer's orders, we retreated in good form in the other direction, so as to get round to the gate by the other alley, on the south side.

And now for the first time we gave them a volley, checking the advance for a few seconds, while we retreated loading, to turn again, and give them another volley, which checked them again; but only for a few seconds, when they came down upon us like a swarm of bees, right upon our bayonets; and as fast as half-a-dozen fell, half-a-dozen more were leaping upon the steel.

We kept our line, though, one and all, retiring in good order to the mouth of the second court, which ran down by the south side of the palace; when, as if maddened at the idea of losing us, a whole host of them came at us with a rush, breaking our line, and driving us anyhow, mixed up together, down the alley, which was dark as pitch; but not so dark but that we could make out a turban or a calico cloth, and those bayonets of ours were used to some purpose.

Half-a-dozen times over I heard the captain's voice cheering us on, and shouting: 'Gate, gate!' Then I saw the flash of his sword once, and managed to pin a fellow who was making at him, just as we got out at the other end with a fierce rush. Then I heard the captain shout 'Rally!' and saw him wave his sword; and then I don't recollect any more, for it was one wild fierce scuffle—stab and thrust, in the midst of a surging, howling, maddened mob, forcing us towards the gateway.

I thought it was all over with us, when there came a cheer, and the gate was thrown open, a dozen men formed, and charged down, driving the niggers back like sheep; and then, somehow or another, we were cut out, and, under cover of the new-comers, reached the gate.

A ringing volley was then given into the thick of the mutineers as they came pouring on again; but the next moment all were safely inside, and the gate was thrust to and barred; and, panting and bleeding, we stood, six of us, trying to get our breath.

'This wouldn't have happened,' says a voice, 'if my

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advice had been taken. I wish the black scoundrels had been shot. 'Where's Captain Dyer?'

There was no answer, and a dead chill fell on me as I seemed to realise that things had come now to a bad pass.

'Where's Sergeant Williams?' said Lieutenant Leigh again; but it seemed to me that he spoke in a husky voice.

'Here!' said some one faintly, and, turning, there was the sergeant seated on the ground, and supporting himself against the breast-work.

'Any one know the other men who went out on this mad sally?' says the lieutenant.

'Where's Harry Lant?' I says.

There was no answer here either, and this time it was my turn to speak in a queer husky voice as I said again:

'Where's Measles? I mean Sam Bigley.'

'He's gone, too, poor chap,' says some one.

'No, he ain't gone neither,' says a voice behind me, and, turning, there was Measles tying a handkerchief round his head, muttering the while about some black devil. 'I ain't gone, nor I ain't much hurt,' he growled; 'and if I don't take it out of some on 'em for this chop o' the head, it's a rum un; and that's all I've got to say.'

'Load,' says Lieutenant Leigh shortly; and we loaded again, and then fired two or three volleys at the niggers as they came up towards the gate once more; when some one calls out:

'Ain't none of us going to make a sally party, and bring in the captain?'

'Silence there, in the ranks!' shouts Lieutenant Leigh; and though it had a bad sound coming from him as it did, and situated as he was, no one knew better than I did, how that it would have been utter madness to have gone out again; for even if he were alive, instead of bringing in Captain Dyer, now that the whole mob was roused, we should have all been cut to pieces.

It was as if in answer to the lieutenant's order that silence seemed to fall then, both inside and outside the palace—a silence that was only broken now and then by the half-smothered groan of some poor fellow who had been hurt in the sortie—though the way in which those men of ours did bear wounds, some of them even that were positively awful, was a something worth a line in history.

Yes, there was a silence fell upon the place for the rest of that night, and I remember thinking of the wounds that had been made in two poor hearts by that bad night's work; and I can say now, faithful and true, that there was not a selfish thought in my heart as I remembered Lizzy Green, any more than there was when Miss Ross came uppermost in my mind, for I knew well enough that they must have soon known of the disaster that had befallen our little party.

XIII.

Whatever those poor women suffered, they took care it should not be seen by us men, and indeed we had little time to think of them the next day. We had given ourselves the task to protect them, and we were fighting hard to do it, and that was all we could do then; for the enemy gave us but little peace; not making any savage attack, but harassing us in a cruel way, every man acting like for himself, and all the discipline the sepoys had learned seeming to be forgotten.

As for Lieutenant Leigh, he looked cold and stern, but there was no flinching with him now: he was in command, and he shewed it; and though I never liked the man, I must say that he shewed himself now a brave and clever officer; and but for his skilful arrangement of the few men under his charge, that place would have fallen half-a-dozen times over.

We had taken no prisoners, so that there was no chance of talking of exchange; though I believe to a man all thought that the captain and files missing from our company were dead.

The women now lent us their help, bringing down spare muskets and cartridges, loading too for us; so that when the mutineers made an attack, we were able to keep up a much sharper fire than we should have done under other circumstances.

It was about the middle of the afternoon, when, hot and exhausted, we were firing away, for the bullets were coming thick and fast through the gateway, flying across the yard, and making a passage in that direction nearly certain death, when I felt a strange choking feeling, for Measles says to me all at once:

'Look there, Ike.'

I looked, and I could hardly believe it, and rubbed my eyes, for just in the thickest of the firing there was the sound of merry laughter, and those two children of the colonel's came toddling out, right across the line of fire, turned back to look up at some one calling to them from the window, and then stood still, laughing and clapping their hands.

I don't know how it was, I only know that it wasn't to look brave, but, dropping my piece, I rushed to catch them, just at the same moment as did Miss Ross and Lizzy Green; while, directly after, Lieutenant Leigh rushed from where he was, caught Miss Ross round the waist, and dragged her away, as I did Lizzy and the children.

How it was that we were none of us hit, seems strange to me, for all the time the bullets were pattering on the wall beyond us. I only know I turned sick and faint as I just said to Lizzy: 'Thank God for that!' and she led off the children; Miss Ross shrinking from Lieutenant Leigh with a strange mistrustful look, as if she were afraid of him; and the next minute they were under cover, and we were back at our posts.

'Poor bairns!' says Measles to me, 'I ain't often glad of anything, Ike Smith, but I am glad they ain't hurt. Now my soul seemed to run and help them myself, but my legs seemed as if they couldn't move. You need not believe it without you like,' he added in his sour way.

'But I do believe it, old fellow,' I said warmly, as I held out my hand. 'Chaff's chaff, but you never knew me make light of a good act done by a true-hearted comrade.'

'All right,' says Measles gruffly. 'Now, see me pot that sowar.—Missed him, by Jove!' he exclaimed, as soon as he had fired. 'These pieces ain't true. No! hit him! He's down! That's one bairn-killer the less.'

'Sam,' I said just then, 'what's that coming up between the huts yonder?'

'Looks like a wagin,' says Measles. '"Tis a wagin, ain't it?'

'No,' I said, feeling that miserable I didn't know what to do; 'it isn't a wagon, Sam; but—— Why, there's another. A couple of field-pieces!'

'Nine-pounders, by all that's unlucky,' said Measles, slapping his thigh. 'Then I tell you what it is, Ike Smith—it's about time we said our prayers.'

I didn't answer, for the words would not come; but it was what had always been my dread, and it seemed now that the end was very near.

Troubles were coming upon us thick; for being relieved a short time after, to go and have some tea that Mrs Bantem had got ready, I saw something that made me stop short, and think of where we should be if the water supply was run out, for though we had the chatties down below in the vault under the north end, we wanted what there was in the tank, while there was *Nabob*, the great elephant,

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drawing it up in his trunk, and cooling himself by squirting it all over his back!

I went to Lieutenant Leigh, and pointed it out to him; and the great beast was led away; when, there being nothing else for it, we opened a way through our breast-work, watched an opportunity, threw open the gate, and he marched out right straight in amongst the mutineers, who cheered loudly, after their fashion, as he came up to them.

There was no more firing in that night, and taking it in turns, we, some of us, had a sleep, I among the rest, all dressed as I was, and with my gun in my hand, ready for use at a moment's notice; and I remember thinking what a deal depended on the sentries, and how thoroughly our lives were in their hands; and then my next thought was of how was it possible for it to be morning, for I had only seemed to close my eyes, and then open them again on the light of day.

But morning it was; and with a dull, dead feeling of misery upon me, I got up and gave myself a shake, ran the ramrod down my piece, to see that it was charged all right, looked to the cap, and then once more prepared for the continuation of the struggle, low-spirited and disheartened, but thankful for the bit of refreshing rest I had had.

A couple of hours passed, and there was no movement on the part of the enemy; the ladies never stirred, but we could hear the children laughing and playing about, and how one did seem to envy the little light-hearted, thoughtless things! But my thoughts were soon turned into another direction, for Lieutenant Leigh ordered me up into one of the rooms commanding the gateway, and looking out on the square where the guns were standing, and came up with me himself.

'You'll have a good look-out from here, Smith,' he said; 'and being a good shot'——

He didn't say any more, for he was, like me, taken up with the movement in the square—a lot of the mutineers running the two guns forward in front of the gate, and then closing round them, so that we could not see what was going on; but we knew well enough that they were charging them, and there seemed nothing for it but to let them fire, unless by a bold sally we could get out and spike them.

Just then, Lieutenant Leigh looked at me, and I at him, when, touching my cap in salute, I said: 'Two good nails, sir, and a tap on each would do it.'

'Yes, Smith,' he said grimly; 'but who is to drive those two nails home?'

I didn't answer him for a minute, I should think, for I was thinking over matters, about life, and about Lizzy, and now that Harry Lant was gone, it seemed to me that there might be a chance for me; but still duty was duty, and if men could not in such a desperate time as this risk something, what was the good of soldiers?

'I'll drive 'em home, sir,' I says then quietly, 'or they shall drive me home!'

He looked at me for an instant, and then nodded.

'I'll get the men ready,' he says; 'it's our only chance; and with a bold dash we may do it. I'll see to the armourer's chest for hammers and spikes. I'll spike one, Smith, and you the other; but, mind, if I fail, help me, as I will you, if you fail; and God help us! Keep a sharp look-out till I come back.'

He left the room, and I heard a little movement below, as of the men getting ready for the sally; and all the while I stood watching the crowd in front, which now began hurraing and cheering; and there was a motion which shewed that the guns were being run in nearer, till they stopped about fifty yards from the gate.

'What makes him so long?' I thought, trembling with excitement; 'another minute, perhaps, and the gate will be battered down, and that mob rushing in.'

Then I thought that we ought all who escaped from the sortie, in case of failure, to be ready to take to the rooms adjoining where I was, which would be our last hope; and then I almost dropped my piece, my mouth grew dry, and I seemed choked, for, with a loud howl, the crowd opened out, and I saw a sight that made my blood run cold—those two nine-pounders standing with a man by each breech, smoking linstock in hand; while bound, with their heads against the muzzles, and their white faces towards us, were Captain Dyer and Harry Lant!

One spark—one touch of the linstock on the breech—and those two brave fellows' heads would be blown to atoms; and, as I expected that every moment such would be the case, my knees knocked together; but the next moment I was down on those shaking knees, my piece made ready, and a good aim taken, so that I could have dropped one of the gunners before he was able to fire.

I hesitated for a moment before I made up my mind which to try and save, and the thought of Lizzy Green came in my mind, and I said to myself: 'I love her too well to give her pain,' when, giving up Captain Dyer, I aimed at the gunner by poor Harry Lant.

'Don't fire,' said a voice just then, and, turning, there was Lieutenant Leigh. 'The black-hearted wretches,' he muttered. 'But we are all ready; though now, if we start, it will be the signal for the death of those two.—But what does this mean?'

What made him say that, was a chief, all in shawls, who rode forward and shouted out in good English, that they gave us one hour to surrender; but, at the end of that time, if we had not marched out without arms, they would blow their prisoners away from the mouth of the guns.

Then, for fear we had not heard it, he spurred his horse up to within ten yards of the gate, and shouted it out again, so that every one could hear it through the place; and, though I could have sent a bullet through and through him, I could not help admiring the bold daring fellow, riding up right to the muzzles of our pieces.

But all the admiration I felt was gone the next moment, as I thought of the cruelties practised, and of those bound there to those gun-muzzles.

There was nothing said for a few minutes, for I expected the lieutenant to speak; but as he did not, I turned to him and said:

'If all was ready, sir, I could drop one gunner; and I'd trust Measles—Sam Bigley—to drop the other, when a bold dash might do it. You see they've retired a good thirty yards, and we should only have twenty more to run than they; while the surprise would give us that start. A good sharp jack-knife would set the prisoners free, and a covering-party would perhaps check the pursuit while we got in.'

'We shall have to try it, Smith,' he said, his breath coming thick and fast with excitement; and then he seemed to turn white, for Miss Ross and Lizzy came into the room.

XIV.

I should think it must have been the devil tempting Lieutenant Leigh, or he would never have done as he did; for, as he looked at Miss Ross, the change that came over him was quite startling. He could read all that was passing in her heart; there was no need for her to lay her hand upon his arm, and point with the other out of the window, as in a voice that I didn't know for hers, she said:

'Will you leave those two brave men there to die, Lieutenant Leigh?'

He didn't answer for a moment, but seemed to be struggling with himself; then, speaking as huskily as she did, he said:

'Send away that girl!' and before I could go

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to her—for I should have done it then, I know—and whisper a few words of hope, poor Lizzy went out, mourning for Harry Lant, wringing her hands; and I stood at my post, a sentry by my commander's orders, so that it was no spying on my part if I heard what followed.

I believe Lieutenant Leigh fancied he was speaking in an undertone, when he led Miss Ross away to a corner, and spoke to her; but this was perhaps the most exciting moment in his life, and his voice rose in spite of himself, so that I heard all; while she, poor thing, I believe forgot all about my presence; and, as a sentry—a machine almost—placed there, what right had I to speak?

'Will you leave him?' said Miss Ross again. 'Will you not try to save him?'

Lieutenant Leigh did not answer for a bit, for he was making his plans, and I felt quite staggered as I saw through them.

'You see how he is placed: what can I do?' said Lieutenant Leigh. 'If I go, it is the signal for firing. You see the gunners waiting. And why should I risk the lives of my men, and my own, to save him? He is a soldier, and it is the fortune of war: he must die.'

'Are you a man, or a coward?' said Miss Ross angrily.

'No coward,' he said fiercely; 'but a poor slighted man, whom you have wronged, jilted, and ill-used; and now you come to me to save your lover's life—to give mine for it. You have robbed me of all that is pleasant between you; and now you ask more. Is it just?'

'Lieutenant Leigh, you are speaking madly. How can you be so unjust?' she cried, holding tightly by his arm, for he was turning away, while I felt mad with him for torturing the poor girl, when it was decided that the attempt was to be made.

'I am not unjust,' he said. 'The hazard is too great; and what should I gain if I succeeded? Pshaw! Why, if he were saved, it would be at the expense of my own life.'

'I would die to save him,' she said hoarsely.

'I know it, Elsie; but you would not give a loving word to save me. You would send me out to my death without compunction—without a care; and yet you know how I have loved you.'

'You—you loved me; and yet stand and see my heart torn—see me suffer like this!' cried Miss Ross, and there was something half wild in her looks as she spoke.

'Love you!' he cried; 'yes, you know how I have loved you'——

His voice sank here; but he was talking in her ear excitedly, saying words that made her shrink from him up to the wall, and look at him as if he were some object of the greatest disgust.

'You can choose,' he said bitterly, as he saw her action; and he turned away from her.

The next moment she was on her knees before him, holding up her hands as if in prayer.

'Promise me,' he said, 'and I will do it.'

'Oh, some other way—some other way!' she cried piteously, her face all drawn the while.

'As you will,' he said coldly.

'But think—oh, think! You cannot expect it of me. Have mercy! Oh, what am I saying?'

'Saying!' he cried, catching her hands in his, and speaking excitedly and fast—'saying things that are sending him to his death! What do I offer you? Love, devotion, all that man can give. He would, if asked now, give up all for his life; and yet you, who profess to love him so dearly, refuse to make that sacrifice for his sake! You cannot love him. If he could hear now, he would implore you to do it. Think. I risk all. Most likely, my life will be given for his; perhaps we shall both fall. But you refuse. Enough: I must go; I cannot stay. There are many lives here under my charge; they must not be neglected for the sake of one. As I said before, it is the fortune of war; and, poor fellow, he has but a quarter of an hour or so to live, unless help comes.'

'Unless help comes,' groaned Miss Ross frantically, when, as Lieutenant Leigh reached the door, watching me over his shoulder the while, Miss Ross went down on her knees, stretched out her hands towards where Captain Dyer was bound to the gun, and then she rose, cold, and hard, and stern, and turned to Lieutenant Leigh, holding out her hand. 'I promise,' she said hoarsely.

'On your oath, before God?' he exclaimed joyfully, as he caught her in his arms.

'As God is my judge,' she faltered with her eyes upturned; and then, as he held her to his breast, kissing her passionately, she shivered and shuddered, and, as he released her, sank in a heap on the floor.

'Smith,' cried Lieutenant Leigh; 'right face—forward!' and as I passed Miss Ross, I heard her sob in a tone I shall never forget: 'O Lawrence, Lawrence!' and then a groan tore from her breast, and I heard no more.

XV.

'This is contrary to rule. As commandant, I ought to stay in the fort; but I've no one to give the leadership to, so I take it myself,' said Lieutenant Leigh; 'and now, my lads, make ready—present! That's well. Are all ready? At the word "Fire!" Privates Bigley and Smith fire at the two gunners. If they miss, I cry fire again, and Privates Bantem and Grainger try their skill; then, at the double, down on the guns. Smith and I spike them, while Bantem and Grainger cut the cords. Mind this: those guns must be spiked, and those two prisoners brought in; and if the sortie is well managed, it is easy, for they will be taken by surprise. Hush! Confound it, men; no cheering.'

He only spoke in time, for in the excitement the men were about to hurray.

'Now, then, is that gate unbarred?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Is the covering-party ready?'

'Yes, sir.'

My hand trembled as he spoke; but the next instant it was of a piece with my gunstock. There was the hot square, with the sun shining on the two guns that must have been hot behind the poor prisoners' heads; there stood the two gunners in white, with their smoking linstocks, leaning against the wheels, for discipline was slack; and there, thirty or forty yards behind, were the mutineers, lounging about, and smoking many of them. For all firing had ceased, and judging that we should not risk having the prisoners blown away from the guns, the mutineers came boldly up within range, as if defying us, and it was pretty safe practice at some of them now.

I saw all this at a glance, and while it seemed as if the order would never come; but come it did, at last.

'FIRE!'

Bang! the two rifles going off like one; and the gunner behind Captain Dyer leaped into the air, while the one I aimed at seemed to sink down suddenly beside the wheel he had leaned upon. Then the gate flew open, and with a rush and a cheer, we, ten of us, raced down for the guns.

Double-quick time! I tell you it was a hard race; and being without my gun now—only my bayonet stuck in my trousers' waist-band—I was there first, and had driven my spike into the touch-hole before Lieutenant Leigh reached his; but the next moment

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his was done, the cords were cut, and the prisoners loose from the guns. But now we had to get back.

The first inkling I had of the difficulty of this was seeing Captain Dyer and Harry Lant stagger, and fall forward; but they were saved by the men, and we saw directly that they must be carried.

No sooner thought of than done.

'Hoist Harry on my back,' says Grainger; and he took him like a sack; Bantem acting the same part by Captain Dyer; and those two ran off, while we tried to cover them.

For don't you imagine that the mutineers were idle all this while; not a bit of it. They were completely taken by surprise, though, at first, and gave us time nearly to get to the guns before they could understand what we meant; but the next moment some shouted and ran at us, and some began firing; while by the time the prisoners were cast loose, they were down upon us in a hand-to-hand fight.

And in those fierce struggles there is such excitement, that, for my part, I've now but a very misty recollection of what took place; but I do recollect seeing the prisoners well on the way back, hearing a cheer from our men, and then, hammer in one hand, bayonet in the other, fighting my way backward along with my comrades. Then all at once a glittering flash came in the air, and I felt a dull cut on the face, followed directly after by another strange, numbing blow, which made me drop my bayonet, as my arm fell uselessly to my side; and then with a lurch and a stagger, I fell, and was trampled upon twice, when, as I rallied once, a black, savage-looking sepoy raised his clubbed musket to knock out my brains, but a voice I well knew cried: 'Not this time, my fine fellow. That's number three, that is, and well home;' and I saw Measles drive his bayonet with a crash through the fellow's breast-bone, so that he fell across my legs.—'Now, old chap, come along,' he shouts, and an arm was passed under me.

'Run, Measles, run!' I said as well as I could. 'It's all over with me.'

'No; 'taint,' he said; 'and don't be a fool. Let me do as I like, for once in a way.'

I don't know how he did it, nor how, feeling sick and faint as I did, I managed to get on my legs; but old Measles stuck to me like a true comrade, and brought me in. For one moment I was struggling to my feet; and the next, after what seemed a deal of firing going over my head, I was inside the breastwork, listening to our men cheering and firing away, as the mutineers came howling and raging up almost to the very gates.

'All in?' I heard Lieutenant Leigh ask.

'To a man, sir,' says some one; 'but Private Bantem is hurt.'

'Hold your tongue, will you!' says Joe Bantem. 'I ain't killed, nor yet half. How would you like your wife frightened if you had one?'

'How's Private Lant?'

'Cut to pieces, sir,' says some one softly.

'I'm thankful that you are not wounded, Captain Dyer,' then says Lieutenant Leigh.

'God bless you, Leigh!' says the captain faintly: 'it was a brave act. I've only a scratch or two when I can get over the numbness of my limbs.'

I heard all this in a dim sort of fashion, just as if it was a dream in the early morning; for I was leaning up against the wall, with my face laid open and bleeding, and my left arm smashed by a bullet, and nobody just then took any notice of me, because they were carrying in Captain Dyer and Harry Lant; while the next minute, the fire was going on hard and fast; for the mutineers were furious, and I suppose they danced round the guns in a way that shewed how mad they were about the spiking.

As for me, I did not seem to be in a great deal of pain; but I got turning over in my mind how well we had done it that morning; and I felt proud of it all, and glad that Captain Dyer and Harry Lant were brought in; but all the same what I had heard lay like a load upon me; and knowing, as I did, that poor Miss Ross had, as it were, sold herself to save the captain's life, and that she had, in a way of speaking, been cheated into doing so, I felt that when the opportunity came, I must tell the captain all I knew. When I had got as far as that with my thoughts, the dull numbness began to leave me, and everything else was driven out of my mind by the thought of my wound; and I got asking myself whether it was going to be very bad, for I thought it was, so getting up a little, I began to crawl along in the shade towards the ruined south end of the palace, nobody seeming to notice me.

XVI.

I daresay you who read this don't know what the sensation is of having one arm-bone shivered, and the dead limb swinging helplessly about in your sleeve, whilst a great miserable sensation comes over you that you are of no more use—that you are only a broken pitcher, fit to hold water no more, but only to be broken up to mend the road with. There were all those women and children wanting my help, and the help of hundreds more such as me, and instead of being of use, I knew that I must be a miserable burden to everybody, and only in the way.

Now, whether man—as some of the great philosophers say—did gradually get developed from the beast of the field, I'm not going to pretend to know; but what I do know is this—that, leave him in his natural state, and when he, for some reason or another, forgets all that has been taught him, he seems very much like an animal, and acts as such.

It was something after this fashion with me then, for feeling like a poor brute out of a herd that has been shot by the hunters, I did just the same as it would—crawled away to find a place where I might hide myself and lie down and die.

You'll laugh, I daresay, when I tell you my sensations just then, and I'm ready to laugh at them now myself; for, in the midst of my pain and suffering, it came to me that I felt precisely as I did when I was a young shaver of ten years old. One Sunday afternoon, when everybody but mother and me had gone to church, and she had fallen asleep, I got father's big clay-pipe, rammed it full of tobacco out of his great lead box, and then took it into the back kitchen, feeling as grand as a churchwarden, and set to and smoked it till I turned giddy and faint, and the place seemed swimming about me.

Now, that was just how I felt when I crawled about in that place, trying not to meet anybody, lest the women should see me all covered with blood; and at last I got, as I thought, into a room where I should be all alone.

I say I crawled; and that's what I did do, on one hand and my knees, the fingers of my broken arm trailing over the white marble floor, with each finger making a horrible red mark, when all at once I stopped, drew myself up stiffly, and leaned trembling and dizzy up against the wall, trying hard not to faint. For I found that I wasn't alone, and that in place of getting away—crawling into some hole to lie down and die, I was that low-spirited and weak—I had come to a place where one of the women was, for there, upon her knees, was Lizzy Green, sobbing and crying, and tossing her hands about in the agony of her poor heart.

I was misty, and faint, and confused, you know; but perhaps it was something like instinct made me crawl to Lizzy's favourite place, for it was not intended. She did not see me, for her back was my

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way; and I did not mean her to know I was there; for in spite of my giddiness, I seemed to feel that she had learned all the news about our failure, and that she was crying about poor Harry Lant.

'And he deserves to be cried for, poor chap,' I said to myself, for I forgot all about my own pains then; but all the same something very dark and bitter came over me, as I wished that she had been crying instead for poor me.

'But then he was always so bright, and merry, and clever,' I thought, 'and just the man who would make his way with a woman; while I—— Please God, let me die now!' I whispered to myself directly after, 'for I'm only a poor, broken, helpless object, in everybody's way.'

It seemed just then as if the hot weak tears that came running out of my eyes made me clearer, and better able to hear all that the sobbing girl said, as I leaned closer and closer to the wall; while, as to the sharp pain every word she said gave me, the dull dead aching of my broken arm was nothing.

'Why—why did they let him go?' the poor girl sobbed: 'as if there were not enough to be killed without him; and him so brave, and stout, and handsome, and true. My poor heart's broken. What shall I do?'

Then she sobbed again; and I remember thinking that unless help soon came, if poor Harry Lant died of his wounds, she would soon go to join him in that land where there was to be no more suffering and pain.

Then I listened, for she was speaking again.

'If I could only have died for him, or been with, or—— Oh, what have I done, that I should be made to suffer so?'

I remember wondering whether she was suffering more then than I was; for, in spite of my jealous despairing feeling, there was something of sorrow mixed up with it for her.

For she had always seemed to like poor Harry's merry ways, when I never could get a smile from her; and she'd go and sit with Mrs Bantem for long enough when Harry was there, while if by chance I went, it seemed like the signal for her to get up, and say her young lady wanted her, when most likely Harry would walk back with her; and I went and told it all to my pipe.

'If he'd only known how I'd loved him,' she sobbed again, 'he'd have said one kind word to me before he went, have kissed me, perhaps, once; but no, not a look nor a sign! Ah! Isaac, Isaac! I shall never see you more!'

What—what? What was it choking me? What was it that sent what blood I had left gushing up in a dizzy cloud over my eyes, so that I could only gasp out once the one word 'Lizzy!' as I started to my feet, and stood staring at her in a helpless, half-blind fashion; for it seemed as though I had been mistaken, and that it was possible after all that she had been crying for me, believing me to be dead; but the next moment I was shrinking away from her, hiding my wounded face with my hand for fear she should see it, for leaping up, hot and flush-cheeked, and with those eyes of hers flashing at me, she was at my side with a bound.

'You cowardly, cruel, bad fellow!' she half-shrieked; 'how dare you stand in that mean deceitful way, listening to my words? Oh, that I should be such a weak fool, with a stupid, blabbing, chattering tongue, to keep on kneeling and crying there, telling lies, every one of them, and—— Get away with you!'

I think it was a smile that was on my face then, as she gave me a fierce thrust on the wounded arm, when I staggered towards her. I know the pain was as if a red-hot hand had grasped me; but I smiled all the same, and then, as I fell, I heard her cry out two words, in a wild agonised way, that went right to my heart, making it leap before all was blank; for I knew that those words meant that, in spite of all my doubts, I was loved.

'O Isaac!' she cried, in a wild frightened way, and then, as I said, all was blank and dark for I don't know how long; but I seemed to wake up to what was to me then like heaven, for my head was resting on Lizzy's breast, and, half-mad with fear and grief, she was kissing my pale face again and again.

'Try—try to forgive me for being so cruel, so unfeeling,' she sobbed; and then for a moment, as she saw me smile, she was about to fly out again, fierce-like, at having betrayed herself, and let me know how she loved me. Even in those few minutes I could read it all: how her passionate little heart was fighting against discipline, and how angry she was with herself; but I saw it all pass away directly, as she looked down at my bleeding face, and eagerly asked me if I was very much hurt.

I tried to answer, but I could not; for the same deathly feeling of sickness came on again, and I saw nothing.

I suppose, though, it only lasted a few minutes, for I woke like again to hear a panting hard breathing, as of some one using great exertion, and then I felt that I was being moved; but, for the life of me, for a few moments I could not make it out, till I heard the faint buzz of voices, when I found that Lizzy, the little fierce girl, who seemed to be as nothing beside me, was actually, in her excitement, carrying me to where she could get help, struggling along panting, a few feet at a time, beneath my weight, and me too helpless and weak to say a word.

'Good heavens! look!' I heard some one say the next moment, and I think it was Miss Ross; but it was some time before I came to myself again enough to find that I was lying with a rolled-up cloak under my head, and Lizzy bathing my lips from time to time, with what I afterwards learned was her share of the water.

But what struck me most now was the way in which she was altered: her sharp, angry way was gone, and she seemed to be changed into a soft gentle woman, without a single flirty way or thought, but always ready to flinch and shrink away until she saw how it troubled me, when she'd creep back to kneel down by my side, and put her little hand in mine; when, to make the same comparison again that I made before, I tell you that there, in that besieged and ruined place, half-starved, choked with thirst, and surrounded by a set of demons thirsting for our blood—I tell you that it seemed to me like being in heaven.

XVII.

I don't know how time passed then; but the next thing I remember is listening to the firing for a while, and then, leaning on Lizzy, being helped to the women's quarters, where, in spite of all they could do, those children would keep escaping from their mother to get to Harry Lant, who lay close to me, poor fellow, smiling and looking happy whenever they came near him; and I smiled, too, and felt as happy when Lizzy, after tending me with Mrs Bantem as long as was necessary, got bathing Harry's forehead with water and moistening his lips.

'Poor fellow,' I thought, 'it will do him good;' and I lay watching Lizzy moving about afterwards, and then I think I must have gone to sleep, or have fallen into a dull numb state, from which I was wakened by a voice I knew; and opening my eyes, I saw that Miss Ross, pale and scared-looking, was on her knees by the side of Harry Lant, and that Captain Dyer was there.

'Not one word of welcome,' he said, with a strange

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drawn look on his face, which deepened, as Miss Ross rose and went close to him.

'Yes,' she said; 'thank God you have returned safe.—No, no; don't touch me,' she cried hoarsely. 'Here, take me away—lead me out of this!' she said, for at that moment Lieutenant Leigh came quietly in, and she put her hands in his. 'Take me out,' she said again hoarsely; and then like some one muttering in a dream: 'Take me away—take me away.'

I said that drawn strange look on Captain Dyer's face seemed to deepen as he stood watching whilst those two went out together; then he passed his hand over his eyes, as if to ask himself whether it was a dream; and then, with a groan, he leaned one hand against the wall, feeling his way out from the room, and something seemed to hinder me from calling out to him, and telling him what I knew. For I was reasoning with myself, what ought I to do? and then, sick and faint, I seemed to sleep again.

But this time I was waked up by a loud shrieking, and a rush of feet, and, confused as I was, I knew what it meant: the hole where the blacks escaped—Chunder and his party—had not been properly guarded, and the mutineers had climbed up and made an entrance.

The alarm spread fast enough, but not quick enough to save life; for, with a howl, half-a-dozen sepoys, with their scarlet and white coatees open, dashed in with fixed bayonets, and two women were borne to the ground in an instant, while a couple of wretches made a dash at those two children—Little Cock Robin and Jenny Wren, as we called them—standing there, wondering like, by Harry Lant's bed on the floor, whilst the golden light of the setting sun filled the room, and lit up their little angels' faces.

But with a howl, such as I never heard woman give, Mrs Bantem rushed between them and the children, caught a bayonet in each hand, and held them together, letting them pass under one arm, then with a spring forward she threw those great arms of hers round the black fellows' necks as they hung together, and held them in such a hug as they never suffered from before.

The next moment they were all rolling together on the floor; but that incident saved the lives of those poor children, for there came a cheer now, and Measles and a dozen more were led in by Lieutenant Leigh, and ——

There, I am telling you too many horrors. They beat them back step by step, at the point of the bayonet; and a fierce struggle it was, a long fight kept up from room to room, for our men were fierce now as the mutineers, and it was a genuine death-struggle; and the broken window being guarded, not a man of about a dozen mutineers who gained entrance lived to go back and relate their want of success.

And can you wonder, when two of those who fought had found their wives bayoneted: Grainger was one of them; and when the fight was over, during which, raging like a demon, he had bayoneted four men, the poor fellow sat down by his dead wife, took her head first in his lap, then to his breast, and rocked himself to and fro, crying like a child, till there was a bugle-call in the court-yard, when he laid her gently in a corner, carrying her like as if she had been a child, kneeled down, and said 'Our Father' right through by her side, kissed her lips two or three times, and then covered her face with a bit of an old red handkerchief; and him all the while covered with blood and dust and black of powder. Then, poor fellow, he got up and took his gun, and went out on the tips of his toes, lest he should wake her who would wake no more in this world.

Perhaps it was weakness, I don't know, but my eyes were very wet just then, and a soft little hand was laid on my breast, and Lizzy's head leant over me, and her tears, too, fell very fast on my hot and fevered face.

I felt that I should die, not then, perhaps, but before very long, for I knew that my arm was so shattered that it ought to be amputated just below the elbow, while for want of surgical assistance it would mortify; but somehow I felt very happy just then, and my state did not give me much pain, only that I wanted to have been up and doing; and at last Lizzy helping me, I got up, my arm being bandaged and in a sling, to find that I could walk about a little; and I made my way down into the court-yard, where I got near to Captain Dyer, who, better now, and able to limp about, was talking with Lieutenant Leigh, both officers now, and forgetful apparently of all but the present crisis.

'What wounded are there?' said Captain Dyer, as I walked slowly up.

'Nearly every man to some extent,' said Lieutenant Leigh; 'but this man and Lant are the worst.'

'The place ought to be evacuated,' said Captain Dyer; 'it is impossible to hold it another day.'

'We might hold out another day,' said Lieutenant Leigh, 'but not longer. Why not retreat under cover of the night?'

'It seems the only thing left,' said Captain Dyer. 'We might perhaps get to some hiding-place or other before our absence was discovered; but the gate and that back window will be watched of course: how are we to get away with two severely wounded men, the women, and children?'

'That must be planned,' said Lieutenant Leigh; and then the watch was set for the night, as far as could be done, and another time of darkness set in.

It was that which puzzled me, why a good bold attack was not made by night; why, the place must have been carried again and again; but no, we were left each night entirely at rest, and the attacks by day were clumsy and bad. There was no support; every man fought for himself, and after his own fashion, and I suppose that every man did look upon himself as an officer, and resented all discipline. At all events, it was our salvation, though at this time it seemed to me that the end must be coming on the next day, and I remember thinking, that if it did come to the end, I should like to keep one cartridge left in my pouch.

Then my mind went off wandering in a misty way upon a plan to get away by night, and I tried to make one, taking into consideration, that the quarters on the north side of us now, and only separated by ten feet of alley, were in the hands of the mutineers, who camped in them, the same being the case in the quarters on the south side, separated again by the ten feet of alley through which we returned when Captain Dyer and Harry Lant were taken. While on the east was the market plain or square, and on the west a wilderness of open country with huts and sheds. I felt, do you know, that a good plan of escape at this time was just what I ought to make, every one else being busy with duty, and me not able to either fight or stand sentry, so I worked on hard at it that night, trying to be useful in some way; and after a fashion, I worked one out.

But I have not told you what I meant to do with that last cartridge in my pouch; I meant that to be pressed to my lips once before I contrived with one hand to load my rifle, and then if the worst came to the very worst, and when I had waited to the last to see if help would come, then, when it seemed that there was no hope, I meant to do what I told myself it would be my duty, as a man and a soldier, to do, if I loved Lizzy Green—do what more than one man did, during the mutiny, by the woman for whom he had been shedding his heart's best blood; and in the dead of that night I did load that gun, after kissing the bullet; and a deal of pain that gave me,

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mental as well as bodily, but I don't think that I need to tell you what that last cartridge was for.

XVIII.

I think by this time you pretty well understand the situation of our palace, and how our stronghold was on the north side, close to which was the gate, so hardly fought for: if you don't, I'm afraid it is my fault, and not yours.

At all events, being at liberty, I went over it here and there, and from floor to roof, as I tried to make out which would be the best way for trying to escape; but somehow I couldn't see it then. To go out from the gate was impossible; and the same related to the broken-out window, as both places were thoroughly watched.

As for the other windows about the place, they were such slips, that without they were widened, any escaping by them was impossible. To have let ourselves down, one by one, from the flat roof by a rope, might have done, but it was a clumsy unsuitable way, with all those children and women, so I gave that up, and then sat down as I was by a little window looking out on to the north alley.

Wearied out at last, I suppose that a sort of stupor came over me, from which I did not wake till morning, to find myself suffering a dull numb pain; but when I opened my eyes I forgot that, because of her who was kneeling beside me, driving away the flies that were buzzing about, as if they knew that I was soon to be for them to rest on, without a hand to sweep them away.

At last, though, as I lay there wondering what could be done to save us, the thought came all at once, and struggling to my feet, I held Lizzy to my heart a minute, and then went off to find Captain Dyer.

It quite took me aback to see his poor haggard face, and the way in which he took the trouble, for it was plain enough to see how he was cut to the heart by Miss Ross's treatment of him. But for all that, he was the officer and the gentleman; he had his duty to do, and he was doing it; so that, if even now, after losing so many men, and with so many more half disabled, if the enemy had made a bold assault now, they would have won the place dearly, though win it they must.

That did not seem their way, though they wanted the place for the sake of the great store of arms and ammunition it contained, but all the same they wanted to buy it cheap.

I found Captain Dyer ready enough to listen to my plan, though he shook his head, and said it was desperate. But after a little thought, he said: 'There are some hours now between this and night—help may come before then; if not, Smith, we must try it. My hands are full, so I leave the preparations with you: let every one carry food and a bottle of water—nothing more—all we want now is to save life.'

I promised I'd see to it; and I went and spoke cheerfully to the women, but Mrs Maine seemed quite hysterical. Miss Ross listened to what I had to say in a hard strange way; and really, if it had not been for Mrs Bantem putting a shoulder first to one wheel and then the other, nothing would have been done.

The next person I went to was Measles, who, during a cessation of the firing, was sitting, black and blood-smeared, with his head tied up, wiping out his gun with pieces he tore off the sleeves of his shirt.

'Well, Ike, mate,' he says, 'not dead yet, you see. If we get out of this, I mean to have my promotion; but I don't see how we're going to manage it. What bothers me most is, letting these black devils get all this powder and stuff we have here. Blow my rags if we shall ever use it all! I've been firing away till my old Bess has been so hot that I've been afraid to charge her; and I'll swear I've used twice as many cartridges as any other man. But I say, Ike, old fellow, do you think it's wrong to pot these niggers?'

'No,' I said—'not in a case like this.'

'Glad of it,' he says sincerely; 'because, do you know, old man, I've polished off such a thundering lot, that I've got to be quite narvous about getting killed myself. Only think having forty or fifty black-looking beggars rising up against you in kingdom come, and pointing at you, and saying: "That's the chap as shot me!"'

'I don't think any soldier, acting under orders, who does his duty in defence of women and children, need fear to lie down and die,' I said.

I never saw Measles look soft but that once, as, laying down his ramrod, he took my hand in his, and looked in my face for a bit; then he shook my hand softly, and nodded his head several times.

'How's Harry Lant?' he says at last.

'Very bad,' I said.

'Poor old chap. But tell him I've paid some of the beggars out for it. Mind you tell him—it'll make him feel comfortable like, and ease his mind.'

I nodded, and then told him about the plan.

'Well,' he said, as he slowly and thoughtfully polished his gun-barrel, 'it might do, and it mightn't. Seems a rum dodge; but, anyhow, we might try.'

'I shall want you to help make the bridge,' I says.

'All right, matey; but I don't, somehow, like leaving the beggars all that ammunition;' and then he loaded his rifle very thoughtfully, but only to rouse up directly after, for the mutineers began firing again; and Captain Dyer giving the order, our men replied swift and fast at every black face that shewed itself for an instant.

That was a day: hot, so that everything you went near seemed burning. The walls even sent forth a heat of their own; and if it hadn't been for the chatties down below, we should have had to give up, for the tank was now completely dried, and the flies buzzing about its mud-caked bottom. But the women went round from man to man with water and biscuit, so that no one left his post, and every time the black scoundrels tried to make a lodgment near the gate, half were shot down, and the rest glad enough to get back into shelter.

Towards that weary slow-coming evening, though, after we had beaten them back—or, rather, after my brave comrades had beaten them back half a score of times—I saw that something was up; and as soon as I saw what that something was, I knew that it was all over, for our men were too much cut up and disheartened for any more gallant sorties.

I've not said any more about the guns, only that we spiked them, and left them standing in the market plain, about fifty yards from the gates. I may tell you now, though, that the next morning they were gone, and we forgot all about them till the night I'm telling you of, when they were dragged out again, with a lot of noise and shouting, from a building in the far corner of the square.

We didn't want telling what that meant.

It was plain enough to all of us that the scoundrels had drilled out the touch-holes again, and that during the night they would be planted, and the first discharge would drive down all our defences, and leave us open to a rush.

'We must try your plan, Smith,' says Captain Dyer with a quiet stern look. 'It is time to evacuate the place now.'

Then he knelt down and took a look at the guns with his glass, and I knew he must have been thinking of how he stood tied to the muzzle of one of them, for he gave a sort of shudder as he closed his glass with a snap.

Just then, Miss Ross came round with Lizzy and

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Mrs Bantem, with wine and water, and I saw a sort of quiet triumph in Lieutenant Leigh's face, as, avoiding Captain Dyer, Miss Ross went up to him, as he half-beckoned to her, and stood by him like a slave, giving him bottle and glass, and then standing by his side with her eyes fixed and strange-looking; while, though he fought against it bravely, and tried to be unmoved, Captain Dyer could not bear it, but walked away.

I was just then drinking some water given me by Lizzy, whose pale troubled little face looked up so lovingly in mine that I felt half-ashamed for me, a poor private, to be so happy—for I forgot my wounds then—while my captain was in pain and suffering. And then it was that it struck me that Captain Dyer was just in that state in which men feel despairing, and go and do desperate things. I felt that I ought before now to have told him all about what I had heard, but I was in hopes that things would right themselves, and always came to the conclusion that it was Miss Ross's duty to have given the captain some explanation of her treatment; anyhow, it did not seem to be mine; but when I saw the poor smitten fellow go off like he did, I followed him softly till I came up with him, my heart beating the while with a curious sense of fear.

There was nothing to fear, though: he had only gone up to the roof, and when I came up with him he was evidently calculating about our escape, for he finished off by pulling out his telescope, and looking right across the plain, towards where there was a tank and a small station.

'I think that ought to be our way, Smith,' he said. 'We could stay there for half an hour's rest, and then on again towards Wallahbad, sending a couple of the stoutest men on for help. By the way, we 'll try and start a man off to-night, as soon as it 's dark. Who will you have to help you?'

'I should like to have Bigley, sir,' I said.

'Will one be sufficient?'

'Quite, sir,' I said; for I thought Measles and I could manage it between us.

Half an hour after, Measles was busy at work, fetching up muskets, with bayonets fixed, from down in the vault, and laying them in order on the flat roof, taking care the while to keep out of sight; and I went to the room where the women were, under Mrs Bantem's management, getting ready for what was to come, for they had been told that we might leave the place all at once.

XIX.

I suppose it was my wound made me do things in a sluggish dreamy way, and made me feel ready to stop and look at any little thing which took my attention. Anyhow, that 's the way I acted; and going inside that room, I stopped short just inside the place, for there were those two little children of the colonel's sitting on the floor, with a whole heap of those numbers of the Bible—those that people take in shilling parts—and with two or three large pictures in each. Some one had given them the parts to amuse themselves with; and, as grand and old-fashioned as could be, they were shewing these pictures to the soldiers' children.

As I went in, they 'd got a picture open, of Jacob lying asleep, with his dream spread before you, of the great flight of steps leading up into heaven, and the angels going up and down.

'There,' says little Jenny Wren to a boy half as old again as herself; 'those are angels, and they 're coming down from heaven, and they 've got beautiful wings like birds.'

'Oh,' says little Cock Robin thoughtfully, and he leaned over the picture. Then he says quite seriously: 'If they 've dot wings, why don't they fly down?'

That was a poser; but Jenny Wren was ready with her answer, old-fashioned as could be, and she says:

'I should think it 's toz they were moulting.'

I remember wishing that the poor little innocents had wings of their own, for it seemed to me that they would be a sad trouble to us to get away that night, just at the time when a child 's most likely to be cross and fretful.

Night at last, dark as dark, save only a light twinkling here and there, in different parts where the enemy had made their quarters. There was a buzzing in the camp where the guns were, and as we looked over, once there came the grinding noise of a wheel, but only once.

We made sure that the gate and the broken window opening were well watched, for there was the white calico of the sentries to be seen; but soon the darkness hid them, and we should not have known that they were there but for the faint spark now and then which shewed that they were smoking, and once I heard, quite plain in the dead stillness, the sound made by a 'hubble-bubble' pipe.

We waited one hour, and then, with six of us on the roof, the plan I made began to be put into operation.

My idea was that if we could manage to cross the north alley, which as I told you was about ten feet wide, we might then go over the roof of the quarters where the mutineers were; then on to the next roof, which was a few feet lower; and from there get down on to some sheds, from which it would be easy to reach the ground, when the way would be open to us, to escape, with perhaps some hours before we were missed.

The plan was, I know, desperate, but it seemed our only chance, and, as you well know, desperate ventures will sometimes succeed when the most carefully arranged plots fail. At all events, Captain Dyer took it up, and the men under my directions, a couple of muskets were taken at a time, and putting them muzzle to muzzle, the bayonet of each was thrust down the other's barrel, which saved lashing them together, and gave us a sort of spar about ten feet long, and this was done with about fifty.

I told you that there was a tree grew up in the centre of the alley—a stunty, short-boughed tree, and to this Measles laid one of the double muskets, feeling for a bough to rest it on in the darkness, after listening whether there was any one below; then he laid more and more, till, with a mattress laid upon them, he formed a bridge, over which he boldly crept to the tree, where, with the lashings he had taken, he bound a couple more muskets horizontal, and then shifted the others. He arranged them all so that the butts of one end rested on the roof of the palace; the butts at the other end were across those he had bound pretty level in the tree. Then more and more were laid across, and a couple of thin straw mattresses on them; and though it took a tremendously long time, through Measles fumbling in the dark, it was surprising what a firm bridge that made as far as the tree.

The other half was made in just the same fashion, and much more easily. Mattresses were laid on it; and there, thirty feet above the ground, we had a tolerably firm bridge, one that, though very irregular, a man could cross with ease, creeping on his hands and knees; but then there were the women, children, and poor Harry Lant.

Captain Dyer thought it would be better to say nothing to them about it, but to bring them all quietly up at the last minute, so as to give them no time for thought and fear; and then, the last preparation being made, and a rough, short ladder, eight feet long, Measles and I had contrived, being carried over and planted at the end of the other quarters,

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reaching well down to the next roof, we prepared for a start.

Measles and Captain Dyer went over with the ladder, and reported no sentries visible, the bridge pretty firm, and nothing apparently to fear, when it was decided that Harry Lant should be taken over first—Measles volunteering to take him on his back and crawl over—then the women and children were to be got over, and we were to follow.

I know it was hard work for him, but Harry Lant never gave a groan, but let them lash his hands together with a handkerchief, so that Measles put his head through the poor fellow's arms, for there was no trusting to Harry's feeble hold.

'Now then, in silence,' says Captain Dyer; 'and you, Lieutenant Leigh, get up the women and children. But each child is to be taken by a man, who is to be ready to gag the little thing if it utters a sound. Recollect, the lives of all depend on silence.—Now, Bigley, forward!'

'Wait till I spit in my hands, captain,' says Measles, though what he wanted to spit in his hands for, I don't know, without it was from use, being such a spitting man.

But spit in his hands he did, and then he was down on his hands and knees, crawling on to the mattress very slowly, and you could hear the bayonets creaking and gritting, as they played in and out of the musket-barrels; but they held firm, and the next minute Measles was as far as the tree, but only to get his load hitched somehow in a ragged branch, when there was a loud crack as of dead-wood snapping, a struggle, and Measles growled out an oath—he would swear, that fellow would, in spite of all Mrs Bantem said, so you mustn't be surprised at his doing it then.

We all stood and crouched there, with our hearts beating horribly; for it seemed that the next moment we should hear a dull, heavy crash; but instead, there came the sharp fall of a dead branch, and at the same moment there were voices at the end of the alley.

If Captain Dyer dared to have spoken, he would have called 'Halt!' but he was silent; and Measles must have heard the voices, for he never moved, while we listened minute after minute, our necks just over the edge of the roof, till what appeared to be three of the enemy crept cautiously along through the alley, till one tripped and fell over the dead bough that must have been lying right in their way.

Then there was a horrible silence, during which we felt that it was all over with the plan—that the enemy must look up and see the bridge, and bring down those who would attack us with renewed fury.

But the next minute, there came a soft whisper or two, a light rustling, and directly after we knew that the alley was empty.

It seemed useless to go on now; but after five minutes' interval, Captain Dyer determined to pursue the plan, just as Measles came back panting to announce Harry Lant as lying on the roof beyond the officers' quarters.

'And you've no idea what a weight the little chap is,' says Measles to me.—'Now, who's next?'

No one answered; and Lieutenant Leigh stepped forward with Miss Ross. He was about to carry her over; but she thrust him back, and after scanning the bridge for a few moments, she asked for one of the children, and so as to have no time lost, the little boy, fast asleep, bless him! was put in her arms, when brave as brave, if she did not step boldly on to the trembling way, and walk slowly across.

Then Joe Bantem was sent, though he hung back for his wife, till she ordered him on, to go over with a soldier's child on his back; and he was followed by a couple more.

Next came Mrs Bantem, with Mrs Colonel Maine, and the stout-hearted woman stood as if hesitating for a minute as to how to go, when catching up the colonel's wife, as if she had been a child, she stepped on to the bridge, and two or three men held the butts of the muskets, for it seemed as if they could not bear the strain.

But though my heart seemed in my mouth, and the creaking was terrible, she passed safely over, and it was wonderful what an effect that had on the rest.

'If it'll bear that, it'll bear anything,' says some one close to me; and we went on, one after the other, for the most part crawling, till it came to me and Lizzy Green.

'You'll go now,' I said; but she would not leave me, and we crept on together, till a bough of the tree hindered us, when I made her go first, and a minute after we were hand-in-hand upon the roof of the officers' quarters.

The others followed, Captain Dyer coming last, when, seeing me, he whispered: 'Where's Bigley?' of course meaning Measles.

I looked round, but it was too dark to distinguish one face from another. I had not seen him for the last quarter of an hour—not since he had asked me if I had any matches, and I had passed him half-a-dozen from my tobacco-pouch.

I asked first one, and then another, but nobody had seen Measles; and under the impression that he must have joined Harry Lant, we cautiously walked along the roof, right over the heads of our enemies; for from time to time we could hear beneath our feet the low buzzing sound of voices, and more than once came a terrible catching of the breath, as one of the children whispered or spoke.

It seemed impossible, even now, that we could escape, and I was for proposing to Captain Dyer to risk the noise, and have the bridge taken down, so as to hold the top of the building we were on as a last retreat; but I was stopped from that by Measles coming up to me, when I told him Captain Dyer wanted him, and he crept away once more.

We got down the short ladder in safety, and then crossed a low building, to pass down the ladder on to another, which fortunately for us was empty; and then, with a little contriving and climbing, we dropped into a deserted street of the place, and all stood huddled together, while Captain Dyer and Lieutenant Leigh arranged the order of march.

And that was no light matter; but a litter was made of the short ladder, and Harry Lant laid upon it; the women and children placed in the middle; the men were divided; and the order was given in a low tone to march, and we began to walk right away into the darkness, down the straggling street; but only for the advance-guard to come back directly, and announce that they had stumbled upon an elephant picketed with a couple of camels.

'Any one with them?' said Captain Dyer.

'Could not see a soul, sir,' said Joe Bantem, for he was one of the men.

'Grenadiers, half-left,' said Captain Dyer; 'forward!' and once more we were in motion, tramp, tramp, tramp, but quite softly; Lieutenant Leigh at the rear of the first party, so as to be with Miss Ross, and Captain Dyer in the rear of all, hiding, poor fellow, all he must have felt, and seeming to give up every thought to the escape, and that only.

XX.

I could just make out the great looming figure of an elephant, as we marched slowly on, when I was startled by a low sort of wimmering noise, followed directly after by a grunting on my right.

'What's that?' says Captain Dyer. Then in an instant: 'Threes right!' he cried to the men, and

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they faced round, so as to cover the women and children.

There was no farther alarm, though, and all seemed as silent as could be; so once more under orders, the march was continued till we were out from amidst the houses, and travelling over the sandy dusty plain; when there was another alarm—we were followed—so said the men in the rear; and, sure enough, looming up against the darkness—a mass of darkness itself—we could see an elephant.

The men were faced round, and a score of pieces were directed at the great brute; but when within three or four yards, it was plain enough that it was alone, and Measles says aloud: 'Blest if it isn't old *Nabob!*'

The old elephant it was; and passing through, he went up to where Harry Lant was calling him softly, knelt down to order; and then climbing and clinging on as well as they could, the great brute's back was covered with women and children—the broad shallow howdah pretty well taking the lot—while the great beast seemed as pleased as possible to get back amongst his old friends, rubbing his trunk first on this one and then on that; and thankful we were for the help he gave us, for how else we should have got over that desert plain I can't say.

I should think we had gone a good eight miles, when Measles ranges up close aside me as I walked by the elephant, looking up at the riding-party from time to time, and trying to make out which was Lizzy, and pitying them too, for the children were fretful, and it was a sad time they had of it up there.

'They'll have it hot there sometime to-morrow morning, Ike,' says Measles to me.

'Where?' I said faintly, for I was nearly done for, and I did not take much interest in anything.

'Begumbagh,' he says. And when I asked him what he meant, he said: 'How much powder do you think there was down in that vault?'

'A good five hundredweight,' I said.

'All that,' says Measles. 'They'll have it hot, some of 'em.'

'What do you mean?' I said, getting interested.

'Oh, nothing perticklar, mate; only been arranging for promotion for some of 'em, since I can't get it myself. I took the head out of one keg, and emptied it by the others, and made a train to where I've set a candle burning; and when that candle's burnt out, it will set light to another; and that will have to burn out, when some wooden chips will catch fire, and they'll blaze a good deal, and one way and another there'll be enough to burn to last till, say, eight o'clock this morning, by which time the beauties will have got into the place; and then let 'em look out for promotion, for there's enough powder there to startle two or three of 'em.'

'That's what you wanted the matches for, then?' I said.

'That's it, matey; and what do you think of it, eh?'

'You've done wrong, my lad, I'm afraid, and'—— I didn't finish; for just then, behind us, there was a bright flashing light, followed by a dull thud; and looking back, we could see what looked like a little fire-work; and though plenty was said just then, no one but Measles and I knew what that flash meant.

'That's a dead failure,' growled Measles to me as we went on. 'I believe I am the unluckiest beggar that ever breathed. That oughtn't to have gone off for hours yet, and now it'll let 'em know we're gone, and that's all.'

I did not say anything, for I was too weak and troubled, and how I kept up as I did, I don't know to this day.

The morning broke at last with the knowledge that we were three miles to the right of the tank Captain Dyer had meant to reach. For a few minutes, in a quiet stern way, he consulted with Lieutenant Leigh as to what should be done—whether to turn off to the tank, or to press on. The help received from old *Nabob*, made them determine to press on; and after a short rest, and a better arrangement for those who were to ride on the elephant, we went on in the direction of Wallahbad, I, for my part, never expecting to reach it alive. Many a look back did I give to see if we were followed, but it was not until we were within sight of a temple by the roadside, that there was the news spread that there were enemies behind; and though I was ready enough to lay the blame upon Measles, all the same they must have soon found out our flight, and pursued us.

The sun could never have been hotter, nor the ground more parched and dusty than it was now. We were struggling on to reach that temple, which we might perhaps be able to hold till help came; for two men had been sent on to get assistance; though of all those sent, one and all were waylaid and cut down, long before they could reach our friends. But we did not know that then; and in the full hope that before long we should have help, we crawled on to the temple, but only to find it so wide and exposed, that in our weak condition it was little better than being in the open. There was a building, though, about a hundred yards farther on, and towards that we made, every one rousing himself for what was really the last struggle, for not a quarter of a mile off, there was a yelling crowd of blood-hounds in eager pursuit.

It was with a panting rush that we reached the place, to find it must have been the house of the collector of the district; but it was all one wrack and ruin—glass, tables, and chairs smashed; hangings and carpets burnt or ragged to pieces, and in one or two places, blood-stains on the white floor, told a terrible tale of what had taken place not many days before.

The elephant stopped and knelt, and the women and children were passed in as quickly as possible; but before all could be got in, about a dozen of the foremost mutineers were down upon us with a savage rush—I say *us*, but I was helpless, and only looking on from inside—two of our fellows were cut down in an instant, and the others borne back by the fierce charge. Then followed a desperate struggle, ending in the black fellows dragging off Miss Ross and one of the children that she held.

They had not gone many yards, though, before Captain Dyer and Lieutenant Leigh seemed to see the peril together, and shouting to our men, sword in hand they went at the black fiends, well supported by half-a-dozen of our poor wounded chaps.

There was a rush, and a cloud of dust; then there was the noise of yells and cheers, and Captain Dyer shouting to the men to come on; and it all acted like something intoxicating on me, for, catching up a musket, I was making for the door, when I felt an arm holding me back, and I did what I must have done as soon as I got outside—reeled and fainted dead away.

XXI.

It was a couple of hours after when I came to, and became sufficiently sensible to know that I was lying with my head in Lizzy's lap, and Harry Lant close beside me. It was very dim, and the heat seemed stifling, so that I asked Lizzy where we were, and she told me in the cellar of the house—a large wide vault, where the women, children, and wounded had been placed for safety, while the noise and firing above told of what was taking place.

I was going to ask about Miss Ross, but just then I caught sight of her trying to support her sister, and to keep the children quiet.

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As I got more used to the gloom, I made out that there was a small iron grating on one side, through which came what little light and air we got; on the other, a flight of stone steps leading up to where the struggle was going on. There was a strong wooden door at the top of this, and twice that door was opened for a wounded man to be brought down; when, coolly as if she were in barracks, there was that noble woman, Mrs Bantem, tying up and binding sword-cuts and bayonet-thrusts as she talked cheerily to the men.

The struggle was very fierce still, the men who brought down the wounded hurrying away, for there was no sign of flinching; but soon they were back with another poor fellow, who was now whimpering, now muttering fiercely:

'If I'd only have had—curse them!—if I'd only had another cartridge or two, I wouldn't have cared,' he said as they laid him down close by me; 'but I always was the unluckiest beggar on the face of the earth. They've most done for me, Ike, and no wonder, for it's all fifty to one up there, and I don't believe a man of ours has a shot left.'

Again the door closed on the two men who had brought down poor Measles, hacked almost to pieces; and again it was opened, to bring down another wounded man, and this one was Lieutenant Leigh. They laid him down, and were off back up the steps, when there was a yelling, like as if all the devils in hell had broken loose, and as the door was opened, Captain Dyer and half-a-dozen more were beaten back, and I thought they would have been followed down—but no; they stood fast in that doorway, Captain Dyer and the six with him, while the two fellows who had been down leaped up the stairs to support them, so that, in that narrow opening, there were eight sharp British bayonets, and the captain's sword, making such a steel hedge as the mutineers could not pass.

They could not contrive either to fire at our party, on account of the wall in front, and every attempt at an entrance was thwarted; but we all knew that it was only a question of time, for it was impossible for man to do more.

There seemed now to be a lull, and only a buzzing of voices above us, mingled with a groan and a dying cry now and then, when I quite forgot my pain once more on hearing poor Harry Lant, who had for some time been quite off his head, and raving, commence talking in a quiet sort of way.

'Where's Ike Smith?' he said. 'It's all dark here; and I want to say good-bye to him.'

I was kneeling by his side the next minute, holding his hand.

'God bless you, Ike,' he said; 'and God bless her. I'm going, old mate; kiss her for me, and tell her that if she hadn't been made for you, I could have loved her very dearly.'

What could I do or say, when the next minute Lizzy was kneeling on his other side, holding his hand?

'God bless you both,' he whispered. 'You'll get out of the trouble after all; and don't forget me.'

We promised him we would not, as well as we could, for we were both choked with sorrow; and then he said, talking quickly:

'Give poor old Sam Measles my tobacco-box, Ike, the brass one, and shake hands with him for me; and now I want Mother Bantem.'

She was by his side directly, to lift him gently in her arms, calling him her poor gallant boy, her brave lad, and no end of fond expressions.

'I never had a bairn, Harry,' she sobbed; 'but if I could have had one, I'd have liked him to be like you, my own gallant, light-hearted soldier boy; and you were always to me as a son.'

'Was I?' says Harry softly. 'I'm glad of it, for I never knew what it was to have a mother.'

He seemed to fall off to sleep after that, when, no one noticing them, those two children came up, and the first I heard of it was little Clive crying: 'Ally Lant—Ally Lant, open eyes, and come and play wis elfant.'

I started, and looked up to see one of those little innocents—his face smeared, and his little hands all dabbled with blood, trying to open poor Harry Lant's eyes with his tiny fingers.

'Why don't Ally Lant come and play with us?' says the other; and just then he opened his eyes, and looked at them with a smile, when in a moment I saw what was happening, for that poor fellow's last act was to get those two children's hands in his, as if he felt that he should like to let his last grasp in this world be upon something innocent; and then there was a deepening of that smile into a stern look, his lips moved, and all was over; while I was too far off to hear his last words.

But there was one there who did hear them, and she told me afterwards, sobbing as though her heart would break.

'Poor Harry, poor light-hearted Harry,' Mother Bantem said. 'And did you see the happy smile upon his face as he passed away, clasping those two poor children's hands—so peaceful, so quiet, after all his suffering; forgetting all then, but what seemed like two angels' faces by his dying pillow, for he said, Ike, he said'——

Poor Mother Bantem broke down here, and I thought about what Harry's dying pillow had been—her faithful, old, motherly breast. But she forced back her sobs, and wiped the tears from her rough, plain face, as she said in low, reverent tones: 'Poor Harry! His last words: "Of such is the kingdom of Heaven."'

Death was very busy amongst our poor company, and one—two—three more passed away there, for they were riddled with wounds; and then I saw that, in spite of all that could be done, Lieutenant Leigh would be the next. He had received his death-wound, and he knew it too; and now he lay very still, holding tightly by Miss Ross's hand, while she knelt beside him.

Captain Dyer, with his eight men, all left, were still keeping the door; but of late they had not been interfered with, and the poor fellows were able to do one another a good turn in binding up wounds. But what all were now suffering for want of, was water; and beyond a few drops in one or two of the bottles carried by the women, there was none to be had.

As for me, I could only lie there helpless, and in a half-dreamy way, see and listen to all that was going on. The spirit in me was good to help; but think of my state—going for days with that cut on the face, and a broken arm, and in that climate.

I was puzzling myself about this time as to what was going to happen next, for I could not understand why the rebels were so quiet; but the next minute I was watching Lieutenant Leigh, and thinking about the morning when we saw Captain Dyer bound to the muzzle of the nine-pounder.

Could he have been thinking about the same thing? I say *yes*, for all at once he started right up, looking wild and excited. He had hold of Miss Ross's hand; but he threw it from him, as he called out: 'Now, my lads, a bold race, and a short one. We must bring them in. Spike the guns—cut the cords. Now, then—Elsie or death. Are you ready there? Forward!'

That last word rang through the vault we were in, and Captain Dyer ran down the steps, his hacked sword hanging from his wrist by the knot. But he was too late to take his messmate's hand in his, and say *farewell*, if that had been his intention, for Lieutenant Leigh had fallen back; and that senseless figure by his side was to all appearance as dead,

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when, with a quivering lip, Captain Dyer gently lifted her, and bore her to where, half stupefied, Mrs Colonel Maine was sitting.

XXII.

I got rather confused, and am to this day, about how the time went; things that only took a few minutes seeming to be hours in happening, and what really did take a long time gliding away as if by magic. I think I was very often in a half-delirious state; but I can well remember what was the cause of the silence above.

Captain Dyer was the first to see, and taking a rifle in his hand, he whispered an order or two; and then he, with two more, rushed into the passage, and got the door drawn towards us, for it opened outwards; but in so doing, he slipped on the floor, and fell with a bayonet-thrust through his shoulder, when, with a yell of rage—it was no cheer this time—our men dashed forward, and dragged him in; the door was pulled to, and held close; and then those poor wounded fellows—heroes I call 'em—stood angrily muttering.

I think I got more excited over that scene than over any part of the struggle, and all because I was lying there helpless; but it was of no use to fret, though I lay there with the weak tears running down my cheeks, as that brave man was brought down, and laid near the grating, with Mother Bantem at work directly to tear off his coat, and begin to bandage, as if she had been brought up in a hospital.

The door was forsaken, for there was a new guard there, that no one would try to pass, for the silence was explained to us all: first, there was a loud yelling and shrieking outside; and then there was a little thin blue wreath of smoke beginning to curl under the door, crawling along the top step, and collecting like so much blue water, to spread very slowly; for the fiends had been carrying out their wounded and dead, and were now going to burn us where we lay.

I can recollect all that; for now a maddening sense of horror seemed to come upon me, to think that those few poor souls left were to be slain in such a barbarous way, after all the gallant struggle for life; but what surprised me was the calm, quiet way in which all seemed to take it.

Once, indeed, the men had a talk together, and asked the women to join them in a rush through the passage; but they gave up the thought directly, for they knew that if they could get by the flames, there were more cruel foes outside, waiting to thrust them back.

So they all sat down in a quiet, resigned way, listening to the crackle outside the door, watching the thin smoke filter through the crevices, and form in clouds, or pools, according to where it came through.

And you'd have wondered to see those poor fellows, how they acted: why, Joe Bantem rubbed his face with his handkerchief, smoothed his hair and whiskers, and then got his belts square, as if off out on parade, before going and sitting quietly down by his wife.

Measles lay very still, gently humming over the old child's hymn, *Oh! that 'll be joyful*, but only to burst out again into a fit of grumbling.

Another went and knelt down in a corner, where he stayed; the rest shook hands all round, and then, seeing Captain Dyer sitting up, and sensible, they went and saluted him, and asked leave to shake hands with him, quite upsetting him, poor fellow, as he called them, in a faint voice, his 'brave lads,' and asked their pardon, if he 'd ever been too harsh with them.

'God bless you! no, sir,' says Joe Bantem, jumping up, and shaking the hand himself, 'which *that* you 've never been, but always a good officer as your company loved. Keep a brave heart, my boys, it 'll soon be over. We've stood in front of death too many times now to shew the white feather. Hurray for Captain Dyer, and may he have his regiment in the tother land, and we be some of his men!'

Joe Bantem gave a bit of a reel as he said this, and then he 'd have fallen if it hadn't been for his wife; and though his was rather strong language, you see it must be excused, for, leave alone his wounds, and the mad feeling they 'd bring on, there was a wild excitement on the men then, brought on by the fighting, which made them, as you may say, half-drunk.

We must all have been choked over and over again, but for that grating; for the hotter the fire grew above, the finer current of air swept in. The mutineers could not have known of it, or one of their first acts must have been to seal it up. But it was half-covered by some creeping flower, which made it invisible to them, and so we were able to breathe.

And now it may seem a curious thing, but I 'm going to say a little more about love. A strange time, you 'll perhaps say, when those poor people were crouching together in that horrible vault, expecting their death moment by moment. But that 's why it was, and not from any want of retiring modesty. I believe that those poor souls wished to shew those they loved how true was that feeling; and therefore it was that wife crept to husband's side, and Lizzy Green, forgetting all else now, placed her arms round my neck, and her lips to mine, and kissed me again and again.

It was no time for scruples; and thus it was that, being close to them, I heard Miss Ross, kneeling by the side of Captain Dyer, ask him, sobbing bitterly the while—ask him to forgive her, while he looked almost cold and strange at her, till she whispered to him long and earnestly, when I knew that she must be telling him all about the events of that morning. It must have been, for with a cry of joy I saw him bend towards her, when she threw her arms round him, and clasped his poor bleeding form to her breast.

They were so when I last looked upon them, and every one seemed lost in his or her own suffering, all save those two children, one of whom was asleep on Mrs Maine's lap, and the other playing with the gold knot of Captain Dyer's sword.

Then came a time of misty smoke and heat, and the crackling of woodwork; but all the while there was a stream of hot pure air rushing in at that grating to give us life.

We could hear the black fiends running round and round the burning building, yelling, and no doubt ready to thrust back any one who tried to get out. But there seemed then to come another misty time, from which I was roused by Lizzy whispering to me: 'Is it very near now?'

'What?' I said faintly.

'Death,' she whispered, with her lips close to my ear. 'If it is, pray God that He will never let us part again in the land where all is peace!'

I tried to answer her, but I could not, for the hot, stifling, blinding smoke was now in my throat, when the yelling outside seemed to increase. There was a loud rushing sound; the trampling of horses; the jingling of cavalry sabres; a loud English hurray; and a crash; and I knew that there was a charge of horse sweeping by. Then came the hurried beating of feet, the ring of platoon after platoon of musketry, a rapid, squandering, skirmishing fire; more yelling, and more English cheers; the rush, again, of galloping horses; and, by slow degrees, the sound of a fierce skirmish, growing more and more distant, till there came another rapid beating of hoofs, a sudden halt, the jingle and rattle of harness, and a moment after, bim—bom—bom—bom! at regular intervals; and I waved my hand, and gave a faint cheer, for I could

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mentally see it all: a troop of light-horse had charged twice; the infantry had come up at the double; and now here were the horse-artillery, with their light six-pounders, playing upon the retreating rebels where the cavalry were not cutting them up.

That faint cheer of mine brought out some more; and then there was a terrible silence, for the relief seemed to have come too late; but a couple of our men crawled to the grating, where the air reviving them, they gave another 'Hurray!' which was answered directly.

And then there was a loud shout, the excited buzz of voices, the crashing of a pioneer's axe against the framework of the grating; and after a hard fight, from which our friends were beaten back again and again, we poor wretches, nearly all insensible, were dragged out about a quarter of an hour before the burning house fell with a crash. Then there was a raging whirlwind of flame, and smoke, and sparks, and the cellar was choked up with the burning ruin.

XXIII.

How well I remember coming to myself as I lay there on the grass, with our old surgeon, Mr Hughes, kneeling by my side; for it was our own men that formed the infantry of the column, with a troop of lancers, and one of horse-artillery. 'There was Colonel Maine kneeling by his wife, who, poor soul, was recovering fast, and him turning from her to the children, and back again; while it was hard work to keep our men from following up the pursuit, now kept up by the lancers and horse-artillery, so mad and excited were they, to find only eight wounded men out of the company they had left.

But, one way and another, the mutineers paid dear for what suffering they caused us. I can undertake to say that, for every life they took, half-a-dozen of their own side fell—the explosion swept away, I suppose, quite fifty, just as they had attempted a surprise, and came over from the south side in a night-attack; while the way in which they were cut up in the engagement was something awful.'

For, anxious beyond measure at not hearing news of the party left in Begumbagh, Colonel Maine had at length obtained permission to go round by that station, reinforce the troops, and then join the general by another route.

They were making forced marches, when they caught sight of the rebels yelling round the burning building, fully a couple of hundred being outside; when, not knowing of the sore strait of those within, they had charged down, driving the murderous black scoundrels before them like so much chaff.

But you must not think that our pains were at an end. Is it not told in the pages of history how for long enough it was a hard fight for a standing in India, and how our troops were in many places sore put to it; while home after home was made desolate by the most cruel outrages! It was many a long week before we could be said to be in safety; but I don't know that I suffered much beyond the pains of that arm, or rather that stump, for our surgeon, Mr Hughes, when I grumbled a little at his taking it off, told me I might be very thankful that I had escaped with life, for he had never known of such a case before.

But it was rather hard lying alone there in the temporary hospital, missing the tender hands that one loved.

And yet I have no right to say quite alone, for poor old Measles was on one side, and Joe Bantem on the other, with Mrs Bantem doing all she could for us three, as well as five more of our poor fellows.

More than once I heard Mr Hughes talk about the men's wounds, and say it was wonderful how they could live through them; but live they all seemed disposed to, except poor Measles, who was terrible bad and delirious, till one day, when he could hardly speak above a whisper, he says to me—being quite in his right mind:

'I daresay some of you chaps think that I'm going to take my discharge; but all the same, you're wrong, for I mean to go in now for promotion!'

He said 'now;' but what he did then was to go in for sleep—and sleep he did for a good four-and-twenty hours—when he woke up grumbling, and calling himself the most unlucky beggar that ever breathed.

Time went on; and one by one we poor fellows got out of hospital cured; but I was the last; and it was many months after, that, at his wish, I called upon Captain—then Major—Dyer, at his house in London. For, during those many months, the mutiny had been suppressed, and our regiment had been ordered home.

I was very weak and pale, and I hadn't got used to this empty sleeve, and things looked very gloomy ahead; but, somehow, that day when I called at Major Dyer's seemed the turning-point; for, to a poor soldier there was something very soothing for your old officer to jump up, with both hands outstretched to catch yours, and to greet you as warmly as did his handsome, bonny wife.

They seemed as if they could hardly make enough of me; but the sight of their happiness made me feel low-spirited; and I felt no better when Mrs Dyer—God bless her!—took my hand in hers, and led me to the next room, where she said there was an old friend wanted to see me.

I felt that soft jewelled hand holding mine, and I heard the door close as Mrs Dyer went out again, and then I stood seeing nothing—hearing nothing—feeling nothing, but a pair of clinging arms round my neck, and a tear-wet face pressed to mine.

And did that make me feel happy?

No! I can say it with truth. For as the mist cleared away from my eyes, and I looked down on, to me, the brightest, truest face the sun ever shone on, there was a great sorrow in my heart, as I told myself that it was a sin and a wrong for me, a poor invalided soldier, to think of taking advantage of that fine handsome girl, and tying her down to one who was maimed for life.

And at last, with the weak tears running down my cheeks, I told her of how it could not be: that I should be wronging her, and that she must think no more of me, only as a dear friend; when there is that amount of folly in this world, that my heart swelled, and a great ball seemed rising in my throat, and I choked again and again, as those arms clung tighter and tighter round my neck, and Lizzy called me her hero, and her brave lad who had saved her life again and again; and asked me to take her to my heart, and keep her there; for her to try and be to me a worthy loving wife—one that would never say a bitter word to me as long as she lived.

I said that there was so much folly in this world, so how can you wonder at me catching it of her, when she was so close that I could feel her breath upon my cheeks, my hair, my eyes, as once more, forgetting all in her love, she kissed me again and again. How, then, could I help, but with that one hand press her to my heart, and go the way that weak heart of mine wished.

I know it was wrong; but how can one always fight against weakness. And, to tell you the truth, I had fought long enough—so long that I wished for peace. And I must say this, too, you must not be hard on Lizzy, and think that it would have been better for her to have let me do a little more of

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the courting: there are exceptional cases, and this was one.

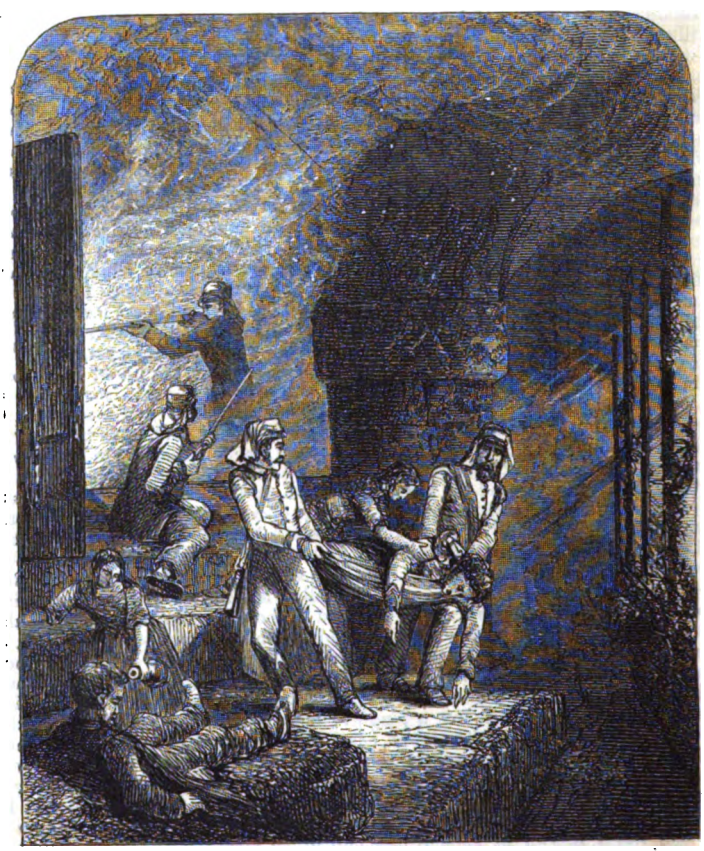
I had a true friend in Major Dyer, and to him I owe my present position—not a very grand one; but speaking honestly as a man, I don't believe, if I had been a general, some one at home could think more of me; while, as to this empty sleeve, she's proud of it, and says that all the country is the same.

Wandering about as a regiment is, one does not often have a chance to see one's old messmates; but Sergeant and Mrs Bantem, and Sergeant Measles did have tea and supper with us one night here in London, Mrs Bantem saying that Measles was as proud of his promotion as a dog with two tails, though Measles did say he was an unlucky beggar, or he'd have been a captain. And, my! what a night we did have of that, without one drawback, only Measles would spit on my wife's Brussels carpet; and so we did have a night last year when the old regiment was stationed at Edinburgh, and the wife and me had a holiday, and went down and saw Colonel and Mrs Maine, and those children grown up a'most into a man and woman. But Colonel Dyer had exchanged into another regiment, and they say he is going to retire on half-pay, on account of his wound troubling him.

We fought our old battles over again on those nights; and we did not forget the past and gone; for Mrs Bantem stood up after supper, with her stiff glass of grog in her hand—a glass into which I saw a couple of tears fall—as she spoke of the dead—the brave men who fell in defence of the defenceless and innocent, hoping that the earth lay lightly on the grave of Lieutenant Leigh, while she proposed the memory of brave Harry Lant.

We drank that toast in silence; and more than one eye was wet as the old scenes came back—scenes such as I hope may never fall to the lot of men again to witness; for if there is ever a fervent prayer sent up to the Maker of All, by me, an old soldier, who has much to answer for, it is contained in those words, so familiar to you all at the season of Christmas:

'Peace on Earth!' *Amen.*



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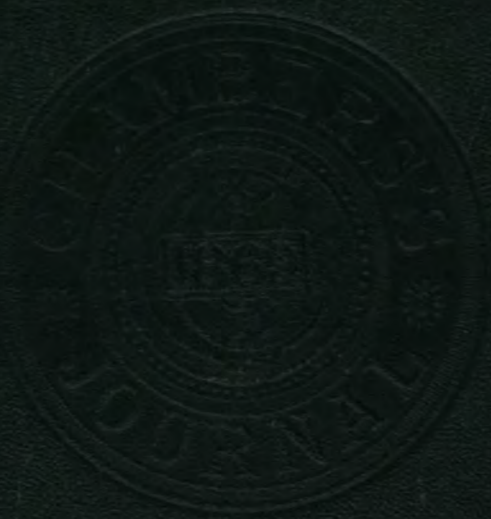
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